

**South Africa Statement on the Fifth Session of the
Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention
against Transnational Organised Crime:
18-22 October 2010; Vienna, Austria**

Madam President,

South Africa is pleased to see you preside over this Conference as we are convinced of your ability to lead us to a successful outcome. The South African delegation stands ready to support you. We also congratulate the Vice-Presidents on their election.

My delegation also takes this opportunity to thank the outgoing President, Ms. Verville, and Members of the outgoing Bureau for their work and efforts.

Madam President

South Africa associates itself with the statements of the African Group and that of the Group of 77 and China.

This fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) follows on the success of the 12th United Nations Crime Congress held in Brazil in April, as well as the 19th Session of the CCPCJ.

South Africa is pleased with the scope of the Salvador Declaration in particular the various commitments undertaken by Member States to address with urgency the old and the new challenges in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. With regard to new and emerging crimes my delegation wishes to draw the attention of the Conference of Parties to the problem of the illicit trafficking of precious metals, which also requires a coordinated response from the international community.

South Africa participated in the United Nations General Assembly Special High-level Meeting on Transnational Organised Crime.

Madam President,

South Africa views transnational organised crime as yet another additional burden to the many and varied threats and challenges that continue to face the international community. These threats come with costs, with negative impacts on national and regional security, on economic growth and thus also on our individual and combined developmental efforts. Criminality, in particular organised crime, associated corruption and violence are major impediments to development.

In this regard South Africa is committed to continuously improve its national legal framework for dealing with organised criminal groups, money laundering, racketeering and gang-related activities, amongst others. We have enacted the Prevention of Organised Crime Act, the Criminal Procedure Act as well as the Financial Intelligence Centre Act as part of the edifice for fighting organised crime. Our attention also focuses on taking the proceeds of crime from criminals, through the Assets Forfeiture Unit. It is for this reason that our country has pledged its support to the Stolen Asset Recovery (STAR) initiative aimed at recovering stolen assets and returning them to their legitimate countries.

Furthermore, regarding the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, we have tabled a Bill in Parliament in March 2010 that will deal comprehensively with human trafficking in all its various forms. This legislation provides for the protection of and assistance to the victims of trafficking. South Africa is also compliant with the Firearms Protocol which requires State parties to criminalize the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. In line with Article 8 of the UN Protocol which places an obligation on all manufacturers to mark a firearm as part of their production process, South Africa has commenced with a comprehensive and unique marking system.

Madam President,

The challenges posed by transnational organised crime can be addressed or mitigated if Governments and the international community in general have one shared goal of building a culture of solidarity characterised by one common vision of ensuring the attainment of a better life for all.

We believe that to achieve this better life for all, we need to achieve universal ratification of the Convention and its Protocols, including the promulgation of national legislative and administrative mechanisms. We need to put into place bilateral and regional cooperation mechanisms, especially in respect of extradition, mutual legal assistance in investigations and obtaining evidence and assistance in confiscation and seizure of proceeds of crime through conviction and non-conviction legal processes. Victims of organised crime, especially trafficked and smuggled persons need support to get out of their appalling situations in countries of destination and be returned to their countries of origin.

Madam President,

In June and July, South Africa hosted the successful 2010 FIFA World Cup. We had to put into place measures to ensure a safe environment for all participants. We appreciate the support of the UNODC and other members of the UN family in helping us to address, amongst others, potential trafficking and smuggling problems.

In conclusion, my delegation looks forward to the possibility of a mechanism for the review of the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and its Protocols.

I thank you.