

Intervention by India at the UN General Assembly Interactive Thematic Debate on Drugs and Crime as a threat to Development on June 26, 2012

Mr. Chairman,

Earlier today, several panelists and speakers have drawn attention to the threat that drugs and crimes pose in undermining social and economic development as also the need to addressing the crime and drugs problem from a development and public health perspective.

In general, while national efforts focusing on development and good governance, no doubt, help address economic inequalities, social imbalances, poverty – factors which are often exploited by organized crime syndicates and drug traffickers – it must be stressed here that these efforts are not in themselves sufficient to address the problem.

It would also be difficult to put an end to these forms of crime as long as the demand for illicit goods and services continue. Therefore, it is essential that different sections of the society – media, educators, civil society representatives, NGOs etc. – are involved in building awareness about the threats posed by drugs and organized crime.

Mr. Chairman,

Separately, while there is need for concerted focus on development and demand-reduction strategies, it is equally important to tackle the supply side by eradicating drug production and disrupting the supply routes. The World Drug Report 2012 documents the continuing challenges that we face. It notes that while drug consumption has decreased in the developed world, it has increased in the developing world and there are new markets emerging.

Annual profits of US\$ 322 billion in drug trafficking starkly illustrate the severity and depth of the problem. This figure is more than ten-to-twenty times the GDP of several States affected by the drugs problem.

It goes without saying national efforts are not enough to combat this problem. International cooperation is necessary in several areas. While advanced equipment and critical resources are deployed by several member states to combat this crime, the gap in such technology available with several other states across the trafficking routes poses a major problem, as this gap is often exploited by illegal entities. There is urgent need to assist States through technical support, institution and capacity building.

It is also necessary to have greater coordination among law enforcement and criminal justice institutions at the international level among countries of origin, country of transit and destination countries.

Enhanced coordination and regional approach will also help in tracking and taking remedial action if trafficking routes were to shift from one country to another in response to tightened security.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, given the scale and complexity of the problem, we believe that national and international efforts must focus on both eradicating drugs production and disrupting supply routes as also addressing demand reduction through a combination of appropriate development, public health, law enforcement and security perspectives.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

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