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Statement

By

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Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

and

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High Level Segment

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(His Excellency Mr. Suwat Liptapanlop, President of the
Congress) Mr. President
Secretary General of the Congress
Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates

Mr. President, let me begin by extending to you, the warm
congratulations of Sri Lanka on your appointment as the President
of this important Congress.

I am also grateful to the Government of Thailand for the gracious
hospitality extended to our delegation, ~~and to the UN Secretariat~~
for the ~~fine~~ arrangements.

~~In view of the~~ *Due to* time constraints I will skip some sections of my
statement, but it will be made available to delegations.

Mr. President, we meet in Bangkok at a momentous time in the
history of International Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.
The exacerbation of crime throughout the world over the last
decade in particular, has demanded of the international community
to take concerted and collective action against crime globally.
New forms of economic and financial crimes inter alia offenses
related to credit card, identity theft, money laundering etc., have
the potential to threaten national and international financial
systems. Significantly, in September 2001 the UN Security

Council resolution 1373 expressed serious concern on the close connection between international terrorism and other forms of crime. Almost five years later the situation seems exacerbated. It is in this context that the present Congress and its theme becomes more appropriate and relevant. Therefore, it is needless to say that the Bangkok Declaration should be an action oriented document.

Mr. President, today, the challenge before us is to recognize terrorism as the 'main enemy of modern society'. The most terrifying political development of the last three decades has been the rise of terrorism. We need to join hands more honestly and more dedicatedly with a sense of political commitment to fight the wave of terrorism. As many previous speakers stated, crime and terrorism have no national borders. It is this linkage that the international community must interdict collectively in order to provide our societies a secure future, and our people an opportunity to live in peace with dignity. Member states must ensure that they do not provide safe heavens, asylum or refugee status to members of terrorist groups of other countries.

Sri Lanka has been experiencing the manifestations of terrorism and transnational crimes over two decades. Many previous speakers elegantly explained the close links between the terrorism and the so-called non-conventional crimes. Engagement in such

activity by terrorist groups has resulted in raising huge funds for financing of terrorist activities.

Throughout the history of terrorism these terrorist groups have attempted to destroy as many lives of innocent civilians as they could, to seriously damage the economy, to destroy the democratic institutions and to devastate the national unity and territorial integrity of countries.

Sri Lanka strongly believes the UN as the most effective and appropriate forum to deal with challenges such as international crimes and terrorism. Sri Lanka is party to 10 of the relevant UN Conventions.

Sri Lanka has been in the forefront of regional efforts in SAARC against terrorism. Sri Lanka has been particularly involved in the drafting of the various UN conventions against terrorism, such as International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Financing. Sri Lanka welcomes the recent adoption of the Nuclear Terrorism Convention by consensus, in the Ad Hoc Committee, which was chaired by Sri Lanka. I have no doubt that those Conventions would give further momentum to complete the urgent task of finalizing the comprehensive convention for the suppression of terrorism during the 60th session of the UNGA as called by the UN Secretary General in his recent report. We also

welcome the recommendations of the high level panel and hope that this would lead to a clear and agreed definition of terrorism, by consensus. The completion of the comprehensive convention will no doubt send a clear message to those engaged in terrorism.

Sri Lanka also wishes to congratulate the UN Office on drugs and crime for its important role in UN's crime prevention agenda and commend the valuable technical cooperation that is provided particularly for the developing countries.

While concerted efforts at national, regional and international efforts are made to address the question of crimes, prevention of crime remains an equally important element. The humane treatment of offenders and assist them in developing skills would help their re-entry into wider society. This would also be an insurance to prevent them from returning to a life of crime. Treatment of offenders, such as drug consumers in appropriate cases, must be considered. Sri Lanka's correctional authorities have been particularly innovative in developing skills development programmes for them.

New draft legislation on Narcotic Drugs currently under preparation, contemplates judicial orders for treatment and rehabilitation, where appropriate.

In conclusion, Sri Lanka looks forward to the successful outcome of this Congress.

Thank you.