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**Talking Points for Mr. Miroslav Jenča**

UN Chiefs of Police Summit

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UN Headquarters, New York, General Assembly Hall

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Department of Political Affairs, it is a pleasure to brief this unprecedented gathering of Chiefs of Police.

You protect the weak and vulnerable.

You work under extremely adverse circumstances.

You protect civilians, fight crime, and foster hope; provide help in the implementation of peace accords; facilitate humanitarian assistance; support electoral processes; and strengthen national capacities in the areas of rule of law and security.

As the Department charged with supporting Member States to prevent and resolve potentially violent disputes, DPA recognises the important role of police in preventing the escalation of tensions into conflict and violence.

We also see you as our partners in a collective endeavour to bring prevention to the center of our efforts. For we know you understand that preventing violence is a much better alternative than addressing its consequences.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The majority of our work today takes place in complex and fluid security and strategic contexts. In some of these environments, the line between political and criminal violence is blurred, as organized crime groups and drug trafficking syndicates strengthen their linkages to political authorities and processes.

These illicit actors and their networks can become spoilers of peace, fueling violence and extremism that can lead to conflict and violence. They corrupt and weaken state institutions, ultimately making them unable to provide lasting responses to conflict.

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In other settings, transnational non-state actors, including armed insurgents, rebels and other combatant groups, move easily across borders, demonstrating vast gaps in border security.

Many of these dynamics can threaten international peace and security. To address them, good policing is one of our most important tools.

Police are at the forefront of efforts to combat the rise of violence where criminality threatens national security.

A police service that acts with integrity is a strong sign of a peaceful and resilient society, with functional and accountable institutions.

The perceptions of police are critical to easing political tensions.

Where national police are seen as instruments of power and abuse, threatening the physical integrity of civilians, it complicates already volatile situations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Some of your countries contribute police to UN peace operations. As DPA, we are grateful for that support, because the Police Components of our Special Political Missions, while relatively small, have a big impact.

UN Police support to domestic institutions to counter organized crime has been valuable to some of our missions and elsewhere. Member States have benefitted from strong border security and management, including maritime security, which is central to deterring the criminal elements who traffic in drugs, arms and other illicit goods.

In Guinea Bissau, the Police Component has continued to lead international efforts in providing strategic and technical advice and support to the Government to combat drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, in close cooperation with UNODC. It also provides strategic and technical advice to the Transnational Crime Unit within the context of the West Africa Coast Initiative.

In Somalia, in the framework of the assistance that we are providing to the government to implement the provisions of the constitution, the Police Component is providing policy advice to the Federal Government, including through strategic guidance on developing a federal security architecture. For the first time ever in Somalia history, a recent consultative conference of Ministers for Internal Security at both federal and state levels agreed on a federal policing model. The Police Component will also continue to support

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the gender desks recently established at four police stations in Somalia, and to advise AMISOM police.

Ladies and gentlemen,

My key message to you today is that police are key in our conflict prevention efforts. As a Department, we will continue to rely on your cooperation, as we see strengthening policing as a core element of promoting the rule of law and sustaining peace.

As we seek to support Member States on the 2030 Agenda, your work will be an integral part of helping conflict-affected countries to implement Sustainable Development Goal 16, which calls for the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice for all, and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The role of policing in our efforts to sustain peace is also critical. As recent reviews of UN Peace Operations made specific recommendations in this area. For example, it noted that police reform had to link with the whole ‘justice chain’, including courts and prosecutors, as progress at one end of the justice chain was often undermined by failures or delays at the other.

The Report also stressed that policing assistance had to be accompanied by reform of internal and external oversight mechanisms, such as internal discipline and parliamentary, judicial and human rights institutions.

We welcome the recommendations of the Report, and look forward to working with all of you as we take the recommendations forward.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We believe that policing can make a unique contribution to preventing conflict, sustaining peace, promoting safe and inclusive societies, and protecting the rights of everyone.

In DPA, we are committed to working with you in order to jointly fulfill our important obligations to the people we collectively serve.

Thank you.