



Statement of Australia
Head of Delegation, Mr David Lewis
Seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the
UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
Vienna, 7 October 2014

Mr President

The Australian delegation congratulates you on your election as chair of the Conference, and looks forward to working with you – and the Extended Bureau – during the week. We thank the Secretariat for its preparations for this Conference and the outgoing chair, Ambassador Budiman of Indonesia, for his work over the past two years.

Mr President

As the Executive Director highlighted in his opening statement, organised crime exploits our interconnected world. Organised crime in all of our countries is inextricably linked to international organised crime.

In this context, strong bilateral, regional and international partnerships are now more fundamental to combatting organised crime than ever before. The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime is critical to these efforts. This Conference is an important opportunity for us to reflect upon the progress we have made to date and to find ways to enhance our cooperation in the future.

Australia strongly supports the important role of the **UN Office on Drugs and Crime**. We welcomed the release of the UNODC's Transnational Organized

Crime Threat Assessment for East Asia and the Pacific in 2013. The Threat Assessment estimated the combined income generated by illicit income flows in the region to be nearly US\$90 billion and highlighted the need to integrate regional strategies.

The Threat Assessment highlights the susceptibility of the **Pacific region** to a range of transnational crime threats, including corruption, environmental crime and drug trafficking. Australia is committed to working with our partners in the region to combat these threats, including through networks of police¹ and law officers², and support for multilateral efforts, such as the UNODC-UNDP Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption project. Effective anti-crime strategies will help promote long-term sustainable development, the rule of law, good governance and political stability and security in the region.

Mr President

People smuggling and trafficking in persons are insidious crimes that also require a concerted regional response, as recognised in the People Smuggling and Human Trafficking Protocols. Australia is firmly committed to this response, in particular working with partners through the 48-member Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, and, with ASEAN, through the Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

Money laundering and corruption are key and interrelated enablers of organised crime. Australia has a robust regime to detect and deter money laundering and is committed to constant improvement to respond to evolving threats. The globalised nature of financial flows requires a coordinated legal, regulatory and operational approach. Australia is working with countries in our region to assist with laws and policies to combat money laundering and

¹ Pacific Transnational Crime Network.

² Pacific Islands Law Officers' Network.

corruption, in line with international standards. As current President of the **G20** we are working to strengthen tax systems, anti-corruption and transparency; and as President of the **Financial Action Task Force** we are working to help set international standards for combatting money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

International **legal cooperation** is another vital tool for combatting transnational organised crime. Enhancing the efficacy and efficiency of multilateral instruments, including UNTOC, as well as regional and bilateral cooperation, is a high priority for Australia. We encourage States parties to review their cooperation processes and welcome the opportunity to work with other states to streamline these procedures.

Mr President

Australia is committed to working with other countries to respond to new forms and dimensions of transnational organised crime, including **maritime crime**. This is particularly important for Australia. In the Indian Ocean, we have committed naval assets to the Combined Maritime Forces combating piracy, narcotics trafficking and terrorism off the Horn of Africa, and have supported the UNODC's Maritime Crime Programme to build criminal justice capacity and implement the piracy prosecution model. In the Pacific, the new Pacific Maritime Security Program will strengthen the capability of Pacific Island countries to respond to maritime security, transnational crime and fisheries protection.

Most organised crime activities in Australia are focused on illicit drug markets, an emerging segment of which is **new psychoactive substances**. Australia is implementing domestic reforms and supporting international cooperation to tackle the challenges posed by new psychoactive substances. We are working closely with the UNODC on this issue, including supporting development of the global synthetics early warning advisory.

Mr President

A key topic for discussion this week is the establishment of an **implementation review mechanism**. It is over a decade since the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime entered into force. As states party, we committed ourselves to reviewing its implementation periodically.

Australia remains convinced of the usefulness of such a mechanism, providing we work together to get the right one: one which enables States parties to develop and strengthen domestic responses to combat transnational crime threats; one which does not tie up States, particularly developing states, in burdensome self-reporting; and one which includes robust participation of civil society, which can help identify and understand gaps in implementation.

Australia looks forward to working constructively with other States Parties towards a consensus approach.

Mr President

In closing, Australia looks forward to working with you and the other States Parties as trusted partners in the fight against the international scourge of organised crime.

Thank you.