

**UNOV Director-General/UNODC Executive Director's Remarks
Handover Ceremony for the Chairmanship of the Group of 77, Vienna
Chapter
Thursday, January 26, 10:30 AM, CR-1**

Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my honour to join you today at the handover ceremony for the chairmanship of the Group of 77, Vienna Chapter.

I would like to start by commending and thanking Ambassador Ezzedine Farhane of Morocco for his leadership of the Group throughout the past year, and congratulating Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher of Pakistan for assuming the Chairmanship.

As Chair of the G-77 Vienna Chapter, Ambassador Farhane was a steadfast partner for the Vienna-based organizations, and we are grateful for his support and leadership.

For the UN Office at Vienna and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, our partnership with the G-77 is very much at the heart of our purpose and our work.

During the past year, as the world grappled with crises and developing countries suffered the gravest consequences, we worked together to ensure stronger responses in the face of growing risks of crime and exploitation.

Throughout 2022, UNODC's total delivery reached a record high of more than 330 million dollars' worth of projects implemented.

This included over 140 million dollars' worth of projects implemented through our regional offices across the G77 regions, providing technical assistance and building capacities.

We also implemented projects worth more than 190 million dollars through our global programmes, addressing many issues of priority for the G77, such as terrorism, corruption, and countering different forms of trafficking.

Last year we also launched our first-ever Strategic Vision for Latin America and the Caribbean and continued to implement our Strategic Vision for Africa, focusing on initiatives that provide for an integrated and continental approach.

As emergencies around the world continued to rage, we were present to support responses, including to prevent illicit flows from Afghanistan and to counter the impact of drugs in and around the country, and to assist UN efforts to restore security and the rule of law in Haiti.

To help stabilize soaring food prices following the outbreak of conflict in Ukraine, we provided UNODC inspectors to support the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which has facilitated the export of more than 18 million metric tons of grain and foodstuffs to date.

And at the COP27 climate conference in Sharm El-Sheikh, where developing countries took a historic step for climate justice through the loss and damages fund, we were there to support your cause, and to shed light on crimes that affect the environment and how they rob developing countries of resources and livelihoods.

But now I would like to look forward, to the important milestones ahead of us.

This year, the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption will convene its tenth session, while marking the 20th anniversary of the Convention.

It is a real opportunity to revitalize global efforts against corruption, which remains a major obstacle to sustainable development, peace and security, as well as to emergency recovery.

This year will also be pivotal for ongoing negotiations to establish a UN convention on the criminal misuse of ICTs, an instrument that can make digital spaces safer and address urgent gaps in knowledge and capacity, and I am quite optimistic that Member States will continue to make progress towards a convention.

And as global risks persist, we will continue to work with you to identify and deliver the assistance you need against emerging threats.

Meanwhile, we remain committed to improving geographical representation in our staff, to reflect the diversity of the United Nations and the people we serve.

At UNODC, the share of staff from under-represented regions increased in 2022, while the share from the most represented regional group has declined.

Excellencies,

The Group of 77 speaks for billions of people around the world from 134 Member States.

I have always been and will always be proud to be from a G77 Member State.

I am also hugely proud and impressed to see the Group's members taking the lead at some of the most central international bodies in Vienna.

This year, the Chair of the CND, Colombia, the Chair of the CCPCJ, Kenya, and the Chair of the ad-hoc committee negotiating the cybercrime convention, Algeria, are all G77 countries, and I am confident that their leadership will pave the path to progress.

In a world that grows more polarized every day, the commitment of the G77 to multilateralism ignites hope, and this Vienna Chapter is a testament to the role of the Group as a voice of reason, and as a vital player in the pursuit of just and sustainable development.

I look forward to continuing our excellent partnership, under the able leadership of Ambassador Khokher, and I wish him and all of you a very fruitful year. Thank you.