



**Statement by H.E., Mrs. Natalia Gherman, Deputy Prime-Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova, at the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Doha, Qatar**

Madam Chairperson,

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very honoured to have the opportunity to address you at this Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and I would like to thank the authorities of Qatar for being such a wonderful host.

We are gathered today to reaffirm the crucial role of the rule of law as an enabling condition for sustainable development and a foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and just world, a priority which we commit to uphold in the run-up to 2015 Summit and beyond.

There is an inextricable connection between criminal offences, justice and socio-economic development. Therefore, we strongly believe that the post-2015 development framework should tackle these challenges as an essential precondition for sustainable development.

Unfortunately, crime and violence, including homicide and drug trafficking are rampant in many parts of the world and in many cases their ferocity is beyond belief, a factor which seriously jeopardizes peace and prosperity. Moreover, the population in countries facing lower income and greater economic difficulties is exposed to greater threats for its security and wellbeing and, at the same time, very often economic problems increase the incentive for people to revert to crime and illicit behavior.

Studies illustrate that in the past decade the level of organization of criminal groups and networks had enhanced at an unprecedented level, with international criminal activities gaining a significant growth. New forms of crimes are evolving such as cybercrime and child abuse online which defy all boundaries, either physical or virtual. One of the most alarming unlawful activities is the trafficking in people and all sorts of goods and commodities, including arms and drugs, which generate incommensurable illegal profits.

In essence, colossal amounts of resources and finances are extracted from legitimate economies, having a weakening effect on them, and this is not only hurting peoples' livelihoods, but is also challenging and undermining the authority of governments, destabilizing societies and causing social unrests.

It is beyond doubt that the implementation of sustainable development goals is very much impacted by organized crime and if we are to deliver on our commitments on the new post-2015 agenda, we must strengthen our cooperation and step up efforts to address these challenges.

Distinguished delegates,

Last February in Chisinau, the Republic of Moldova hosted an international high level meeting dedicated to the Global Dialogue on Strengthening Capacities and Building Effective Institutions for the Implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, organized in partnership with the Government of Germany, and co-facilitated by the UNDP and ILO. One of the key issues discussed during that meeting was the need for upgraded, innovative and integrated institutions and capacities that are well-aligned with development priorities and planning processes. That goes very much in line with the necessity to build resilient national judicial institutions and increase law enforcement capacities to ensure the respect for the rule of law and reduce crime.

Structural reforms and transformations are required in order to ensure the integrity of judicial institutions, generate an environment for development opportunities and choices and address the risks factors for crime through education, job creation, promotion of social inclusion, eliminating gaps and inequalities and in this way discourage and keep people away from the motivation and the need to revert to crime.

My country is firm in its promise to deliver on a comprehensive judicial reform agenda in order to ensure the respect for the rule of law, a commitment which has been taken in the framework of the Moldova EU-Association Agreement. Several actions have been undertaken as part of the reform strategy, starting from measures to improve the judicial infrastructure and the quality of judicial services both at central and local levels and implement the e-justice system, to the consolidation of professional capacities in exercising the act of justice and modernization of data collection in criminal justice.

Keeping up with our endeavors to tackle international organized crime, our law enforcement agencies operate with the most updated and efficient tools in crime prevention such as Intelligence Led Policing, migration risks analysis, Joint Investigation Teams and border risks management.

In the last four years the Moldovan authorities prevented several attempts of smuggling uranium by international criminal networks. Our aim is to exclude Moldova from the route of criminal transit, reprimand such actions, help secure the frontiers from East to West and efficiently manage potential threats.

Let me also underline that the most recent data on organized crime in Moldova show a constant decrease in the number of exceptionally serious crimes, which is a result of our actions to consolidate and reform the law enforcement institutions, including the domestic police force, and to cooperate and exchange data with international organizations and intelligence centers such as EUROPOL, the South East European Law Enforcement Center, the EU Border Assistance Mission in Moldova and others. Today, Moldova is the only country in the Eastern Partnership which signed the Agreement on Operational and Strategic Cooperation with EUROPOL and Eurojust, providing for an effective exchange of information and criminal intelligence.

Nonetheless, there is a number of outstanding legislative and institutional initiatives which remain to be dealt with as part of the judicial reform strategy and the EU-Moldova Association Implementation Plan and this is the outmost priority of the Government in pursuing the EU agenda.

In terms of cooperation and international responsibility, Moldova is part to all core UN treaties on crime, including the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto, the UN Convention against Corruption, as well as the UN drug and terrorism related treaties, keeping the link between the international policy making processes and the national justice and crime prevention system and accountability mechanisms.

Excellencies,

Focusing on international cooperation, mutual legal assistance, especially in addressing evolving forms of crime, as well as assessing the effectiveness of criminal justice institutions are aspects of particular interest and relevance in the new post-2015 agenda. In this sense, my government strongly supports the upholding of ambitious pledges in those areas preparing the UN Summit in September and we will look for a meaningful follow-up of the results of this Congress by the UN General Assembly.

I thank you.