Statement by the UNODC Executive Director at the Meeting of the Third Committee of the General Assembly 9 October 2013

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to report to the Third Committee on the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

I am sorry that I am not with you in person, but the good news is that we could avail ourselves of modern technology to meet today nonetheless.

Drugs, crime, illicit trafficking, corruption, terrorism. These represent some of the most urgent threats to development and security that Member States face.

UNODC is the lead entity of the UN Secretariat in helping countries to address these
threats and challenges, and to promote justice and the rule of law.

Our Office serves as the guardian of international conventions on drugs, Transnational Organized Crime, including protocols against human trafficking, migrant smuggling and firearms, and Corruption. We are also guided by the 16 universal instruments against terrorism.

These landmark documents provide a solid legal foundation for our research and operations.

Our integrated response is based on three main pillars.

This includes a normative pillar, to support implementation of the conventions; operations on the ground to provide technical assistance to Member States; and research and analysis, so that the international community can develop strategic responses and identify emerging threats.

UNODC’s studies, surveys and reports provide state-of-the-art research and analysis on the many dimensions of drugs and crime. Our flagship publications, such as the annual World
Drug Report, have become standard sources of reference and are widely cited.

In addition, UNODC provides Member States with technical assistance to implement the conventions.

Our field operations help to identify areas where support is needed most, and help countries to build the capacity to respond.

Moreover, our work increasingly involves addressing a range of new and emerging threats, including crimes committed at sea, cybercrime, trafficking in fraudulent medicines and cultural property, and wildlife crime.

In all this UNODC strives to link up initiatives between countries as well as within and between regions.

Our integrated programme approach has enhanced cooperation with UN partners as well as with other multilateral organizations and civil society.
It helps to promote local ownership and mutual responsibility, it enables us to offer good value for money and promote joined-up solutions.

The recent report by the Secretary-General on advancing the UN development agenda beyond 2015 identified major new challenges that have emerged since the MDGs were agreed.

Among these challenges is organized crime, including trafficking in people and drugs, which "violates human rights and undermines development".

The report further acknowledges the importance of "effective governance based on the rule of law and transparent institutions" as an outcome and enabler of development.

This emphasis on addressing organized crime and establishing rule of law goes to the core of our work at UNODC.

In this context, the General Assembly is expected to consider and adopt the "United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative
Development", as recommended by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

The GA is also expected to adopt a resolution on the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice in the UN development agenda beyond 2015, together with other resolutions recommended by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,

Alongside the regular work of UNODC, we are busy preparing for key events in the areas of drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice that are taking place in the next years.

In 2014 the Vienna-based Commission on Narcotic Drugs will hold the High-Level review of Member States' implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on the World Drug Problem.

This will be followed in 2016 by a special session of the General Assembly on this topic, in accordance with GA resolution 67/193. We are looking forward to guidance from the GA during
its 68th session this year on the format and expected content of the 2016 UNGASS.

It is my hope that the omnibus resolution will facilitate preparations for the UNGASS, and encourage Member States to be part of the process and support it.

The CND is the central policymaking body on drug-related matters within the UN system and has specific mandates under the international drug control conventions.

The Commission served as the preparatory body for the 1998 UNGASS on the world drug problem, engaging in open-ended deliberations with the participation of all Member States, specialized agencies and observers.

The CND, as it follows from its last resolution, adopted unanimously, is prepared to play a similar role with respect to the 2016 preparations so that the UNGASS can benefit from the CND’s extensive technical and political expertise.

UNODC stands ready to support Member States through this process.
Both these events, the 2014 high-level review by the CND and the 2016 UNGASS, represent important milestones towards meeting the goals set out in the Declaration and action plan by the target date in 2019.

No country is unaffected by the menace of drug trafficking or the threat to health, development and the rule of law that illicit drugs pose.

There are no easy solutions, and it is clear that a frank and forward-looking debate on the world drug problem is needed.

But that debate should be predicated on the fact that the existing international conventions are nearly universal in membership, and their validity has been reaffirmed by the General Assembly unanimously only last autumn.

I therefore encourage all Member States to be actively engaged and represented at the appropriate level at the High-Level review in Vienna next March.

Other forthcoming events on issues under UNODC’s mandate include the 5th session of the
Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption in Panama in November, to be followed in 2015 by the 6th session in Russia.

Next year will bring the 7th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto in Vienna.

Moreover, the 13th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, one of the main periodic conferences of the UN, will be held under the auspices of the General Assembly in 2015 in Qatar.

Since 1955, UN Crime Congresses have shaped the agenda and standards of the UN in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice and beyond.

The main theme of the 13th Congress will be "Integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation".
The 13th Crime Congress will be preceded by regional preparatory meetings in early 2014, in order to obtain views and inputs from different parts of the world.

The regional preparatory meetings are expected to make action-oriented recommendations to serve as a basis for the draft recommendations and conclusions by the 13th Congress.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,

As you can see from this brief overview, UNODC has a broad mandate and an urgent agenda.

This presents us with great challenges.

The rapid rise in voluntary contributions over the past decade shows that donors trust UNODC and Member States see the value of our work.

However, the vast majority of voluntary contributions, more than 90%, is earmarked for special purposes, and do not always reflect the priorities of our governing bodies.
General purpose funding that is not earmarked has fallen, while funding from the regular budget of the UN represents less than one-tenth of the total.

Our core functions, which are critical to supporting our rapidly growing field capacity, are already severely overstretched.

For the 2012-13 biennium our total budget is some $576.3 million, of which $43 million is regular budget and $533.3 million is extrabudgetary.

For the 2014-15 biennium we expect a total budget of some $693.9 million, of which $45.6 million is RB and $648.3 million is ExB.

Our proposed budget for the 2014-15 biennium reflects our commitment to achieving the greatest possible efficiency and transparency in delivering on our mandates. We aim to do this by moving toward a model of full cost recovery with respect to our technical assistance programmes, in line with UN Secretariat-wide policies.

We have engaged Member States in this discussion, particularly in the context of the
standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC (FinGov).

Despite our efforts and successes in achieving overall strategic and operational coherence, however, this complicated governance and funding situation must be addressed if our work to support Member States in our many areas of responsibility is to be sustainable.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,

If people are to be able to pursue a life of dignity and opportunity, free of fear and violence, the world must tackle the problems of drugs, crime, trafficking, corruption and terrorism.

UNODC is committed to assisting Member States to meet these global, interconnected challenges. We count on your support to help us carry out this vital work.

Thank you.