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Remarks of the UNODC Executive Director
UN COPS Summit: A connected world: global criminal challenges and UN
peace operations
New York, 3 June 2016

Distinguished participants,

Thank you for this opportunity to address the issue of global criminal challenges and UN peace operations.

The exacerbating impact of crime on conflict, and the need to prevent organized crime from spoiling peace, have been widely recognized.

In order to prevent crime challenges from further destabilizing fragile situations and undermining sustainable development, responses need to be integrated in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, security and development.

A well-functioning and reliable criminal justice system, that is fair and human rights compliant, is the basis for any effective response to the complex threats posed by drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism.

Addressing global criminal challenges in post-conflict contexts therefore may require comprehensive reform and capacity building of the criminal justice system, from police to prisons.

UNODC's response is based on the Conventions on transnational organized crime, corruption and drugs, the international counterterrorism instruments and the UN standards and norms on crime prevention and criminal justice.

These UN standards and norms can provide guidance on ensuring the accountability and integrity of criminal justice actors, the fair and humane treatment of offenders and prisoners, and the care and respect of the rights of victims and witnesses.

The rights of women, minorities, children and vulnerable groups are also central concerns addressed by UNODC when implementing criminal justice reform.

Furthermore, UNODC provides assistance to Member States in building, developing and strengthening their law enforcement capacities.

Check against delivery

Through our Networking the Networks initiative, UNODC seeks to build links between regional and international organizations, including INTERPOL, WCO, regional police organizations and law enforcement centres, the OSCE and others, to promote the exchange of information and intelligence, and support multilateral operations capable of addressing the transnational threats posed by organized crime.

As part of this initiative, we recently launched the Global Programme on Building Effective Networks Against Transnational Organized Crime (BENATOC).

With respect to peacekeeping operations, UNODC remains committed to working closely with DPKO and other partners.

An example of this is the West Africa Coast Initiative to combat drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, which brings together UNODC, DPKO, Interpol, DPA, UNOWA and ECOWAS.

The initiative has resulted in the creation of transnational organized crime units in the region, with two fully operational in Liberia and Sierra Leone, one established in Guinea-Bissau, and another we hope to start soon in Cote d'Ivoire.

With DPKO and other partners, we recently issued the Inter-agency Guidance Note on Security Sector Reform and Transnational Organized Crime to support practitioners in mainstreaming measures to counter transnational organized crime in security sector reform.

UNODC has also provided inputs to the DPKO Police Division, and welcomes the development of new guidance for post-conflict settings, including on community-oriented policing, which allows for more effective crime prevention by encouraging consultative and cooperative arrangements between police and the people they serve.

UNODC stands ready to support joint planning and programming missions, as well as training for incoming chiefs of police.

We also remain strongly committed to contributing to strengthening the ability of the UN system to work across its three pillars of peace and security, human rights and development.

Thank you.