Statement
By
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Agenda Items 108 & 109
“Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice” and “International Drug Control “

Third Committee

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation for the valuable briefings and statements delivered under the two agenda items.

The reports of the Secretary-General under the two items show the importance of international and regional cooperation in the fight against organized crime and drug trafficking. The role played by the UN system, particularly UNODC and other relevant UN entities to support member states’ efforts to combat drug trafficking and organized crime is indispensable. Egypt notes with appreciation the manuals on international cooperation in criminal matters developed by the UNODC. In this context, I would like to highlight the following points:

First: There is a need to provide UNODC with adequate, predictable and stable resources, including additional regular budget resources, to enable it to implement its mandate in a sustainable manner. There is also a need to provide UNODC with the necessary voluntary contributions to enable it to effectively respond to the increasing demand for technical assistance worldwide.

Second: We reiterate the importance of the establishment of a transparent, efficient, inclusive and impartial mechanism to review the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols and assist States Parties in the implementation. This issue should be re-visited during the 7th session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention in 2014.

Mr. Chairman,

Egypt is fully committed to its obligations as a State party to the main international and regional treaties related to combating drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism. We commend the ongoing cooperation with the UNODC, in particular through its regional office in Cairo, to extend technical assistance in areas of trafficking in persons, drug addiction, corruption, police and corrections reform and on juvenile justice. We look forward to extending this successful cooperation to include areas of alternative development and to maximize the benefit of the STAR initiative to repatriate illegally acquired funds.

Egypt welcomes the adoption of the European Parliament resolution in May 2013 on asset recovery by Arab countries in transition. The resolution stresses that the return of misappropriated assets stolen by former dictators and their regimes to Arab Spring countries is a moral and legal imperative and a highly political issue. It acknowledges that the recovery of stolen assets is also of economic and social
importance for the countries. It urges the EU and its Member States to make significant efforts to facilitate the return of these stolen assets within a reasonable timeframe. We look forward to effective cooperation from all countries of destination for the repatriation of illegally acquired funds that have been laundered and transferred outside Egypt.

Combating trafficking in cultural property remains on top of our priorities. We look forward to UNESCO’s technical support to retrieve stolen objects and repair damage to cultural heritage monuments. We also urge the international community to firmly stand against trafficking in cultural property and take appropriate measures to restore Egypt’s looted historical antiquities in accordance with the 1970 Convention against Illicit Traffic of Cultural Heritage.

The High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the appraisal of the Global Plan of action to combat trafficking in persons in May 2013 was a good opportunity to review the progress achieved to ensure its full and effective implementation. Despite the efforts exerted in this regard by the Inter-Agency Task Force to Combat Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), Egypt believes that it is important to set priorities and actions to be achieved before the next appraisal meeting to be held during the 71st session of the General Assembly in 2016. There should be an increased focus on prevention, assisting victims, management of resources, fund-raising, more data collection and analysis, in addition to building partnerships with the relevant stakeholders including the private sector, the media, and civil society.

In light of the preparations for the high-level review of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, to be held in 2014, member states should pursue the implementation of the targets set out in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action. We believe that ECOSOC should devote a high-level event to a theme related to the world drug problem.

Mr. Chairman,

I conclude by reiterating Egypt’s strong commitment to combat all forms of organized crime and drug trafficking, in consistency with its international obligations.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman