

**UNOV Director-General /  
UNODC Executive Director  
Congratulatory Remarks  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Group of 77 Vienna Chapter  
Wednesday, May 31, 2023  
13:15 – 14:20, Board Room C**

Ambassador Khokher,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me to join you today, I am delighted to take part in this celebration. For 25 years, the Vienna Chapter of the Group of 77 has been a vital partner for the UN Office at Vienna and all the Vienna-based organizations.

So my colleagues and I are here today not only to celebrate with you, but to express our sincere thanks for your active engagement and steadfast commitment to the work that we do.

With 134 member countries accounting for more than two-thirds of the global population, the Group of 77 and its five chapters in Geneva, Nairobi, Paris, Rome and Vienna are influential advocates for – and an embodiment of – multilateralism, solidarity and cooperation.

The Vienna Chapter is an important voice for the most vulnerable. For 25 years you have stood up for people in the developing world, to promote their right to security, integrity and the rule of law, to industrial development, to live in safety from nuclear threats and benefit from peaceful uses of nuclear technologies – and more.

Your voice is essential in today's increasingly polarized world, as we face the very real risk of failing to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Because developing countries are being harmed most by the toxic convergence of poverty, violence, inequality, and health and climate crises that is rolling back our hard-won progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals.

Last week, at the annual session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the President of the General Assembly underscored that if we continue to take the same approaches to the SDGs, we will never achieve them, even if we pick up the pace of our efforts. He called for game-changers to jumpstart progress and get the 2030 Agenda back on track.

So as we approach the SDG Summit, we need the G77's vision, experience and energy more than ever before.

For UNODC, our partnership with the G77 is indispensable. I sincerely thank you for your statements of support for UNODC's work at this year's meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

UNODC is striving to ensure that developing countries have the tools and capacities they need to build inclusive societies that are resilient to crime and exploitation, that protect the safety, health and wellbeing of their people, and that empower women, youth and vulnerable people so that no one is left behind.

UNODC's Strategic Visions for Africa and for Latin America and the Caribbean help us tailor our technical assistance to national and regional needs, and guide us in promoting South-South cooperation for just and sustainable development.

But G77 countries are not only UNODC's partners, they are our leaders. This year, both of our governing bodies are chaired by G77 members – the Commission on Narcotic Drugs by Colombia, and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice by Kenya. And the ad-hoc committee negotiating a cybercrime convention is chaired by Algeria.

Moreover, all but one of the draft proposals submitted at this year's sessions of the CND and the CCPCJ were either sponsored or co-sponsored by at least one G77 country.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As a citizen of a G77 country myself, I am proud of how much the Group has achieved. And I look forward

to celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Group of 77 with you next year.

The Group of 77 is an engine for global cooperation that can propel us toward a safer, more prosperous, greener and more equitable future for all.

You can count on UNOV, UNODC and all the Vienna-based organizations as your reliable partners.

Thank you.