

STATEMENT BY MR. K.C. VENUGOPAL, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, ON AGENDA ITEM 105 – CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE & AGENDA ITEM 106 – INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 65TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 07, 2010

Mr. Chairman,

Let me thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for his statement in this Committee and also the Secretary General for all his reports under this agenda items.



One of the significant finding of this year's World Drug Report has been the steady global reduction in the cultivation of crops for illicit drugs since 2007. We must build on these successes by redoubling our efforts, nationally, regionally and internationally to tackle this menace. India's resolve to fight the menace of illicit drugs remains steadfast. We will continue to adhere to the commitments made in the three UN Conventions as well as in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action to overcome the world drug problem, adopted at the 1998 Special Session of the UN General Assembly.

While a holistic and balanced approach towards drug control measures is essential, however, the keystone in this fight still is the supply reduction strategies by sustained alternative development programmes for the cultivators of these crops as well as overall economic development of such regions. In this regard, we would like to voice our support for such initiatives and strategies by strengthening North-South as well as South-South cooperation by sharing of best practices, lessons learnt and provision of technical assistance. On the demand side, we must raise social awareness about the adverse consequences of drug addiction, particularly amongst the younger generation, which is one of the most vulnerable groups, especially in the schools and colleges. Apart from stringent legal measures, societies should strive to inculcate the highest moral values in our youth.

Under the able leadership of Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India and Mrs Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance, a revised Scheme for Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse (2008) was launched in India. The approach of this Scheme was to provide the whole range of services including awareness generation, identification,

counseling, treatment and rehabilitation of addicts through voluntary and other organizations with a thrust on preventive education programmes and Whole Person Recovery of the addicts. Presently about 41 Drug Awareness and Counseling Centres and 401 Treatment- Cum- Rehabilitation Centres are functioning with the support of the ministry in the country. De-addiction camps are organized regularly to reach out to uncovered areas. In addition, The National Consultative Committee on De-addiction and Rehabilitation (NCCDR) has been set up at national level, headed by Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, to advise Central and State Governments on issues connected with drug demand reduction, especially education/awareness building, de-addiction and rehabilitation.

However, we are conscious that national efforts alone cannot effectively address this problem. Combating the menace of illicit drugs requires member states to develop a cohesive, balanced and integrated approach to the issue. In this context, India reaffirms its commitment to working closely with other countries, both bilaterally and through regional and international collaboration, to achieving our common goal of a world free of illicit drugs. India is the world's largest producers of licit opium. We pursue a balanced drug control approach. We ensure that the demand and supply of licit opiates required for genuine medicinal and scientific purposes is maintained and there is no proliferation of manufacture beyond the traditional and established manufacturers of licit opiate. We also welcome INCB's contribution in monitoring the balance between demand and supply for opiate for legitimate purposes.

Terrorism continues to pose grave threat to all States and all societies. It undermines peace, democracy and freedom thus endangering the international community and the humankind as a whole. India has been a victim of terrorism for decades. Innocent lives are been lost to heinous terrorist attacks and our resolve against perpetrators of such attacks should be strong and resolute. India has taken several steps to strengthen international cooperation to combat terrorism. We are party to all the 13 sectoral conventions on terrorism that have been adopted under the auspices of the UN. Terrorism is a global threat and requires a coordinated and concerted global response to combat it. This year's Secretary General's report on review of the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy very aptly pointed out that the comprehensiveness of implementing the Strategy will not be complete without the conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT). It is upon us, Member States, to give the necessary political push and adopt the CCIT. Let us not lose further invaluable time in taking a concrete decision on this important issue. It is time that the international community shows its resolve and solidarity for a collective global action against international terrorism and to send a clear message that terrorism in any forms or manifestations for whatever cause, will not be tolerated.

The UN made significant progress in the fight against trafficking of persons this year by launching the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons in August this year. We are pleased that for the first time an agreement of the international community has been reached to address the scourge of trafficking in persons in holistic manner. This comprehensive Plan will ensure that trafficking in persons policies are integrated, balanced, coherent, result-oriented and people centric.

There is a need to create as well as reinforce bilateral, regional and international cooperation to develop strategies to combat the menace of the deep-rooted nexus between drug mafias, arms dealers, and money launderers for financing terrorism. This is a grave, dangerous and destructive nexus. We support the efforts of the UNODC in providing necessary assistance to countries that seek financial and technical assistance in their efforts at capacity-building and training and in putting in place the administrative and legal framework, institutional reforms that are required for fighting transnational organized crime. In this context, we would also like to voice our support for the call made by Jamaica, on behalf of the CARICOM countries, yesterday, to seriously reconsider UNODC's decision to close its regional office in Barbados, which served 29 countries. A UNODC office in the CARICOM region would be able to led valuable institutional and financial capacity building support in the CARICOM countries fight against transnational organised crime, in a concerted manner.

India has enacted strong anti-money laundering domestic legislation and bilateral agreements have been entered into to develop joint programs to prevent money laundering, counter terrorism and organized crime. I would like to inform that the Government of India have also decided to ratify the Convention and its three Protocols. At this 10th anniversary of the Convention, it is critical that we commit ourselves to translate our obligations into actions with an even greater degree of cooperation.

We are deeply concerned about new areas of transnational crimes like cyber-crime, economic fraud, education related fraud and identity-related crimes and their links with other criminal and terrorist activities. In our view, these developments demand that we agree to take a wider look at transnational organized crime encompassing these new and emerging threats while also dealing with crime prevention, criminal justice and treatment of offenders.

India remains committed to working bilaterally and through regional and international cooperation towards a world free of transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, money laundering, trafficking in persons, illegal arms transactions and above all, terrorism.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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