



STATEMENT BY DR. M.S. GILL, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 108: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE, AGENDA ITEM 109: INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL IN THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 60TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 10, 2005

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for the comprehensive reports on Agenda items 108 and 109 on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and International Drug Control. We wish to thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, for his introductory statement highlighting developments in the global crime and drug situation and his views on the response of the international community to the related challenges.

We support the UNODC's integrated approach to drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism and encourage it to continue with its ongoing programme of operational transformation. It is our hope that this would enhance the effectiveness of UNODC in dealing with these issues. There is an urgent need for recasting drug and crime policies into a broader developmental mould, based on the promotion of justice and good governance. We welcome UNODC's initiatives in this direction.

Mr. Chairman

The close nexus between international terrorism on the one hand and trans-national organised crime, illicit drugs, money laundering, illegal arms transactions and illegal movement of nuclear, chemical and biological materials on the other, pose a serious threat to international security, and needs to be monitored carefully. Narcotic drugs have been one of the main sources of funding for trans-national criminals and terrorists.

Almost 80,000 people have been killed in various parts of India on account of terrorist attacks over the past several years. While the resultant loss in human lives has been incalculable, the loss of jobs, economic opportunities, development efforts negated and infrastructure destroyed has also been severe.

The Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh has stated "we must not yield any space to terrorism. We must firmly reject any notion that there is any cause that justifies it. No cause could ever justify the indiscriminate killing of innocent men, women

and children.” As a country that has borne the brunt of terrorism over decades, India has taken extensive measures to prevent and combat terrorism. We have put in place legislative and administrative measures, and entered into bilateral and regional arrangements to fight terrorism.

India believes that the strengthening of international cooperation is vital to fight the menace of terrorism. The Outcome Document reflects the joint resolve of the international community to fight terrorism. In our judgement, there is no better institutional setting than the United Nations capable of providing cohesion and vigour to these efforts. As an initiator of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, India welcomes and is fully committed to the decision taken by the Heads of State and Government to conclude negotiations on the Convention in the early part of the 60th Session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the Bangkok Declaration of the eleventh UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held earlier in the year, particularly its encouragement for countries to work together on extradition and mutual legal assistance, as also to fight cyber crime.

India is a signatory to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three Protocols, and is taking steps for their ratification. India has entered into bilateral agreements with several countries to combat organised crime and terrorism. These agreements provide for development of joint programmes to counter terrorism, money laundering and organised crime. India has strong domestic legislation to deal with these issues, and this has been strengthened further with the enactment of the Money Laundering Act.

The role of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the UNODC is particularly important, given the high priority attached by the international community in the fight against terrorism. There is an urgent need to enhance the capacities of the Terrorism Prevention Branch.

Mr. Chairman,

According to the World Drug Report 2005, about 200 million people, or 5% of the world’s population age 15-64, have used illicit drugs at least once in the last 12 months. Trends in global coca cultivation and cocaine manufacture have seen steady decline since 1999. The trends are worrisome in other sectors, particularly with regard to global illicit opium production and ATS (amphetamine type stimulants) increase. We have also seen worrying trends in the increasing production and trafficking of drugs in our neighbourhood. The international community must act early to prevent this menace from posing even greater risks to the social and economic fabric of the countries affected.

India is fully committed to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action adopted to overcome the world drug problem at the 20th special session of the General Assembly,

which laid down the goals and objectives to be achieved by Member States by 2008. The Narcotic Control Bureau of India has achieved significant success in recent years not only in seizures of various narcotic drugs but also in combating trafficking, interdiction and investigation, and destroying illicit drug crops. However, national efforts alone cannot deal comprehensively with the drug problem. Bilateral, regional and international collaboration is essential in this area. Extradition treaties, mutual legal assistance treaties and other specific arrangements are essential to support efforts in eradicating drug trafficking, and organised crime and terrorism. In particular, law enforcement cooperation is a significant emerging area in the field of international cooperation. The need for intensification of efforts of the international community in addressing the world drug problem is immense.

We look forward to working with members of the international community to achieve our common goal of a world free of illicit drugs and the malaise of narco-terrorism and organised crime.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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