STATEMENT
BY

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ON AGENDA ITEM 108: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND AGENDA ITEM 109: INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

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Check against delivery
South Africa has enacted national legislation to give effect to our international obligations as signatories to the various United Nations Conventions and Optional Protocols in the areas of transnational organised crime, and the combating of human trafficking, drug trafficking and corruption.

South Africa is an important hub for the shipment of cocaine and heroin destined for illicit international markets, as well as a destination country for cocaine. An Inter-Ministerial Committee on Combating Substance Abuse has been established to oversee the development and implementation of policy and integrated national strategies on the prevention of substance abuse.

In the fight against corruption, an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Anti-Corruption was established in 2009 and several independent institutions established to fight corruption at the highest levels.

Rhino poaching has reached epidemic proportions in South Africa, with close to 700 rhinos killed by poachers for their horns in 2013 alone.

In response, the Government has adopted new measures aimed at enhancing law enforcement for the punishment of offenders, the rule of law, better management of national borders and closer collaboration with neighbouring states.

At the sub-regional level South Africa is collaborating with Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique in the area of nature conservation through the Great Limpopo Trans-frontier Parks.

The protection of wildlife and endangered species is dealt with under the United Nations Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which amongst others, outlaws illegal trade in ivory. This notwithstanding, South Africa continues to lose wildlife and endangered species at an alarming rate. The massive scale of illicit poaching and trade in wild fauna and flora underscores the need for international cooperation and collaboration to stamp out this scourge.

My delegation is of the view that at the international level and within the United Nations Congress on Criminal Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) framework, a process should be initiated for the elaboration of an Additional Protocol to the Palermo Convention that would provide maximum protection for wildlife and endangered species.

The purpose of such an Additional Protocol would be to further (a) criminalise in international law the practise of illicit trafficking in wildlife and endangered species; (b) make this practise punishable by law; (c) create mechanisms for the combating of impunity; and (d) create an international monitoring mechanism for both the Palermo Convention and an Additional Protocol.
Chairperson,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Angola on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive and insightful reports prepared under this important agenda item.

These reports show evidence of an unprecedented growth in the illicit trafficking of drugs, people, small arms and light weapons and natural resources. The global scale and reach of transnational crime threatens the achievement of peace, security, sustainable development and human rights, particularly in developing and fragile states, where the systems, institutions and mechanisms for combating sophisticated international criminal syndicates are nascent or weak.

Transnational crime therefore risks eroding the gains made by developing nations to advance progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The full and effective implementation by member states of core United Nations Conventions on crime, drugs, trafficking and corruption is a prerequisite for combating crimes that have assumed a global character and transcended national and regional boundaries and jurisdictions.

International partnerships and technical cooperation and assistance for developing countries in particular are critical to building national and regional criminal justice capacities to successfully combat transnational crime and drug trafficking. International cooperation, including bilateral and regional treaties on extradition and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters are key tools in fighting organised crime.

My delegation strongly supports the mandate of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) and its key role in coordinating and supporting the efforts of member states to ratify and implement international instruments on crime prevention and criminal justice, including drug trafficking.

We note from the Secretary-General’s report the extensive work undertaken by UNDOC in all regions of the world towards assisting governments to build national capacities in criminal justice sectors.

Undoubtedly, there is an urgent need for the international community to provide UNDOC with sustainable and predictable financial support to fulfill its mandate and assist member states to combat and effectively counter an increasingly complex array of international threats and risks.

Chairperson,

The fight against crime and corruption is one of the five national priorities of the South African Government.