STATEMENT

BY

H.E. MRS. KOKI MULI GRIGNON
AMBASSADOR/CHARGE D’AFFAIRES OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON

AGENDA ITEM 108:
"CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE"

DURING

THE

68TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, October 9, 2013
United Nations, New York

Please check against delivery
Mr. Chairman,
I thank you for giving me the floor and wish to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on being elected to guide the work of this committee. We assure you of our full cooperation. I wish to thank the Executive Director of UNODC for his comprehensive presentation this morning.

At the outset, my delegation wishes to recognize the strengthened partnership and collaboration fostered between the Government of Kenya and UNODC on various areas relating to crime prevention and enhancing criminal justice and drug control. We look forward to further strengthening our collaboration and partnership to achieve our national priorities.

Mr. Chairman,
Crime and drugs continue to be an impediment to development in many of our countries. Despite concerted efforts by individual countries and the international community to combat rising crime levels and suppress the sale and distribution of drugs, both continue to spiral out of control. Indeed, based on the Secretary General’s reports, we can conclude that there is need to further strengthen global cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crimes for these crimes, know no boundaries.

The Eastern Africa and Horn of Africa regions have witnessed an increase in the supply of illicit drugs destined for Europe and Asia. These drugs pose dangers to public health and quality of life and impact negatively to political, economic and social stability of many nations. Our fight-back strategies have not been very successful. This phenomenon raises fundamental questions regarding the efficacy of the strategies adopted and our collective commitment to combat this problem. Against this backdrop, it is imperative that we change tact and discuss a completely novel approach to dealing with these problems. There is need to critically interrogate the reasons for increasing drugs production and consumption in source and destination countries.
Mr. Chairman,
Kenya remains concerned over the continued proliferation of small arms and light weapons especially in Africa. The Horn of Africa Region is awash with these weapons yet it does not produce them. These weapons kill, maim and disrupt essential services such as education, health and economic activities. Kenya continues to invest heavily in the regional mechanisms established for stemming the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Kenya has diverted enormous resources to strengthening security apparatus.

Indeed, in September last year, the Kenya and AMISOM troops successfully removed Al-Shabaab from Kismayo, Somalia’s major port, allowing the democratically elected Somali Government to take control. The port was a crucial source of money for the terrorists, who extorted legitimate traders. This is a big leap toward stabilizing Somalia and all those who strive to fight terrorism should applaud these efforts. Despite these positive developments, we are gravely concerned by the ineffectiveness to confront the security challenge posed by the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. These challenge present themselves in many different ways and forms; and they pose compounding effects not only on Somalia but on the countries of the region as well. The horrific killings and hostage-taking of innocent people that we have just witnessed in Nairobi, conducted by Al Shabaab, an Al Qaeda affiliated terrorist group, is illustrative. In this regard we wish to thank the international community for standing with us.

Mr. Chairman,
The international community must do more to stem the flow of these deadly weapons and eliminate these terrorist activities. We welcome the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty as one measure to ensure that even those arms originating from legitimate trade do not end up in the illicit market. Another measure would be to address poverty. The testimonies of former members of Al-Shabaab reveal that many were groomed through offers of money or the simple promise of a daily meal, while their minds were bombarded with a violent and distorted worldview. It is through economic empowerment that young people in the region who might be vulnerable to the Al-Shabaab message
will have hope for a better life.

Mr. Chairman,
While Al-Shabaab preys on the poor for recruitment, the group itself is well financed. Kenya and our international partners have identified three routes of funding: the illegal trade in ivory in which Al-Shabaab acts as a facilitator and broker, the diversion of international remittances and the theft of money intended for the honourable purpose of assisting communities. In the coming months, Kenya will seek to bring governments and non-governmental organisation together to devise and implement a global plan to end poaching which endangers our wildlife and bankrolls attacks on our people. Terrorism is a global problem that requires global solutions and Kenya stands ready to play her part in tackling terrorism and related acts. We must all take measures to financially suffocate acts of terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,
Kenya supports an international order that is firmly grounded on the rule of law. This is based on our belief that the rule of law is the bedrock of peaceful co-existence and sustainable development in any society. The Kenya Government remains committed to improving the quality of life of ordinary Kenyans, particularly the poor and vulnerable. Although we are blessed with natural resources, a relatively well developed infrastructure, an educated and hardworking workforce as well as a strategic location, we cannot achieve this goal without addressing the issue of access to justice and upholding the rule of law. This is the reason why we have made concerted efforts to the transformational changes and reforms in all sectors that concern security and delivery of justice.

Mr. Chairman,
Driven by the desire to better deliver justice to Kenyans, Kenyans are undertaking the widest ranging judicial reforms since independence. These reforms were necessitated by the need to promote high standards of conduct and discipline amongst judicial officers, address the backlog of cases and improve the administration and enhance performance and accountability in the sector. The climax of these
judicial reform initiatives was the vetting of all judicial officers to determine their suitability to hold office. For the first time ever, all judicial positions including the Chief Justice, the deputy and other judges were advertised in the media and a most rigorous recruitment process was conducted by an independent panel that included representatives from a cross section of stakeholders. As a result, Kenya has a fiercely independent and effective judiciary.

Another area in which Kenya has made commendable strides is combatting human trafficking. The Kenya government recently passed a comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation to improve measures for prevention and victim protection. The legislation also includes a stringent minimum 30 year sentence for perpetrators of human trafficking. This will serve as a serious deterrent to individuals or groups seeking to exploit those who are vulnerable through human trafficking.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to commend the work of UNODC regional office in Kenya. We remain committed to the regional and international efforts to deal with transnational organized crime as well as efforts that seek to find solutions to the challenges posed by proliferation of illicit arms and drugs in our region and elsewhere.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.