

STATEMENT

BY

**THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

BEFORE THE

**FIFTEENTH SESSION OF
COMMISSION ON CRIME PREVENTION
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

VIENNA
(24-28 APRIL 2006)

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

Let me first congratulate you and your colleagues at the Bureau on your election. My Delegation also wishes to extend its congratulations to the Secretariat of the UNODC for the excellent arrangement of this session.

My Delegation fully endorses the statement read by distinguished Ambassador of Bolivia on behalf of G77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I'm delighted to inform the plenary that the Iranian Parliament ratified the UN Convention against Corruption on 8 April 2006. The instrument of ratification would be deposited with the Secretary General soon.

Mr. Chairman,

It is a universally recognized fact that transnational organized crime poses a real threat against our societies. As an increasingly diversifying phenomenon, transnational organized criminality continues to adversely affect our daily life by burdening our national economies, undermining our security and safety, and weakening our confidence and trust toward our political structures. New developments in technology, the expansion of communication facilities, and rapid globalization of economies has aggravated this trend by providing criminal groups with unprecedented facilities to go far beyond specific territorial borders in pursuing their unlawful activities. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that each and every

State should join hands in tackling transnational organized crime, including through providing technical assistance and expertise to requesting States in order to create or upgrade national capacities to prevent and combat this multi-faceted scourge. Given that, my Delegation has the following comments to make:

1. Transnational organized crime is too complicated in nature and too diversified in form to be combated individually. In other words, international cooperation is an inevitable essential for controlling the menace. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime is an appropriate legal instrument to draw the lines and define the ways and means of such cooperation.

2. Fighting illicit production and trafficking in narcotic drugs, as the oldest form of transnational organized criminality, has, for decades, been, and still is, a top priority for the international community. It is unfortunate, however, that despite the existence of relatively sufficient (international) legal apparatus, the production of opium and trafficking in narcotic drugs has sharply increased within recent years. As a country at the forefront of fighting illicit narco-drug trafficking, the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its deep concern over this dangerous trend and urges all States to engage more actively in fighting this scourge by adopting more practical measures, including by providing technical and financial assistance to countries involved in this fight.

3. Fighting trafficking in persons, as a most heinous manifestation of transnational criminality, requires a coordinated holistic approach, taking into account all factors which may, in any way, contribute to or associated with it. States should be assisted to adopt appropriate legislations, including measures to support and rehabilitate victims, on the one hand, and to fight trafficking in human being and to facilitate multilateral cooperation, e.g. mutual legal assistance and law enforcement cooperation, on the other. It is imperative, however, to bear in mind that the supply of human being for prostitution, forced labour or removal of human organs could not effectively be suppressed unless demand for them is controlled. We should note here that removal of and trafficking in human organs is one of the most cruel and inhumane elements of trafficking in persons and need to be taken very seriously. Given that, an active campaign at global level shall be developed in order to target demand side of the problem. A more coordinated inter-agency cooperation among related specialized UN bodies including ILO, UNDP, UNICEF and UNODC is needed to make such an endeavour a success.

The Islamic Republic of Iran takes trafficking in persons very seriously and is committed to suppress it. Trafficking in human being to and/or from Iranian territory for purposes of sexual exploitation and/or forced labour and/or removal of organs is criminalized in accordance with a specific legislation approved by the Parliament in 2004. Furthermore, extensive measures have been taken by related bodies including Iranian Welfare Organization to support victims and assist the vulnerable groups.

4. The sharp increase in trafficking in cultural property is a source of concern for many nations including my own country. The theft of and trafficking in looted, stolen or smuggled archaeological and cultural property has reached to an alarming level in recent years. The involvement of transnational criminal groups in this unlawful business would have long term devastating effect on common cultural heritage of man kind. My country's cultural property has severely been targeted by organized criminal groups in recent years. Tens of thousands of archaeological objects, as old as 5000 years, have been looted and smuggled out of the country. We believe that fighting trafficking in cultural property should be set as one of the priorities of the international community. Although the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property are good legal bases for cooperation, especially in returning trafficked or stolen antiquities, more practical measures need to be taken. We believe that it is imperative to convene, as soon as possible, the open-ended expert group foreseen in paragraph 3 of the ECOSOC resolution 2004/34.

5. Corruption is another challenging issue for our societies and needs to be dealt with seriously. 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, derails development programs, and weakens citizens' trust to the government.

Extensive measures have been taken by the Iranian Government to prevent and combat diverse forms of corruption. In addition to State General Inspection Organization' which is the main national body concerning with corruption cases, a high-level committee, comprising the President, the Speaker of the Parliament and the Head of the Judiciary, has been established in order to develop a coordinated approach against corruption.

Given the recent ratification by the Parliament of the UN Convention against Corruption, the Islamic Republic of Iran would become a member of the Convention. As a result, the provisions of the Convention would have the force of law in accordance with Article 9 of Iranian Civil Code. Furthermore, the Convention provides a good model for developing necessary legislations and/or amending and/or updating existing anti-corruption legislations. It is our firm belief that the Convention constitutes a unique legal framework for multilateral cooperation against corruption, including through mutual legal assistance for recovery and return of illegally acquired assets, given the fact that Asset recovery has been explicitly stated as 'a fundamental principle of the Convention'. The implementation of the Convention also needs extensive legal and technical expertise and knowledge. We welcome the initiatives taken by UNODC and other member States to work on appropriate ways and means to provide developing countries and countries with economies in transition with the necessary technical assistance. It is imperative that all states, especially the destination states, strengthen the monitoring mechanisms on their financial and monetary institutions in order to prevent laundering of proceeds of crime and to facilitate legal/ administrative procedures for asset recovery.

6. International terrorism still remains high on the agenda both at national and international level. It is axiomatic that no country, developed or developing, is exempt from the threats arising from this scourge and that no individual state could afford to overcome it and its dire consequences without help of other states.

Fighting terrorism requires an internationally recognized legal framework supported by concerted effort and political will of all nations. To meet such a goal, campaign against terrorism should be organized under the auspices of the United Nations, and accomplished within the line of its charter and in accordance with international law. An internationally agreed definition of terrorism is essential to fulfil that end. However, in any such definition, a clear distinction ought to be made between the heinous acts of terror violence, committed for whatever purpose, on the one hand, and the internationally recognized and legally legitimate struggle of peoples deprived of their fundamental right of self determination, on the other.

Rule of law and respect for basic human rights and fundamental principles must be our guiding principle in fighting terrorism. It should be warned that terrorism must not be fought at the expense of humanitarian law either.

It's a truism that prevention is better than cure. Talking about the root causes of terrorism should not become a taboo. Nor should it be misunderstood as a justification for inhuman acts of terrorism. After all, we are discussing the issue with a crime prevention perspective; terrorism like any other criminality could and must be prevented. In doing so, the necessary first step is to identify and eradicate the underlying causes of terrorism, and the feeding grounds that breed resentment, hatred, intolerance and violence. It is important to note that adopting a militarist approach to terrorism or resort to force in retaliation against the perpetrators of terrorism, though justifiable at a mundane level of discourse, will never lead to its eradication. At the same time selectiveness and double-standard must be avoided. Terrorism is absolutely an evil phenomenon. There should be no "good" terrorists even if they are enemy to our enemy.

As a long-standing victim of terrorism, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always condemned all acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations in the strongest term. It is our firm belief that nothing can justify resort to acts of terrorism. Unfortunately MKO, the notorious group recognized to be among terrorist groups by many countries, is still pursuing its terrorist activities in and outside Iran. It is very unfortunate, however, that the group is allowed to continue to finance and propagate its terrorist activities in some countries. We are also concerned at the alarmingly increase in terrorist acts in the neighbouring Iraq.

Mr. President,

The Islamic Republic of Iran would spare no effort in fighting terrorism. We are ready to cooperate with all countries and with the United Nations in this regard.

Thank you.

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