

STATEMENT

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In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to address the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. First of all, I'd like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and other members of the Bureau for your election. I also wish to congratulate the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime, and the Kingdom of Thailand, as the host country, for the excellent organization of this important gathering.

Mr. President,
Since the previous Congress held in 2000, the international community has managed to reach a common understanding on the most challenging threats we face. And as a result, a consensus emerged on the need to expand cooperation among all countries to overcome the perceived dangers. The adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, aiming at the prevention and suppression of the most threatening forms of organized criminality, as well as the United Nations Convention against Corruption are indicatives of such consensus. However, despite the existence of such a collective will – which is of course the prerequisite for any coordinated work against the menace – the increase in organized criminality continues to stand as a real obstacle to the socio- economic improvement of many societies, and poses threat against law and order. The only way to overcome such a sophisticated disorder, as organized crime has proved to be, is through collective effort and global cooperation.

Mr. President,
Since the previous Congress, my country has taken considerable measures to reform the criminal justice system, strengthen the administration of justice, and prevent the commission of crime. The revision of the Code of Criminal Procedure, establishment of Dispute Settlement Councils, revival of the prosecutor offices, administration of the alternatives to imprisonment, and promotion of juvenile justice are but few to be mentioned.

In the second five-year Judicial Development Program, that constitutes long term strategy of the Judiciary, a progressive, effective, and methodological pattern is designed with the aim to promote public participation, improvement of methods, public satisfaction, and the promotion of the judicial expertise, speed, and the quality of dealing with the cases and monitoring the good trends of affairs. This is an important step in strengthening the judicial system in the prevention of crime and application of the criminal justice as well as in combating corruption, discrimination, and injustice.

We do believe that the rule of law and integrity of the judicial system in any society guarantees, and is a prerequisite for, the health and efficiency of the whole public system and governmental bodies as well as private sector.

Mr. President,

Illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, as one of the oldest manifestations of transnational organized crime has for decades been a source of concern for the international community. The adoption of multilateral documents, especially the 1988 Convention, against narcotic drugs, was a necessary tool to curb the problem. However, although many States, including my own, are members to this Convention and in spite of tremendous efforts accomplished by many countries and international organizations, the scourge keeps poisoning many parts of the world. My country, due to its geographical conditions, is severely affected by narcotic drugs. For years, drug related crimes has continued to be the highest in my country's crime trend; Millions of dollars have been spent each year to fight organized trafficking in narcotic drugs; and more than 4000 Iranian law enforcement forces have been killed in this continuing war.

The countries at the warfront of combating drug trafficking should not be left alone. Rather they shall be given technical and financial assistance to fight the increasingly highly sophisticated and equipped drug trafficking bands.

My Government is determined to pursue its war against drug trafficking and is ready to cooperate with all countries and international organizations to that end. No doubt, our success in this war will make all destination countries free of the highly epidemic virus of narcotic drugs.

Mr. President,

Trafficking in persons especially women and children is a most heinous transnational organized crime, appropriately called as “modern slavery”. Any strategy for fighting human trafficking should also target the breeding or feeding grounds. At the same time the public, especially the potential victims, shall be informed of the phenomenon and its consequences. States should be encouraged and assisted to adopt appropriate legislation and support victims. They should also take measures to facilitate multilateral cooperation, e.g. mutual legal assistance and law enforcement cooperation. Nevertheless, it should be noted that trafficking in persons follows the principle of demand and supply. The supply of human being for prostitution, forced labor or removal of organs could not be stopped unless demand for them is controlled. The issue of image of child abuse and child pornography should also be seriously dealt with in the same vein.

Mr. President,

The Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to prevent and fight any manifestation of human trafficking. A specific Act against trafficking in human beings was approved in mid 2004. The adoption of the new law is expected not only to strengthen the domestic legal regime against human trafficking but also to prepare the legal base for probable accession to the Protocol against Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children. Moreover extensive measures have been taken to support victims and assist the vulnerable groups.

Mr. President,

Another manifestation of transnational organized crime which is a matter of concern for us, is the rapidly increase in trafficking in cultural property. The theft of and trafficking in archaeological and cultural object has reached to an alarming level in recent

years. The involvement of transnational criminal groups in this highly flourishing business would have devastating effect on common cultural heritage of man kind. Therefore fighting this unlawful business should be set as a priority. My Delegation welcomes and fully supports the proposal made by G77 and China to examine the feasibility of an international convention in this regard.

Mr. President,

Corruption is another matter of global concern. The spread of corruption in public sector adversely affects the whole aspects of social, economic and political life. It undermines social fabrics and ethical values at large, disrupts development programs, and weakens citizens' trust to the government.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has taken a wide range of measures to prevent and combat diverse forms of corruption. Fighting corruption has been top on the political agenda in the last five years. A high-level committee consisting of the President, the Speaker of the Parliament and the head of the Judiciary was established in 2000 in order to coordinate the anti-corruption campaign. Another Anti Corruption Committee was established in Office of the President in the same year. This think-tank body has made considerable contributions to anti-corruption efforts by publicizing the issue and offering recommendations to related authorities on the best ways to cope with corruption. In December 2004 a conference was held in Tehran to commemorate the first anniversary of adoption of the UN Convention against Corruption and discuss its provisions.

There is a strict legal regime against corruption in Iranian legal system. Almost all manifestations of corruption, including bribery, embezzlement, diversion, fraud, illicit enrichment and trade in influence are criminalized. A draft law against money-laundering, adopted a year ago by the Parliament, is under consideration in the Expediency Council. With the amendments made in the code of criminal procedure in 1999, banking secrecy was lifted and therefore there is no legal obstacle in fighting money laundering.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is a signatory to the UN Convention against corruption. The legal procedure for its final ratification by the Parliament is well underway. We believe that the Convention provides a unique legal framework for multilateral cooperation against corruption, including through mutual legal assistance for confiscation and extradition of illegally acquired assets. Since asset recovery is a fundamental principle of the Convention, necessary measures should be taken to make it possible. The implementation of the convention also needs extensive legal and technical expertise and knowledge. The UNODC and member states should work on appropriate ways and means to provide developing countries with the necessary technical assistance.

Mr. President,

No society is immune from the threats arising from terrorism. Nor could any individual state afford to overcome the scourge. Poverty, despair, humiliation, political oppression, extremism, human rights abuses, regional conflicts and foreign occupation are some of the breeding grounds for terrorism. A comprehensive strategy should be developed to eradicate the feeding grounds that breed resentment, hatred, extremism and intolerance. Promotion of international cooperation for prevention and suppression of acts of terrorism should constitute an indispensable part of such strategy as well.

The United Nations is the legitimate body to lead the international campaign against terrorism. Fight against terrorism shall be done in compliance with the U.N charter and in accordance with international law, international humanitarian law and human rights. An internationally agreed definition of terrorism would contribute much to meet this end. In any such definition, a clear distinction ought to be made between the heinous acts of terror violence, committed for whatever purpose and the internationally recognized and legally legitimate struggles of peoples deprived of their fundamental right of self determination. Such struggle must be accomplished in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Terrorism is a social human disorder with global dimensions. No religion, culture, ethnicity, ideology or school of thought shall be labeled as being associated with or contributing to terrorism. It shall be noted that terrorism violates all values that religions including Islam stand for. Such treatment as well as double standard and selectivity would only put the highly valued consensus against terrorism at stake.

Mr. President,

We are all in the same boat. No doubt, no state can remain indifferent to the existing or potential dangers threatening our globe. International terrorism and transnational organized crime, especially illicit trafficking in narcotics, trafficking in human beings, are real threats against all states and societies. We have the shared responsibility to guarantee the safety and security of the globe through enhanced cooperation in both prevention and suppression of transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a responsible and capable member state is ready to cooperate with all countries and international bodies to that effect.

Thank you.