

STATEMENT

by

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President of the Security Council for the month of November, 2020

Ministerial Event Commemorating 20 Years of the United Nations Convention
against Transnational Organized Crime and Its Protocols - "A Universal Vision for
a Global Threat"

United Nations Security Council

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Thank you, Chair,

It is an honour to address this Ministerial Event to commemorate 20 years of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols, in my capacity as President of the United Nations Security Council.

Our multilateral system was assembled on the principle of collective security. While, as an international community, we have made significant progress over the years in reducing the scale of armed conflicts, the acute and multidimensional security challenges of transnational organized crime continue to grow in their complexity and pervasiveness. Organized criminals take advantage of gaps in law enforcement capacities at porous border areas, across the high seas, and in other ungoverned spaces where travel and trade are largely unregulated.

Against this backdrop of security and governance vacuums, bad actors seek power and profit from a range of pursuits including:

- the illegal trafficking of narcotics, arms and ammunition;
- the smuggling of persons and counterfeit goods;
- the illicit exploitation and trade of natural resources;
- piracy, extortion, and money-laundering; and
- cyber-crime.

Organized criminality, in all its forms and manifestations, impairs the rule of law, erodes trust in public institutions, and undermines social and economic development. Of continuing concern is the potential linkages between transnational organized crime and terrorism in certain contexts, where the proceeds from illicit pursuits are used to finance terror activities that may exacerbate conflicts in affected regions, and may contribute to undermining affected States, specifically their security, stability, governance, social and economic development . These activities only flourish, however, in the absence of well-organized governance frameworks, and in this regard the UNODC plays an invaluable role in promoting multilateral cooperation and collective action to address transnational criminality.

The UNTOC remains a critical instrument that assists Member States and the international community, and the UN Security Council plays an important role, in our efforts to maintain international peace and security by fostering enhanced cooperation and information-sharing. While the primary responsibility for implementation of the legal, economic, financial and technical frameworks to manage crime remains with individual nation states, coherent and comprehensive strategies that bring together all actors, including the international private sector, civil society, regional and sub-regional organizations, and Member States are needed to effectively address transnational organized crime. These comprehensive strategies must address the root causes of insecurity including extreme poverty and economic vulnerabilities, unemployment social inequalities and marginalization, and weak governance structures.

As the international community endeavours to reconcile the challenges and opportunities of our increasingly globalized and interconnected world, we must recommit ourselves to addressing the multidimensional challenges of organized crime. During this important decade to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, a renewed multilateralism rooted in the universal principles of international law is needed in order to strengthen legitimate economic activity and social contracts and livelihoods that this activity sustains.

I Thank You.