Statement
by
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at the
68th Session of United Nations General Assembly
Third Committee
on
Agenda item 108: Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
and
Agenda Item 109: International Drug Control

New York
9 October 2013
Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving us the floor on this important agenda item. We also thank the Secretary General and UNODC for the well-researched reports on various aspects of the twin-monster of drugs and organized crimes and its prevention through various mechanisms of criminal justice.

2. A major threat to human security, transnational organized crime also impedes the social, economic, political and cultural development of societies around the globe. This phenomenon manifests itself in different forms like trafficking in persons and firearms, smuggling of migrants and money laundering. These crimes result in serious and gross violations of human rights of the vulnerable and marginalized groups of societies. Keeping in view nature and scope of this threat, it is essential that member states cooperate with each other at the regional, sub-regional and international levels, and with relevant UN agencies to effectively tackle all aspects of international organized crimes. The United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice is useful body and should be further strengthened. Pakistan endorses the plans for holding the 13th session of the Commission in Qatar in 2015.

3. Human trafficking remains a serious problem of our part of the world. To counter human trafficking, Pakistan has promulgated the Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance (P&CHTO). The Ordinance also incorporates a role for the civil society to work with the law enforcement agencies for rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking. Similarly a special Anti-Human Trafficking Unit has been set up in the Federal Investigation Agency of Pakistan to crack down on human traffickers.

4. Corruption is another serious problem for most developing economies. In line with Article 55 of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), Member States should cooperate with each other proactively in responding to the requests for exchange of information referred to in Article 31. Member States should also develop appropriate mechanisms to overcome obstacles arising from their bank secrecy laws. On its part, Pakistan has joined the International Convention for the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism. Under Pakistan’s Anti-Money Laundering Act 2010, a special Financial Monitoring Unit has been set up in the State Bank of Pakistan, to cooperate with other countries to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Drugs and Trans-national organized crimes go hand in hand, as do drugs and HIV. It is a complex and intricate phenomenon. From the point of view of market dynamics, the global drug market has a supply side and a demand side.
Often, our attentions are mainly focused on the supply side and the demand side gets ignored. Increase in demand for drugs in the developed world leads to added incentives for the producers in the poorer countries. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive approach to combat drug problem through balanced focus on both demand and supply sides.

5. UN Drug Control Conventions provide a useful framework for international cooperation in tackling the menace of drugs. Pakistan is a state party to all these Conventions and has taken necessary legislative and administrative measures for their effective implementation. Through a multi-pronged strategy coupling strict enforcement with development plans offering alternatives to growers, Pakistan has made phenomenal gains in eliminating opium cultivation inside the country. This has been recognized at the international level. However, we continue to suffer as a transit country. In cooperation with UNODC, we have successfully launched Country Programme 2010-2014, which comprehensively takes into account all facets of the drug problem including its regional impact. Pakistan has been part of the “Rainbow Strategy” of UNODC and has actively participated in the “Triangular Cooperation Initiative” with Afghanistan and Iran to combat narco-trade. Pakistan is also playing an active role in the Regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries as well as the Paris Pact Initiative. We believe that there is a need for increasing technical assistance to the Triangular Initiative Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Crime, whether international or local, cannot be fought without an effective judicial system. Pakistan’s “Access to Justice Programme” launched in 2002 with the help of Asian Development Bank, helped reduce backlog of court cases. Similarly, Pakistan has benefited from implementation of immigration screening programme (called PISCES) to monitor international movement of criminals. The proactive judiciary of Pakistan has also taken revolutionary steps to ensure rule of law and access to justice at all levels.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Let me conclude by re-emphasizing the key importance of a balanced strategy, global cooperation and the role of UNDOC in tackling the serious problems of drugs and international crimes. These aspects should receive due attention in the forthcoming high level review of the Political Declaration & Plan of Action in 2014 and the Special Session of UNGA on Drugs in 2016.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.