



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

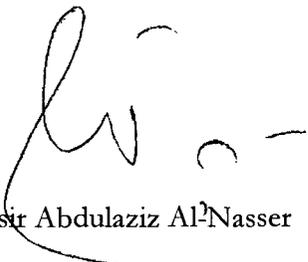
19 April 2012

Excellency,

Transnational organized crime and drug trafficking pose a challenge to the security and stability, including at regional and sub-regional level, in a context of growing violence, economic limitations, fiscal constraints, and institutional weaknesses. In order to highlight the fight against transnational organized crime in Central America in the broader framework of the United Nations' policies and actions, including a development-centered approach, as well as grant greater visibility and international cooperation to that end, I will convene a thematic debate on "Security in Central America as a Regional and Global Challenge: How to Promote and Implement the Central American Security Strategy". This meeting is organized in cooperation with the Government of Italy, the Government of Honduras, in its capacity as the President *pro tempore* of the Central American Integration System (SICA), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The debate will take place on 16 May 2012 at the General Assembly Hall, UN Headquarters, New York.

I am pleased to share with you the attached concept paper and tentative programme of the thematic debate for your reference. A detailed programme of the event will follow in due time, and will be available at a later stage on the website of the President of the General Assembly and the UN Journal.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY THEMATIC DEBATE ON
SECURITY IN CENTRAL AMERICA AS A REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGE:
HOW TO PROMOTE AND IMPLEMENT THE CENTRAL AMERICAN SECURITY STRATEGY
16 May 2012 – New York

BACKGROUND

Increasing violence fuelled by organized crime and drug trafficking is, with different country-specific degrees a major threat to the political stability and security of the Central American region, in a context of longstanding institutional weakness. UNODC's 2011 Global Study on Homicide found that killings in Central America were nearing a "crisis point," at a rate of more than 41 per 100 thousand citizens in Guatemala, 66 per 100 thousand in El Salvador, and 82 per 100 thousand in Honduras.¹

Transnational organized crime (TOC) and drug trafficking are a challenge to the region and a global threat. They jeopardize security, obstruct the functioning of public institutions, undermine respect for human rights, and threaten legitimate economic activities. In the short term, high crime and violence rates directly impact human welfare. In the long term, they hinder economic growth and social development. From this perspective, crime and violence are a development issue. No State can hope to defeat this threat on its own. A stronger regional and global response is needed. This has been recognized by all Central American countries and is the moving force of their regional strategy on security.

In recent years, the UN Member States have voiced their concern over the negative impact of TOC on development, peace and security, and human rights.² The UN was also encouraged to be more proactive in helping the region fight organized crime and impunity during the Central American Summit held in Guatemala City in March 2011, with the participation of the UN Secretary-General.

Regional Security Strategy for Central America, adopted at a meeting of Heads of State of Central America on 22 June 2011, marked the beginning of a new stage in the region's efforts to "consolidate Central America as a region that is safe, in peace, with freedom, democracy and development". The Strategy with its comprehensive approach received broad endorsement from the international community, especially the Group of Friends of the Conference, consisting of the main donors and key implementation partners, including UNODC, UNDP, the World Bank and other international organizations.

The Central American Integration System (SICA), which plays a leading role in the strategy, has asked the UN to lend its active support to implementation efforts. Such an initiative would be consistent with the goals of the United Nations Task Force on Transnational Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking, established by the Secretary-General in 2011 and led by DPA and UNODC.

This timely thematic debate, organized in cooperation with the Government of Italy, SICA, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), will discuss the challenges that transnational organized crime and drug trafficking pose to the security and stability of Central America in a context of growing violence, financial and fiscal constraints, and institutional weaknesses.

OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the thematic debate is to highlight the Central American Government's individual and collective fight against transnational organized crime, its focus in the framework of the United Nations' policies and actions, as well as the importance of cooperation with and support of the donor community.

Experience and best practices in countering organized crime in the context of balanced strategies, such as those pursued in Italy, can be useful in forging long-lasting solutions based on the Rule of Law, respect for human rights,

¹http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/Homicide/Globa_study_onhomicide_2011_web.pdf

² 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, A/RES/60/1, para 111; GA Resolution 65/232 of 21 December 2010; GA Resolution on "Strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity" adopted on 19 December 2011 (A/C.3/66/L.15/Rev.1).

and advanced legal and judicial tools aimed at identifying the complex structure of criminal networks and curtailing their financial power. The debate will also be a useful step in preparing the General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Rule of Law that will be held during the 66th Session of the UNGA.

The outcome of the thematic debate will be a President's Summary.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

High-level thematic debate will take place on Wednesday, 16 May 2012 at the General Assembly Hall, UN Headquarters, New York. The meeting will consist of opening and closing sessions and one interactive panel discussion.

Following presentations by the panellists, the floor will be open to delegates and other participants to pose questions and to share their experience and perspectives. Delegations are encouraged to engage in an open and interactive discussion. There will be no established list of speakers, and delegations are kindly asked to limit their interventions to a maximum of 3 minutes.

TIME	PROGRAMME
10am – 10:30am	<p><i>Opening Remarks:</i></p> <p>H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General H.E. Ms. Paola Severino, Minister of Justice of Italy H.E. Mr. Arturo Corrales Alvarez, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Honduras, President <i>pro tempore</i> of the Central American Integration System (SICA) H.E. Mr. Yury Fedotov, Under-Secretary-General, Executive Director of UNODC (video-message)</p>
10:30am – 11:10am	<p><i>Ministerial level participation from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama and other Member States [tbc]</i></p>
11:10am – 12:20am	<p><i>Interactive Panel Discussion:</i> <i>Security in Central America as a regional and global challenge:</i> <i>How to promote and implement the Central American Security Strategy</i></p> <p>Moderated by Mr. Sebastian Rotella, Correspondent and Investigative Reporter, ProPublica, 2006 Pulitzer Award Finalist for international reporting</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <p><i>Ms. Abigail Benzadón Cohen, Secretary-General, Council of Transparency against Corruption, Panama</i> <i>Ms. Aminta Granera, Chief, National Police, Nicaragua</i> <i>Mr. Pietro Grasso, Anti-Mafia National Prosecutor, Italy</i> <i>Mr. Juan Daniel Aleman Gurdian, Secretary-General, SICA</i> <i>Mr. Luis Alberto Moreno, President, Inter-American Development Bank</i> <i>Mr. Lynn Pascoe, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs</i> <i>UNDP Panelist [tbc]</i></p>
12:20pm – 12:50pm	<p><i>Exchange of Views</i></p>
12:50pm – 1pm	<p><i>Closing Remarks:</i></p> <p>H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly</p>