

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H.E .Mr. HOSSEIN PANAHI AZAR**

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF LEGAL INTERNATIONAL  
AFFAIRS  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF  
THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

**BEFORE THE**

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

**ON AGENDA ITEM 3(a)**

**“Crime prevention and criminal justice responses to urban  
crime, including gang related activities”**

**VIENNA  
23-27 April 2007**

## **In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful**

At the outset, my Delegation would like to 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 Sudan on behalf of G77 and China.

The world is becoming increasingly urban. The urban population is expected to grow from 2.86 billion in 2000 to 4.68 billion in 2030, when some 60 percent of the world's population will live in cities. Most of this growth is occurring in developing countries, where it will result in enormous problems.

Urban areas have become engines for economic growth and centers of diversity and change. Cities are focal points for both internal and international migration, transport, communications and economic activities. The rapid changes make it difficult to plan and manage the expansion of cities and, escalating demand for services often exceeds the resources and the substantive capacity of municipal and even national governments.

The rapid growth of urban areas in all regions of the world, increasing disparities of income and living conditions and the high proportion of children and young people living in conditions of poverty in the urban areas, all present major challenges. Rates of crime and violence have also increased, often in association with firearms and drug trafficking. Increasing numbers of young people are now at risk of crime and victimization.

This phenomenon generates "feelings of insecurity" in the majority of people who are living in urban areas. This increase in crime has adversely affected the "quality of life" in the community

and it will be a serious cause of hindrance to the sustainable growth of a country.

**Mr.Chairman,**

Many countries have adopted national strategies on crime prevention that place much greater emphasis on what can be done to prevent crime occurring before the intervention of the criminal justice system and to complement the work of the criminal justice system. Strategies are needed not only to improve the quality of urban life and reducing crime, but also to enhance the feeling of safety and to restore the confidence of citizen in the ability of the government to protect them.

It is necessary to develop effective strategies and programmes for the prevention and control of the level of victimization, having due regards to the role of school, religion and the community and taking into account existing economic and social needs and conditions at the level of the whole society.

**Mr.Chairman,**

There has been increasing resort to tougher criminal justice responses, which criminalizes at risk populations and youth in particular. The use of the criminal justice system to respond to crime is costly and not cost-effective when compared with good strategic prevention programmes. This underlines the importance of investing in prevention policies and strategies. Governments at all levels face a major challenge to shift public opinion towards preventions, through well-planned strategies that balance short- and long- term responses to crime and insecurities, and towards alternatives to the use of incarceration.

Responding to the demands of the people and public opinion who seek safety and security, the government has to put an emphasis on repressive approaches such as strengthening law enforcement and punishment, which directly responds to the public's beliefs and are effective in the short term. It is clear that these countermeasures are necessary and we can expect some positive results from them; however, relying solely on such

countermeasures is insufficient to combat the crime associated with urbanization because offenders will be back in the community sooner or later and repressive approaches do not take into account prevention of crime and reintegration of offenders into the community.

There is consolidated knowledge to be shared on how those challenges have been overcome, much can be learned by exchanging of experiences, both between cities and between countries. We stress the need to consider measures to prevent expansion of urban crimes, including by improving international cooperation and capacity building. Planning for such development requires greater accountability, transparency and public participation in governance and crime control at the local as well as national level. There is a need for a closer cooperation between government and the community for building broad coalitions of all those concerned with crime related problems and empowering communities and civil society. The multiple factors involved in urban criminality and in manifestation of violence also call for multidimensional preventive policies and an integrated approach.

**Thank you**

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