

Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Plenary meeting on Cybercrime and Terrorism

14 April 2015, Doha, Qatar

Statements by Member States and other high-level participants

ORSAT MILJENIĆ, Minister for Justice of Croatia, associating himself with the European Union, stressed that fair and effective criminal justice systems should be based on respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In that regard, Croatia continued to actively seek effective ways to promote tolerance, equality and to combat all forms of discrimination. The country had shown readiness to embrace international standards and to introduce innovative legal and institutional mechanisms to those ends. Reiterating the importance of integrating children and youth issues into the overall rule of law, he said Croatia also supported measures to integrate a gender perspective into legal systems in order to fully protect women and girls from all acts of violence, in accordance with obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Croatia also welcomed the decision by an increasing number of Member States to apply a moratorium on the death penalty or to limit its application. His country had developed a systematic approach to bear down on corruption, especially in the areas of criminal law, conflict resolution and public procurement, and had adopted a new anti-corruption strategy. Croatia strongly supported initiatives that increased international cooperation in criminal matters, and condemned most strongly all acts of terrorism.

RUI JORGE CARNEIRO MANGUEIRA, Minister for Justice and Human Rights of Angola, said that his country was a democratic State founded on popular suffrage, the primacy of the constitution and the law, the separation of powers, the interdependence of functions, national unity, pluralism of expression and political organization, as well as a representative and participatory democracy. The Government had taken consistent steps in implementing the principles of the Salvador Declaration, namely concerning legislation, mechanisms for prevention, application of the law, penalty and promotion of international cooperation. He went on to describe a number of specific laws, including on combating money-laundering, terrorism financing, crimes committed by public office holders, search orders and seizures, and combating corruption. Policies for the rehabilitation for prison inmates were also being developed. Following the implementation of the Salvador Declaration, the Government had created the Inter-ministerial Committee against Trafficking in Human Beings, which had as its main task the formulation of a comprehensive, integrated programme to prevent and suppress the trafficking of persons.

SAMUEL SANTOS LÓPEZ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, said his country's experience and best practices spanned a number of areas. The current model, which included open communication between police forces and communities, and the creation of a crime prevention programme, was being shared with other States. However, challenges such as drug trafficking and organized crime plagued the country and region. Richer States should play a responsible role with financial assistance to address those issues. For its part, Nicaragua had taken a number of steps to combat terrorism financing and money-laundering, and its national crime prevention and criminal justice system had incorporated

United Nations standards on human rights and the treatment of prisoners. Yet, new and emerging crimes were a concern, including cybercrime, environmental violations and the trafficking of cultural property. Condemning the United States Government's executive order against Venezuela, he applauded that country's new relationship with Cuba and hoped that a similar rapprochement would occur with Venezuela.

GALO CHRIBOGA ZAMBRANO, General Prosecutor of Ecuador, aligning with the "Group of 77" developing countries and China, said his country's Constitution was designed to strengthen the rule of law and create a society that respected human dignity. It had facilitated strengthening of the judicial and penal system and the fight against impunity. The Public Defender's Office, set up in 2008, gave legal aid to citizens without the financial resources to pay for counsel. The legal system provided for justice and protection of minors and restorative justice. It addressed such concerns as victims of torture, violence against women, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, terrorism and corruption. A new Penal Code that extended protections for women and minors had taken effect in 2014. A policy to fight cybercrime was being developed. Steps had been taken to fight the illegal trafficking of migrants, drugs and human organs. Recommendations set forth by the Open-Ended Interim Working Group on the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children had been incorporated into national action plans towards that end. In 2013, Ecuador had ratified the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition.

ASHRAF RIFI, Minister for Justice of Lebanon, aligning with the Group of 77 and China, said the Congress was pivotal, epitomizing consolidated international crime-fighting efforts at a time when criminals had become more sophisticated and adept. Addressing economic and social challenges and shaping plans for development would fall short of its goals in the absence of the rule of law and stability. Crime prevention and reducing crime rates were essential. Transnational organized crime, terrorism, kidnapping for ransom and other crimes were serious concerns and consolidated efforts were needed. It was also necessary to find an efficient framework to tackle trafficking in cultural property. Similarly, cybercrime required specific targeted programmes. For its part, Lebanon had made headway in amending its Penal Code to consider hacking a crime. Cooperation at all levels was required to truly combat crime. The oppression and injustice suffered by communities must be addressed, he said, condemning terrorist attacks. He hoped the Congress would include fruitful discussions about issues important to all.

TEA TSULUKIANI, Minister for Justice of Georgia, said the Declaration set a global agenda for upholding the rule of law and strengthening commitments in accountable, fair and humane criminal justice systems. As Georgia entered its fourth wave of reforms, juvenile justice, bolstering confidence in the judiciary and overhauling the legal aid initiative were among targeted areas. Through a set of cross-cutting reforms in areas such as civil service, public procurement and whistle-blower protection, Georgia had become one of the least corrupt countries in the world. Owing to sweeping reforms, Georgia's prison population had dropped to below the European average. Innovative approaches were also being used, she said, pointing to a crime prevention centre that was targeting high-risk groups, including juveniles. Under one initiative, 65 youth prisoners used a special programme to have their body tattoos removed, thus overcoming the social stigma that prevented them from becoming full-fledged members of society. Georgia's model of probation services had

become a best practice that was now widely being shared and explored by many Eastern European countries.

MAMADOU GNÉNÉMA COULIBALY, Minister for Justice, Human Rights and Public Liberties of Côte d'Ivoire, said his country had developed a legal anti-terrorism project that restricted and prevented the proliferation of terrorist groups in West Africa, a region which had been confronted by terrorism for several years. The country had also adopted a law to combat human trafficking and related practices, which constituted the third largest form of trafficking in the world after the trade in drugs and arms. Justice was an integral part of the country's economic and social development initiatives. Efforts were being undertaken to ensure a judicial system that was equitable and well respected, and which satisfied all citizens. Cooperation with the United Nations had allowed Côte d'Ivoire to put in place a programme to combat transnational crime, in line with the plan of action of the Initiative on the Fight against the Illicit Trafficking of Drugs and Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa. Turning to the trafficking of cultural objects and artefacts, as well as flora and fauna, he said that the reinforcement of international cooperation was urgent, and expressed his hope that a United Nations instrument would be created to better coordinate international engagement in the fight against those phenomena.

HENRY OKELLO ORYEM, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uganda, said the rule of law, democratic governance and fundamental human rights were the cornerstones of his country's Constitution and foreign relations policy. Uganda was a signatory of and scrupulously abided by key international legal instruments on transnational organized crime, corruption, drug control and other areas. Concerted efforts were needed to stamp out the demand and supply chain of illegal drugs, and cut the trade's links to money-laundering and narco-terrorism. The General Assembly's special session on drugs in April 2016 should produce solutions that fully encompassed the social, cultural and security interests of all concerned, taking into account the experiences from the debate over the development agenda. Developing countries like Uganda needed international support - including information sharing to boost counter-terrorism efforts and combat the illegal trafficking in arms, drugs, women and girls, human organs, and wild flora and fauna. He called upon developed partners to increase technical aid in the interest of common security and well-being.

MOHAMMED BUSHARA DOUSA, Minister for Justice of Sudan, said the holding of the Congress was timely and important as the evolving nature of crime could only be dealt with through regional and international cooperation. Instruments of criminal justice must be linked to socioeconomic development, as a healthy society could only be established when the rule of law was upheld. Sudan, which had one of the oldest legal systems in the world, underpinned by tolerant Sharia law, was keen on upholding the rule of law and ending impunity. Indeed, there was no crime in Sudan which was not reported and prosecuted. Sudan was modernizing its legal system by adapting national legislation in line with the country's international commitments. Sudan believed in legal pluralism, and warned against attempts to impose a single legal culture reflecting one civilian that controlled others through imperialism and the imposition of force. Sharia law and human rights were complementary. He called for the implementation of all legal conventions that reflected the need for international cooperation, but said such conventions should take into account State sovereignty and the diversity of legal systems. Sudan had hosted the African Union Regional Conference for Combating Human Trafficking and Smuggling in the Horn of Africa in 2014.

Turning to the "revolting phenomenon" of terrorism, which was rejected by all religions, he called on the international community to examine the root causes of terrorism and said that Sudan was combating the phenomenon at the national level through several laws and policies.

SAYED YOUSUF HALIM, Acting Minister for Justice of Afghanistan, said there was a clear link between various forms of crime and socio-economic development. As such, he welcomed the inclusion of the rule of law and criminal justice in the sustainable development agenda. Despite collective global efforts, crime still threatened societies. Cooperation and a comprehensive approach were needed to tackle those scourges, as well as new threats such as cybercrime. His country continued to suffer from challenges posed by terrorism, narcotics and organized crime and had taken steps to address them, including initiating justice sector reforms, acceding to relevant international instruments and adopting laws targeting money-laundering, terrorism and corruption. Ongoing efforts were combating trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. More effective efforts were required at all levels to counter those crimes and protect the victims' human rights. Major concerns included trafficking in cultural property as many historical items had been stolen, trafficked or destroyed during times of conflict. In that regard, a national law had been revised and continued international cooperation under relevant instruments by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) were required. Afghanistan had, for its part, been actively involved in judicial cooperation at bilateral, regional and international levels. However, inadequate capacity to implement international instruments was a major challenge for many countries, including Afghanistan.

GHANIM BIN FADHEL AL-BUAINAIN, Minister for Shura Council and House of Representatives Affairs of Bahrain, said peace was based on combating crime and establishing justice, and was closely linked to social and economic development. International conventions in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice had helped many countries draft laws in those areas. Underscoring the legislative foundations of his country - which sought to comply with all international conventions on the protection of human rights - he said that Bahrain had also adopted laws ensuring the right to a fair trial, to express complaints and to seek legal assistance. The criminal justice system was integrated into all sectors, including those dealing with children, women and labour, and bodies had been set up to serve those different groups. Bahrain was also working to further develop its organs and capacities by gaining new experiences and keep up with new developments in crime prevention. In combating crime and establishing criminal justice, States were the main implementing parties; however, civil society was also crucial as it acted as a link between Government and society. From that standpoint, Bahrain hoped that civil society would play a key role in the Congress.

MOHAMED SALEH BEN AISSA, Minister for Justice of Tunisia, associated himself with the African Group and the Group of 77 and China, especially with regard to the latter Group's position on "burden sharing" in combating terrorism. That phenomenon had taken a dangerous turn lately, including a vicious attack on the Bardo Museum only weeks earlier. Tunisia was among the countries most threatened by terrorism and crime; as such, it coordinated closely with neighbouring countries and with regional and international organizations. He noted several recent achievements in combatting terrorism, among them the elimination of several leaders of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. He described a new

draft law on combating terrorism and money-laundering, which UNODC had helped formulate. The Government had several initiatives to combat corruption. He called on UNODC to complete its analytical summary for Tunisia so that the country could review it in Vienna in June. The recovery of stolen assets transferred abroad was one of Tunisia's top priorities. Despite great efforts to cooperate with neighbouring countries to identify the location of such assets, many requests submitted by Tunisia to other countries had gone unanswered. He thanked Lebanon, one of the first countries to return assets belonging to the ousted Tunisian President. On new forms of transnational crime, he said that "we must combine our efforts under the leadership of the United Nations" to combat those phenomena.

TAYEB LOUH, Minister for Justice of Algeria, said that while the rule of law was about exercising power nationally and internationally, it was also about providing adequate living conditions and education, which would help to establish a rule-abiding culture and transform individuals into actors in pursuit of the goals of crime-prevention policies. Terrorism was the most dangerous crime threatening life, security, stability and development of people worldwide, and there was an increasing link between terrorism and other transnational crimes. Algeria had faced that phenomenon and had worked to fight it without any assistance. Terrorism and organized crimes such as drug trafficking were coming together and feeding off one another; such links should be taken into consideration in national and international policies. In Algeria, national legislation had been adapted in line with the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Convention against Corruption, and training systems had been modernized. Citing cybercrime as a dangerous emerging threat, he said that it would require the development of mechanisms to ensure a rapid and effective response. Algeria welcomed the General Assembly's adoption of the Guiding International Principles on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Concerning the Trafficking in Cultural Properties and Related Offences, and called on States Parties to strengthen cooperation in that field.

PELONOMI VENSON-MOITOI, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Botswana, said that to achieve the post-2015 development agenda, a high premium must be placed on the education of young people and the promotion of a culture of peace. She praised the UNODC report for clearly identifying gaps and challenges for Member States and the need for concerted international action to fight crime. In an effort to comply with international legal instruments, Botswana had enacted laws to counter human trafficking, chemical weapons, cyber- and computer-related crimes and terrorism. It also had become host to the Commonwealth Africa Anti-Corruption Centre, but it needed the support of regional and international partners, and was committed to efforts by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), African Union and UNODC. Botswana had joined forces and established frameworks with neighbouring countries to fight the rise of poaching of wildlife, especially elephants and rhinos. The Congress must commit to an outcome that affirmed goal 16 of the sustainable development goals, which focuses on peaceful and inclusive societies and universal access to justice.

THELMA ALDANA, Attorney General of Guatemala, said her Government had created robust programmes to prevent violence and protect human rights. The Peace, Security and Justice Pact aimed to confront such challenges as trafficking in persons, migrants, organs, intellectual property and arms, as well as cybercrime, narco-trafficking, domestic violence, femicide and violence against children. Modern methods had replaced investigation based

purely on testimony, thus strengthening the National Institute for Forensic Science's crime-investigation procedures. The increase in drug busts in the last three years illustrated the seriousness of Guatemala's anti-drug efforts and sent a serious message to traffickers using Guatemala as a transit point. Guatemala's cooperation with authorities in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras had produced positive results in that regard. The Public Prosecutor had restructured and bolstered staff in its offices dealing with administrative offences and corruption. A national policy to prevent violence and protect public security had been developed; it involved Government offices, the private sector and civil society.

YAACOUB ABDULMOHSEN AL-SANAA, Minister for Justice and Awqaf and Islamic Affairs of Kuwait, said the threat seen in the rising prevalence of organized crime must be contained, as it jeopardized the security of all countries. Kuwait was dedicated to democracy, which was in line with Sharia law, and believed that cooperation would enable the strengthening of international security to create an environment that was conducive to economic and human development. Pending threats and challenges had led the international community to adopt a number of conventions, including on combating organized crime, narcotic drugs and corruption, he said, pointing to a rise in close regional and bilateral cooperation based on the common goal of upholding crime-prevention principles. For its part, Kuwait had taken many measures to implement relevant international instruments in order to tackle a range of crimes, including human trafficking, migrant smuggling and corruption. Kuwait's Ministry of Justice had shared experiences and lessons learned in information exchanges with other States. Turning to cybercrime, he said to combat the illegal use of technology and the Internet, Kuwait had, with a strong belief that such crime was linked to organized crime, signed regional agreements and adopted laws, including one specifically to combat Internet crime.

SHRI D. V. SADANANDA GOWDA, Minister for Law and Justice of India, said his country of 1.2 billion people, the world's largest democracy, firmly believed in the principles of the rule of law, which was the bedrock for survival of democratic processes and institutions. The Indian criminal justice system had gained strength and matured over time. An independent judiciary worked as a watchdog over the executive branch and the country had ratified the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its three protocols, as well as the Convention against Corruption. Such actions demonstrated India's resolve to fight transnational organized crime and its constructive and active contribution to global efforts towards that end. However, more action was required by the world community. Greater cooperation was needed to tackle heinous crimes such as human, drug and arms trafficking and money-laundering. Operational and cutting-edge partnerships were crucial for the success of such conventions and protocols. Terrorism had emerged as the most serious scourge of our time. "The whole world has been the victim of an undeclared war by epicentres with the aid of well-knit and resourceful terrorist organizations," he said. Terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, must be condemned in the strongest terms, and the international community must have a zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism and those who aided and abetted terrorist acts or provided safe havens to their perpetrators.

IBRAHIM AL JAAFARI, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, said terrorism had not started in the Middle East, but had appeared throughout history and, if left unaddressed, the scourge would only spread. Modern terrorism targeted humans, the young and old, houses of worship, schools and hospitals, making it history's ugliest form of that threat, as could be seen by Da'esh. The Internet could have fulfilled great needs, but Da'esh had used that

medium to promote the most heinous forms of crime. Even though the East was the cradle of all religions that preached love and peace, Da'esh had attacked those principles. To counter that threat, Iraq was fighting for itself and for all people, as not a single country was immune to terrorism. Every continent had Da'esh fighters, and all countries should shoulder their responsibilities and stand by Iraq in its fight against terrorism. Iraq had acceded to all relevant conventions on crime and criminal justice, and had been among the first countries to adopt laws to combat terrorism. But going forward, he said, "we need to have a comprehensive security structure to combat the terrorist structure". Their funds must be "dried up" and used to help victims and those living in poverty, he said, calling upon judicial authorities to examine that phenomenon and to punish and to stand by all countries confronting terrorism. His country was now a model of democracy and a land of diversity. He hoped the Congress would make great progress, sending a message to Da'esh that the international community were united to fight against terrorism.

EL MOSTAFA RAMID, Minister for Justice of Morocco, said the enormous evolution of crime presented serious threats to societies and nations, and grave challenges to justice systems. Prevention and deterrence was needed, with efforts to target the root of crime and provide equal justice to all citizens. Morocco was committed to international efforts to achieve agreed upon crime prevention and criminal justice goals. In that vein, the Constitution had made judicial powers independent and impartial, including recommendations stemming from a national dialogue on reforms. Taking a new approach had allowed Morocco to develop policies, including protecting vulnerable groups in society. Several steps had been taken to combat terrorism, including implementing strategies to address growing threats. With criminal, separatist and terrorist factors plaguing parts of the Sahara-Sahel region, aid was needed to fight those scourges. Human trafficking was also a concern. Morocco had enacted legislation on issues that included the smuggling of migrants. On drug control, his country had developed a comprehensive, long-term multidimensional strategy and the legal system had been developed in that regard. Other efforts included strengthening human development, including through education, and fighting corruption.

JOSÉ EDUARDO AYÚ PRADO (Panama) said his country's Supreme Court judges enforced a range of laws, including terrorist financing, money-laundering, smuggling persons and arms trafficking, in order to create safe communities. On drug control, Panama seized more drugs than all other countries of the region combined. The new criminal justice system reflected substantial changes, including restorative justice for victims, and it had taken steps to combat corruption by advocating for transparency and requesting audit hearings for various Government departments. Through another initiative, since January 2014, the Court had been meeting with civil society groups and the media in an effort to maintain closer contact with the administration of justice and the system's users. The Court was working to prevent crime and see that justice was served, he said, adding that efforts must be pooled to ensure that the rule of law dealt with all the modalities of organized crime in order to produce better results.

GARVIN EDWARD TIMOTHY NICOLAS, Attorney General of Trinidad and Tobago, said his country's fight against domestic, regional and transnational crime was foremost on its legislative agenda. The country's location made it an attractive transshipment point for drug traffickers and other illegal ancillary activities, such as money laundering, illegal trafficking in firearms and ammunition, and offenses related to corruption and human trafficking. As such, it was also in an ideal position to offer help to combat transnational crime. Describing a

number of national laws aimed at achieving those ends, he said that, since the formation of Trinidad and Tobago's Counter Trafficking Unit in early 2013, 13 victims had been rescued and 11 people charged with human trafficking. A national task force against trafficking in persons had been created to establish policies and develop a national plan of action against human trafficking. Safe houses and shelters for victims were also being designed. Trinidad and Tobago had taken the initiative to co-sponsor the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty, and the first Preparatory Meeting towards the first Conference of States Parties to the Treaty had been held in Trinidad and Tobago in February 2015. His country had created and implemented several social programmes aimed at youth development and training with a view to steer young adults away from the path of crime.

BAMDEV GAUTAM, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs of Nepal, said low-income and least developed countries were disproportionately affected by national and transnational crime. Policies, strategies and methods of combating existing and newly emerging forms of crime were of major importance. Today, those were further complicated by the use of modern technology and the emergence of a "formless enemy". An enhanced understanding of the new forms and dimensions of transnational organized crime was needed at the national, regional and international levels. Nepal was committed to the principles of a fair, impartial and accountable justice system, and had worked to put in place the policies, plans, programmes and institutions needed to effectively prevent crime and provide criminal justice. In addition, it had enacted various laws, including on mutual legal assistance, extradition and the elimination of organized crime and money-laundering. Bills had been submitted on a Penal Code, a Criminal Procedures Code and a Sentencing Act, among others. Efforts were under way to address gaps concerning all forms of criminal activities, thereby addressing the needs of criminal justice in a holistic manner. Education on human rights and criminal justice had been part of training for security agencies and other related officials. The country had established a truth and reconciliation commission, as well as a commission on investigation of disappeared persons.

DAVIES MWILA, Minister for Home Affairs of Zambia, said his country had developed a national strategic plan 2013-2016 on crime prevention. It was in the process of amending its anti-terrorism act of 2007 to provide for the establishment of a counter-terrorism centre, which would investigate acts of terrorism and ensure that perpetrators were prosecuted and brought to justice. The country had also set up a financial intelligence centre through an act of parliament to monitor financial transactions in order to prevent possible funding of terrorist activities. With regards to criminal offenders, he said that "a prisoner does not lose his or her inherent dignity and value as a human being". Zambia had therefore built female prisons and reformatories, as well as approved schools for juvenile offenders. Female offenders were given the full range of reproductive health services. On human trafficking, Zambia had enacted an anti-human trafficking act and put in place a national action plan on combating human trafficking and smuggling 2012-2015, and it had embarked on establishing interview centres for victims of trafficking. In addition, he described laws and policies on drug trafficking, as well as anti-corruption measures.

UMAR NASEER, Minister for Home Affairs of the Maldives, said his small island nation was being challenged by a wave of crime fuelled by drug abuse. The Government was taking a two-sided approach in the fight against crime and for criminal justice. While catching criminals and prosecuting them took place, there was now a wider emphasis on stopping crime before it occurred. In that regard, the country was engaging leaders such as teachers,

shop owners, religious scholars, youth organizations and parents. Remoteness and disconnection from urban centres, which resulted in strong family ties and a hierarchy of community leaders, had helped the Maldives maintain a "cheap and quick" criminal justice system that prevented crime and kept island communities safe for hundreds of years. Rebranding and reintroducing that system would add strength to efforts to change the culture of violence that pervaded society today. Governments must unite and act against terrorism and its recruitment on the Internet. They must make it a criminal offense for any person to leave the country with the intent to participate and fight alongside terrorist organizations. On human trafficking, child exploitation and human rights abuses, the Maldives was working with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to introduce a pilot project called the Safe Island Model on two selected islands. That project included camps, programmes, awareness sessions and workshops focusing on the individual, family and community.

AMINU BASHIR WALI, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, said his Government was committed to a fair, effective, transparent criminal justice system. The system was under constant review to address trends and emerging challenges and to improve the capacity of criminal justice administrators to prevent, prosecute and punish offenders. The National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons had made commendable progress in carrying out its mandate. Nigeria strongly condemned terrorism at home and abroad, and was determined to work with the international community to fight it. The terrorism prohibition act of 2011 had established the requisite legal framework for the war on terrorism and terrorism financing. Before Parliament was the Terrorism Prevention Bill of 2012, which addressed gaps in the current anti-terrorism regime. A West-African coalition comprising Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon, Chad and Niger had deployed troops to fight the growing regional threat of Boko Haram. All territories occupied by insurgents or terrorists had been reclaimed. The national counter-terrorism strategy 2014 and a new national security strategy had been formulated to address emerging related crimes. He cited recent successes in recovering stolen assets both within the country and abroad, and noted that anti-corruption agencies had successfully prosecuted corruption cases.

NENEH MACDOUALL-GAYE, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gambia, reiterated her country's commitment to creating a vibrant criminal justice system through its courts, in line with the 1997 Constitution. Human trafficking was high on Gambia's agenda. The country was a party to the Palermo Protocol supplementing the efforts of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and it had enacted the Trafficking in Persons Act of 2007, which provided for the prevention, prosecution and punishment of offenders, as well as the protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims back into society. Transnational crime called for collaborative efforts among countries in the area of information sharing, investigation and prosecution. In that context, Gambia, through the National Agency against Trafficking in Persons, had signed memoranda of understanding with several countries in the region. Negotiations were ongoing with other countries beyond the African region for the signing of bilateral agreements in the fields of cooperation and information-sharing to combat transnational organized crime. In addition, international drug crime, terrorism and other ills of society required strong partnerships, collaboration and cooperation.

FATMA ABDULHABIB FERREJI, Minister of State of the United Republic of Tanzania said that the root causes of most crimes were poverty, geo-political location and cultural and

socioeconomic dynamics. Her country, as an outlet for six landlocked countries and as a bridge connecting Eastern, Central and Southern Africa, was experiencing an increase of criminal acts relating to human trafficking and illegal migration, piracy, money-laundering and corruption, as well as illicit drug trafficking and the transshipment of wildlife poaching. Due to those trends, the United Republic of Tanzania had adopted or ratified a number of international instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes. Describing domestic legislation in areas such as piracy, terrorism, money-laundering and drugs, she said the country was also a signatory to several joint efforts to prevent and combat crimes at the regional level. Instead of increasing the number of prisons as a measure to reduce prison congestion, the United Republic of Tanzania had devised a system that encouraged courts to give non-custodial sentences and community service, as well as extending parole to entitled prisoners. Apart from such successes, however, the country was facing challenges, including limited financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, and coping with the technological advancements used by criminal networks.

ABDULLAHI AHMED JAMA, Minister for Justice of Somalia, said his country was slowly starting to recover from a disastrous, very painful near quarter century of civil war. Criminality was still prevalent in many Somali areas, police services were not yet professional and the criminal justice system was still undergoing a national constitutional dialogue and review. The country was therefore at a critical juncture of rebuilding and reform, while at the same time fighting many national and transnational crimes, including terrorism, piracy and human trafficking. The single most difficult criminal challenge facing Somalia today was terrorism. The Government was committed to winning the war against Al-Shabaab and returning full control of all Somali territories to the legitimate State and its people. Piracy off the Somali coast in the past had heavily impacted the global economy and local communities; today, due to the Government's determination and international efforts and cooperation, that piracy had radically diminished. "However, we cannot be complacent," he said in that regard. On offering hope and alternatives to the most vulnerable, who were sometimes lured into criminality, he strongly supported the Qatari Prime Minister's generous initiative to fund youth education and professional development, which would make an enormous difference in the lives of a generation of displaced children. In that vein, he said, combating all crimes required the creation of economic opportunity and hope at home. It also required confronting the violent ideology that indoctrinated young people to commit heinous criminal acts.

VALENTIN RYBUKORR, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belarus, said the world was fast approaching a "rare critical juncture" that would determine the course of the future, which was the upcoming summit on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. That agenda should adequately reflect the issues of crime prevention and criminal justice. A large amount of financing would be needed to implement that agenda, he said, while organized crime continued to steal resources away from States. Crime must therefore be addressed in a holistic way, with a twin-track approach: crime prevention and criminal justice. Conventional crimes must continue to be addressed, but so too should emerging crimes such as cybercrime and the trafficking in persons and human organs. International cooperation would be needed to implement the Declaration adopted on 12 April.

ROBERTO CAMPA CIFRIAN, Under-Secretary of Prevention and Citizen Participation in the Ministry of the Interior of Mexico, said his country was transitioning to an accusatory and oral

criminal justice system, which represented a paradigm shift away from incarceration and restorative justice schemes. Through the National Programme for Social Prevention of Violence and Crime, the Government had worked to reduce the risk factors that led to violence and crime. Mexico sought to address their structural causes, focusing on 3,000 priority localities through 51 federal programmes and 99 specific programmes. In addition, the country had invested resources into reclaiming public spaces, strengthening community cohesion and providing children, youth and women with a sense of community ownership. Communication committees focusing on crime prevention had been created in each federal entity. The Government had also promoted various initiatives such as the creation of a proximity police and others aimed at providing comprehensive care for women and young victims of violence and crime, the design of alternative projects and the economic reactivation of productive projects for young people and the imprisoned population. Mexico had published a law to prevent, punish and eradicate human trafficking, and adopted a framework providing the necessary protection for victims, those affected by the crimes and witnesses to them.

AUREA ROLDAN MARTIN, Undersecretary, Ministry of Justice of Spain, aligning herself with the European Union, said that, in recent years, Spain had reformed its criminal justice system and those reforms would help to improve life for the country's citizens. In crime prevention and criminal justice, it was critical to strike a balance between State resolve and the rights of those affected by crime. The updating of the criminal justice response to new and emerging types of crime was a priority matter. Spain had adopted a new correctional philosophy in which criminal sentences were constantly under review. The country was also criminalizing new offenses, such as online grooming and the training of foreign fighters, and appropriate responses were being established. She called for a specialized international mechanism to combat the "barbarism" and "mindlessness" of global extremism and other transnational crimes. Spain was also working to foster tolerance and respect for diversity through its work with the Alliance of Civilizations and similar initiatives. The country welcomed initiatives geared towards creating international strategies to combat emerging crimes such as cybercrime. Special attention must be paid to victims, especially those who were most vulnerable, such as victims of gender-related crimes and terrorism, children and those with disabilities. Spain was also working to confiscate assets of illicit origin and was developing an office of asset recovery and management.

KIM JOO-HYUN, Vice Minister for Justice of the Republic of Korea, pointed to his Government's initiative to promote the rule of law and root out corruption and structural irregularities. The Government had strengthened its legal system and the department responsible for recovering illegally obtained assets. It had designated sex crimes, domestic violence, school violence and crimes related to food safety as the "four evils of society", and focused efforts on stamping them out. The Ministry for Justice's crime prevention through environmental design initiative worked to eliminate environmental factors that could contribute to crime. As of late 2014, about 1.3 million people had visited the "law education theme park", which gave citizens of all ages the chance to learn about the law through various activities. The Government had signed extradition treaties with 32 countries and mutual legal assistance treaties with 29 countries, as well as built a platform to combat transnational organized crime. The Republic of Korea was working closely with other Asian countries combat such crimes through the Recovery Interagency Network - Asia Pacific.

JOHN JEFFERY, Deputy Minister for Justice and Constitutional Development of South Africa, associating himself with the African Group and the Group of 77 and China, said that, with its pre-democracy history of oppression and human rights violations under apartheid, it was of particular importance for South Africa to continue to play an active role in the protection and promotion of human rights. Fighting crime and corruption and promoting the rule of law was central to that aim. While challenges remained, efforts to build better and safer communities in South Africa were gaining momentum. Since the adoption of the Salvador Declaration, the country had made strides in reducing the level of crime, especially organized crime. That could be attributed to improved law enforcement efforts, socioeconomic intervention, reduced levels of poverty and improved quality of life in general. He went on to describe his country's national and international efforts in the areas of transnational organized crime, illegal mining, the illicit trafficking in precious and non-precious metals and trafficking in persons. Cybercrime remained a global threat, and the initiative to negotiate a United Nations convention against cybercrime should be supported and fast tracked. Further, the illicit trafficking in endangered species, in particular rhino poaching, remained a challenge in South Africa and other countries. "There is no doubt that we need to increase international cooperation and coordination efforts in countering this scourge," he said.

MOHAMED ABDGHANIIWAIWI, Attorney General of the State of Palestine, said crime had flourished to a point of affecting all countries and its danger had stemmed from new forms of crime, including those affecting the environment and the trafficking of cultural property. He urged Member States to set up an effective mechanism financed from the regular budget to review the United Nations Convention on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and its implementation. For its part, the State of Palestine had acceded to a number of international conventions and treaties, and had adopted measures to achieve relevant goals, including fighting corruption and organized crime. The promotion of the rule of law was essential to growth and sustainable development, necessary for eradicating poverty and hunger, and bolstering human rights, he said, noting that the Palestinian Government supported the link between the rule of law and development, which should be part of the post-2015 agenda. However, prosecuting transnational crime and fighting it in the State of Palestine was more difficult than other parts of the world due to Israel's occupation, which included the imposition of colonial laws. Still, the rule of law helped establish confidence between a State and its citizens, he said, noting that the State of Palestine had aligned its laws with the guiding principles for criminal justice.

TIINA ASTOLA (Finland) said the rule of law had only recently been considered part of the development landscape. That notion had already had a large impact on Finland, which had turned from a poor, war-torn and rural society into an egalitarian, secure and prosperous welfare State. United Nations standards and norms had a significant role to play in the global effort to prevent crime and ensure criminal justice by providing practical guidance to States in their conduct. The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners were an important complement to national legislation and international conventions. Rules should be updated to reflect advances in correctional science and good practices. For its part, Finland had implemented an effective criminal justice policy to address prison overcrowding. Between the 1960s and 1970s, the prison population had been halved by applying community sanctions and fines. Community sanctions had since been widely used, as their

effects were less harmful than those of imprisonment and they supported the sentenced person's individual growth and development.

BETO VASCONCELOS (Brazil) said efficient strategies aimed at countering crime should include preventive policies as central elements, especially those promoting social and economic development. Fighting organized crime was among Brazil's priorities and it was committed to implementing international conventions in that regard. In other areas, a national system was aimed at reining in the manufacture and trafficking of illicit arms. Strides had also been made in preventing and combatting corruption, but more remained to be done. International cooperation and mutual legal assistance were essential to fighting such crimes. Turning to the death penalty, he said the Declaration should include a call for a moratorium on the practice. Turning to the Internet, he said "cybercrime deserves special attention". Authorities from every country faced complex challenges in investigating and obtaining evidence in digital environments where traditional international cooperation was often limited. As such, it was essential to develop a truly global legal framework focusing on tools for international cooperation, with adequate attention paid to the necessary balance between repressive measures and respect for human rights, especially the right to privacy. He said that balance had been ensured by Brazil's domestic Internet regulations.

IVAN ŠIMONOVIĆ, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, said crime prevention and criminal justice were deeply related to all three pillars of the United Nations work. Lack of respect for civil and political as well as social and economic rights eroded the rule of law and led to crime. In today's interdependent world, corruption and organized crime hurt everyone, he said, adding that "we must do more to exchange information and ensure joint and coordinated action". The world could not afford to see criminals and traffickers do better than criminal justice systems. There was a "vicious cycle" between lack of human rights, crime and conflict. After a conflict, if the root causes were not addressed, and if there was a sense of powerlessness or injustice, more conflict or new crime could be triggered. States had a duty to take the steps needed to deliver justice, but all such measures must be anchored in respect for international human rights law. That approach was not only the right one, but was also more effective.

On combating terrorism, he urged States that were revising their counter-terrorism legislation to recognize that human rights violations, such as arbitrary arrest and torture, could lead to more crime and terrorism, and jeopardized the support of populations. There was no scientific evidence that the death penalty deterred crime any more than a sentence of life without parole. The best deterrent lay in efficient justice systems which ensured that criminals faced a high chance of punishment within a reasonable amount of time. A Government that respected rights at all times and for all individuals would go a long way towards avoiding feeding feelings of injustice that could lead to crime.

UUGANGEREL TSOGOO, Vice Minister for Justice of Mongolia, said that with the advancement of globalization, legislators and law enforcement agencies faced greater challenges than ever before to deter highly motivated and increasingly sophisticated, better-funded criminal organizations. That required creating a legal environment to thwart criminals. Mongolia had seen a rise in crimes related to human trafficking, narcotics, money-laundering and smuggling cultural property, and had accordingly acted to strengthen its legal system by improving the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies. Legislative, judicial and institutional reforms had enhanced the human rights protection and strengthened the rule of

law, with the country's Criminal Code and Crime Prevention Act revised in accordance with United Nations standards. Victims of crime were now supported and protected, and a national legal aid system provided services to those with financial difficulties. Other progress could be seen in efforts to encourage public participation in crime prevention, he said, calling on Member States to intensify their efforts to prevent national and transnational crime.

LUIS E. ARREAGA (United States) said strong criminal justice institutions established the conditions for citizens to pursue economic activities. President Barack Obama had recently requested \$1 billion from Congress to support the efforts of Central American Governments to promote prosperity, security and good governance. In other regions, such as West Africa, Central Asia and the Caribbean, the United States was similarly committed to working with international partners to address security-sector reform at the community level and among the police, courts and corrections facilities. For example, the United States also supported the West Africa Cooperative Security Initiative and the West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors, which was a UNODC initiative. Noting that "human rights" was one of the goals outlined in the preamble to the United Nations Charter, he stressed that it was the primary responsibility of States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including legal protection for vulnerable populations such as women, children, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals. Economic growth was only sustainable in an environment where civil society and media held Governments accountable and eliminated impunity. The United States encouraged Member States to consider ways to strengthen the role of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in all bodies that supported and guided the work of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme.

ASHOT HOVAKIMIAN, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia, said that despite significant achievements on national and international levels to develop fair, accountable justice systems and institutions, in many parts of the world, people were still being deprived of protection and were persecuted by those motivated by hatred and intolerance. The crime of genocide needed to be addressed, he said, emphasizing that a century ago the Security Council had characterized the Armenian massacres as a "crime against humanity and civilization". As a country that had survived genocide, it had a moral responsibility towards the protection of the collective and individual rights of religious and ethnic groups where their survival was at stake. As such, Armenia had sponsored a resolution recently adopted by the Human Rights Council on genocide prevention. Impunity was a breeding ground for new crime, he said, pointing at cybercrime as an example. Regulations for cybersecurity must, however, comply with all human rights. International cooperation was essential to success in addressing global threats as the borders of national responsibility were becoming blurred. Turning to the phenomenon of modern slavery, he said human trafficking was a contributing factor. For its part, Armenia had achieved significant results in countering trafficking, and had revised its national Criminal Code towards that end.

SAEED BIN ABDULLAH AL-QAHTANI (Saudi Arabia) said his country had always been aware of its collective responsibility to provide humanitarian assistance. He also supported all measures likely to improve the standards of living and delivery of basic services. Saudi Arabia had adopted initiatives to ensure education and improve the social safety net. Appropriate planning with sustainable objectives in mind was essential. The post-2015 agenda should also take into consideration societal and environmental aspects, he said, adding that crime prevention and the criminal justice system was a cornerstone to those

goals. As crime was a threat to stability, it was important to recognize the need for criminal justice. For its part, Saudi Arabia had adopted a host of legislative measures in line with the Convention on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. His country had also adopted measures to combat human trafficking and other related crimes, as multidimensional policies were essential to combat that scourge. The exchange of best practices covering a number of crimes was helpful. However, new forms of criminality required new cooperative approaches.

CARLOS ALFREDO CASTANEDA MAGAÑA, Deputy Minister for Foreign Relations, Integration and Economic Promotion of El Salvador, said the Congress was an ideal forum for promoting the role of the rule of law in the post-2015 development agenda, as well as migration, education, citizen security and human rights. The 2014-2019 development plan titled "El Salvador: productive, educated and safe" promoted a culture of dialogue, rule of law, family and community. The National Council of Citizen Security and Cohabitation had been set up in 2014 to spearhead plans to improve citizen safety and well-being. The anti-extortion law aimed to prevent, investigate, prosecute and sanction extortion. He called for international support towards that end. With UNODC support, the national police had set up a cybercrime unit, which enabled it to share best practices with other interested countries. Technical aid and the development of institutional capacity would help strengthen crime prevention systems and penal codes, thus enabling an adequate response to cybercrimes. Protecting the human rights of migrants, which comprised an important percentage of the Salvadoran population, was a top foreign policy priority, as many migrants fell victim to kidnapping, extortion and murder by criminal organizations.

JEAN-PAUL LABORDE, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, said the rule of law was making progress, albeit very, very slowly. "Terrorists and other criminal organizations are taking us to the very edge of horror," he said, and they were undermining the rule of law. Such acts were often linked to organized crime or clearly identifiable violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Indeed, transnational crime had reached a zenith over the past few years and represented a threat to the security of all human beings. The Security Council had set up strategies to counter terrorist organizations, and had adopted, in December 2014, a resolution on the links between organized crime and terrorism. It had further resolved that human rights and the rule of law were key elements in peace and security throughout the world. All activities must be well coordinated within the United Nations system, he said, recalling that, in February, the Secretary-General had launched a global action campaign against terrorism. Despite great efforts, it did not seem that the results of those actions lived up to expectations. He went on to propose stronger cooperation among magistrates and supreme courts, which often were isolated from each other within their own chambers, to create a "real dialogue" on the rule of law. That was the only possible way to work effectively against the phenomenon of terrorism, within the parameters of the rule of law.

SUSAN LE JEUNE D'ALLEGEERSHECQUE (United Kingdom) said criminals and terrorists exploited and exacerbated the conditions that allowed crime to thrive and created a cycle of destruction. Crime and terrorism threatened national security and could act as an obstacle to prosperity and development in affected States. The rule of law existed where order was prevalent, where there was equal treatment before the law, where public authority was bound by and accountable to pre-existing, clear and known laws, and where human rights

were protected. In the United Kingdom alone, approximately 40,600 people were involved in organized crime, and the country was committed to fighting such crimes - including the illegal drugs and firearms trade, fraud and financial crime, money-laundering, organized illegal immigration and human trafficking, and cybercrime - as well as the corruption that enabled and perpetuated them. That commitment had most recently been demonstrated through the passage of a new modern slavery act against human trafficking and a new serious crime act that improved the ability to investigate and prosecute crime. The United Kingdom was committed to working with Member States to tackle transnational crime and terrorism, for example the pervasive threat of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant/Sham (ISIL/ISIS). The international reach of that group drew comparison with powerful organized crime groups, in that they moved money illicitly and exploited vulnerable people. "Together we must disrupt this activity, in particular by taking steps to prevent our young people turning to crime and terrorism," she said.

DRAGANA KIPRIJANOVSKA, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia said priorities of the post-2015 agenda must encompass all human rights and aim at combating all forms of crime and eliminating gender-based violence. Trends and situations could easily be reversed if necessary actions were not taken, she said, underlining a need for a balanced, integrated approach to preventing new, sophisticated forms of crime. However, trafficking, including in cultural property, and cybercrime were no longer new phenomena, but were part of a landscape of growing challenges that demanded new strategies based on preventive actions. The identified shortcomings in criminal law and justice systems had inspired a wave of reforms to address those new challenges. Her country had worked towards strengthening its legal machinery and developing preventive mechanisms. Reforms included designing a new conceptual model and set of provisions for combatting organized and financial crime, including cybercrime. Her Government had also instituted reforms in its penitentiary system, including reducing overcrowding. With regard to an emerging threat, her country's Criminal Code had been amended to include sanctioning participation in foreign armies, police and paramilitary forces.

CHRISTOPHE PAYOT (Belgium) said democracy gave the required legitimacy to a Government, which ensured the rule of law was respected. Corruption, meanwhile, eroded that legitimacy. Even convicts had human rights and Belgium dissociated itself from any position that supported the death penalty. Recent reforms in his country included greater autonomy for the judiciary and modernization of the penitentiary system. Measures had been taken to address issues concerning prisoners, including efforts to prevent recidivism. After all, imprisonment should lead to reinsertion into society. Human trafficking was another grave concern and Belgium was taking action in that regard. Countering terrorism and radicalism was another concern and work needed to be coordinated to tackle those threats. Peace in the long run and sustainable development could not happen without the rule of law. The rule of law was essential to eradicate poverty and ensure all human rights and freedoms.

DATO' SRI ADENAN BIN AB RAHMAN (Malaysia) said the rise of new and emerging forms of transnational crime was a constant challenge to many States. Malaysia recognized the centrality of crime prevention and criminal justice systems, as well as the need to ensure a functioning, efficient and humane system. Recently, a new preventive law aimed at

combating threats from ISIL and included provisions that provided rehabilitation to neutralize those individuals that were being radicalized and influenced by extremists. Transnational crime prevention was a mammoth task and no single country could do it alone, he said, noting his country's participation in regional efforts. Bilaterally, Malaysia continued to form security arrangements with like-minded countries to forge strategic cooperation in eliminating crime syndicates. "We need to expand the existing international cooperation beyond the current practices," he said, adding that States should share best practices and regularly exchange information.

MUTHONI KIMANI (Kenya) said that, earlier in the month, Kenya had faced a terrorist attack at the Garissa University College leaving 152 innocent young Kenyans dead. Terrorists killed indiscriminately without an iota of conscience or remorse, and left a trail of death and destruction in all corners of the world. Kenya was committed to stopping that growing menace, as well as other transnational crimes. "We shall neither shy away nor back down from defending our people and resources within our borders and beyond," she said in that regard. Kenya shared concern at the increased challenges faced in addressing violence against women and children, transnational crimes and emerging forms of crime at the national, regional and international level. Of additional concern to national security were such crimes as human trafficking, poaching, trafficking of wildlife trophies and forestry products, cybercrime and corruption. Regrettably, the proceeds of such crimes were laundered in and out of Kenya, compounding the complex offense of money-laundering. On wildlife crime, she said Kenya had marked World Wildlife Day on 3 March 2015 by burning 15 tons of confiscated ivory and other wildlife trophies. "Kenya is committed to combating the menace robustly and persistently until we dismantle the entire vile economy," she said in that respect.

KHANH NGOC NGUYEN, Vice Minister for Justice of Viet Nam, said that as the world was witnessing the increasing sophistication of transnational criminal activities, it was critical that nations acted collectively to prevent and minimize the negative human and financial effects. New developments in the criminal world were impairing sustainable development, damaging rule of law efforts and were a threat to the maintenance of peace and security. Building the rule of law and having in place a fair, effective crime prevention and criminal justice system was of utmost importance. Viet Nam had progressed in that direction, with significant developments in its national legal system, strengthened law enforcement capacities and enhanced international cooperation. Emerging crimes, such as wildlife trafficking and cybercrime, were concerns, he said, highlighting that Viet Nam would make every effort to continue to enhance its legislation to effectively prevent those new threats.

LUCIE ANGERS (Canada) said the Congress should be a point of departure, not a point of arrival. Previous congresses had adopted inward-looking agendas focused on how States defined and responded to specific forms of crime. The time had come for the Congress to adopt a broader approach to crime, including how crime prevention and criminal justice fit within the broader United Nations agenda. Canada strongly believed in the crucial importance of the rule of law, public safety and respect for fundamental freedoms. However, freedoms could only flourish where there was also a sense of security. Development and prosperity depended on the ability of populations to exercise free choices in a secure environment. Turning to the important role played by victims in strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice, she said Canada believed in the need to have the right tools to protect the most vulnerable members of society, and more significantly to ensure that

voices of the victims - too often silenced in justice systems - were clearly heard. All countries needed to do more to protect women and girls from violence, including sexual violence and early and forced marriage. The exclusion or oppression of any group of people based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, race or religion from the full and equal protection of the law was not acceptable, and could in fact create fertile ground for recruitment or exploitation by organized criminal groups or terrorists.

SEM OUNTANA (Burkina Faso) said transnational organized crime was a major challenge to all States with damaging social, economic, political and security consequences that could, if unaddressed, threaten countries' development. The fight against that scourge must be swift, global and integrated. Burkina Faso had taken a number of steps to counter transnational crime, as well as terrorism. However, the war against terrorism should not be seen as a battle of religions or civilizations. Having signed almost every relevant international, regional and subregional instrument, his country had adopted laws on a range of related issues. In addition, it had ratified instruments on children's and women's rights, adopting measures nationally for their benefit. The transitional Government in place since October 2014 had supported other efforts to address public concerns, including a fair justice system that guaranteed fundamental freedom and respect for human rights. He hoped the Congress would result in intensified cooperation on issues such as strengthening the capacity of vulnerable States against criminal networks.

ERNESTO PLASENCIA (Cuba) said that over the last five years, his country had made significant strides in crime prevention and criminal justice, including signing international instruments and passing national legislation. Access to justice was a fundamental right; there could be no fair society without sustainable development or the protection of the environment. Poverty was the driving force behind crime, which was also fuelled by an unfair international economic order. In his region, millions lived in poverty, lacked health care and had no access to clean water. Governments, civil society and the private sector had clear roles to play in addressing those concerns. A mechanism to review the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime should be impartial, transparent and inclusive, among other things. International cooperation must also be strengthened to implement that and other related conventions in order to tackle drug trafficking and other scourges.

REYNALDO A. CATAPANG (Philippines), aligning with the Group of 77 and China and the Asian Group, said his country had passed three important laws to amend and fortify the existing money-laundering law. Apart from banks, institutions such as foreign exchange corporations, money changers and jewellery dealers were now required to report to the Anti-Money Laundering Council all transactions involving a threshold amount. The 14 predicate crimes mentioned in the original law had also been expanded to cover other acts, such as trafficking in persons, bribery, extortion and financing of terrorism, to discourage the use of the country as a money-laundering site. The terrorist financing prevention act had been passed in 2012, which criminalized the financing of terrorism and authorized the Anti-Money Laundering Council to investigate funds and property of persons suspected of financing terrorism. He went on to describe other recently strengthened laws, including the juvenile justice act and the welfare act, and the passage of the cybercrime prevention act, which specifically penalized cybercrimes involving illegal access, illegal interception, data interference, system interference, misuse of devices, cybersquatting, computer-related fraud, identity theft and cybersex. The Philippines had also passed the expanded anti-trafficking in persons act of 2012, which widened the definition of trafficking in persons to

include such acts as recruitment for organ removal and recruitment under the guise of domestic or overseas employment for sexual exploitation.

CHRISTINE JEANGÉY, representative of the Holy See, said Pope Francis had recently made numerous appeals against transnational organized crime, notably the trafficking of migrants. Slavery went against international rights norms and was considered to be a war crime and crime against humanity. To tackle that crime, international cooperation was indispensable, including with civil society organizations. Despite international strategies and agreements, thousands of people continued to live in conditions comparable to slavery, trafficked for various reasons, including recruitment for prostitution or to work as child soldiers. Current treaties, while necessary, were not alone capable of putting an end to those scourges. The deeper causes of those phenomena must be addressed, including poverty and a lack of employment opportunities. A purely security-based approach was not the solution, she said. Armed conflict and terrorism often resulted in people forced to migrate. Armed groups also abducted people to recruit them. Appealing to the international community to refresh diplomacy to end all conflicts and all terrorism, silence the guns and embark on the path of reconciliation and peace, she said in doing so "we would save thousands of human lives".

Right of Reply

Speaking in exercise of the right of reply, the representative of Turkey said she was saddened to take the floor at such a late stage in the meeting, but she felt she needed to address the reference made by Armenia to the events of 1915. During the First World War, many people had suffered immensely, and that had been a "shared suffering". While that period needed to be understood in its entirety, the term "genocide" referred to a crime clearly defined by international law and which required high standards of evidence. The term should not be used randomly. Indeed, there was no legal or scholarly consensus on the nature of the 1915 events. She reiterated that the proposal of a joint historical mission remained on the table.

Also speaking in exercise of the right of reply, the representative of Armenia said he would not react to the comment made by the representative of Turkey. It was because of its commitment to improving justice jointly with the international community that Armenia had joined the consensus on the adoption of the Doha Declaration. However, he expressed his disappointment that the Declaration contained no single reference to the United Nations Charter. Moreover, it was regrettable that certain principles were expressed in a way as to have priority over other purposes and principles of the Charter. All principles of the Charter were equal, he stressed.