AGENDA ITEM 5

ORAL STATEMENT

GLOBAL INITIATIVE AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

Crime Congress Regional Preparatory Meeting
Vienna, 25-27 March 2025

Thank you for giving me the floor. I am making this statement on behalf of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

I would like to propose that the eventual Declaration makes a priority of encouraging states to enhance their implementation and effective use of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime – the UNTOC.

The GI-TOC issued a report at the 12th UNTOC COP in 2024, assessing the implementation and impact of the UNTOC. The findings of this report are varied but all point in a similar direction, that the UNTOC's broad adherence has not translated consistently into tangible impact on criminal markets.

The impact on legislation varies depending on the country; the impact on international cooperation varies depending on the region and country; and the impact on criminal markets remains impossible to assess.

There is a lack of available data and analysis, and mechanisms to gather and disseminate such data when it does exist. This is exacerbated by the slow and flawed review mechanism, which has so far produced only 1 country review.

The Congress bears responsibility for driving forward action and discussion on how to improve UNTOC implementation. Responding to these findings will require the Congress to think differently, especially as a new expert group has now been established to consider whether a new Protocol should be adopted to respond to environmental crimes.

We therefore propose the following recommendations to be considered by the Congress:

- Enhance political attention to the UNTOC Implementation Review Mechanism;
- Gather and disseminate the latest information and analysis on organized crime and

UNTOC's value, including by bringing together data sources into a global transnational organized crime monitoring mechanism that includes data from civil society and academia.

- Open up discussions on UNTOC implementation that go beyond legalistic approaches, and consider varied and new data to understand where and how UNTOC has had an impact on criminal markets – including those covered by its existing protocols, as well as those for which Protocols are being considered;
- Empower and fund independent institutions to carry out civil society-led shadow reviews, to assess the impact of state efforts on transnational organized crime.

The Congress had a key role in the story of the UNTOC's negotiation and creation, and it's time to re-focus attention on this convention to make it fulfil its aims.

Chair, in this context, the nature of organized crime has changed a lot since the last Congress, and even more so since the adoption of the UNTOC, a quarter of a century ago. As EUROPOL recently stated in their most recent threat assessment of organized crime: The DNA of organized crime is changing. To respond to this new DNA and the escalation of organized crime in Europe, last year the Global Initiative launched the Europe Observatory of Organized Crime.

Through the Europe Observatory, together with our long-standing South-East Europe Observatory, we connect Europe with our global networks and Observatories.

We look forward to bringing the latest data on criminal markets in Europe and elsewhere, and on implementation of UNTOC and related instruments, to the fore at the Crime Congress.

Thank you.