

**UN 10<sup>TH</sup> CRIME CONGRESS: HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT**

**DRAFT SPEAKING NOTE FOR CHARLES CLARKE**

Mr/Madam Chairman, thank you for giving me the opportunity to address this Congress. In a fast-changing world, flexibility and innovation are essential: we must tackle 21<sup>st</sup> century crime by 21<sup>st</sup> century means. And, in a world where traditional legal boundaries between nation states are more likely to facilitate law-breaking than to prevent it, governments need to cooperate in the fight against crime as never before.

I would like to focus my remarks on the problem of organised crime. Organised crime has many victims, but the hardest hit are not rich people or rich countries, but ordinary people - especially the poor and the vulnerable and developing 'countries. Organised crime brings wealth to a few people by hurting the many.

It generates an atmosphere of fear and corruption. It subverts the rule of law.

And it limits economic progress and investment. Some countries are in danger of being overwhelmed by organised crime, and there is a real risk of serious damage to their economic development and stability. Legitimate markets, fiscal policy, lawful authority and democracy itself are subverted through racketeering, tax evasion, corruption, intimidation and violence. This deters the overseas investment and aid needed to lift the poor from poverty.

It is a vicious circle, from which only vicious and lawless people draw any profit.

It goes without saying that governments have a special responsibility to protect their own citizens from the effects of crime. But there is now a growing recognition of the need for effective cooperation across national boundaries in fighting crime.

In this respect, the UK Government attaches particular importance to completion of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime and its three protocols. It will be a milestone in the fight against organised crime.

The negotiations have been difficult. The timetable and scale of the work are demanding, but I believe it still remains possible to complete the work this year, given sufficient political will and commitment. All concerned will need to show a spirit of compromise, but also a willingness to achieve progress where it counts most. The international community has a shared interest in securing a Convention that is both workable and effective in concrete terms.

I would not want to mention the Convention without referring also to the three protocols that will accompany it, on firearms, trafficking in human beings and illegal migrants. The UK Government attaches great importance to all three Protocols. To highlight only one of these, the proposed Protocol on illicit manufacture and trafficking of firearms is important and timely. Firearms are dangerous commodities that are particularly attractive to organised crime. Unlike many of the issues dealt with in law enforcement, however, firearms that are illicitly manufactured and traded are often derived from legitimate sources, often in other jurisdictions around the world. As a result, efforts to control their criminal use cannot avoid considering the regulations under which firearms are legally manufactured and traded internationally. These considerations, and the international cooperation on which they are built, lie at the very heart of the Protocol.

I welcome the emphasis in the draft Declaration on practical cooperation and assistance for implementing the Convention and its protocols. A legal text by

itself achieves very little. The UK already cooperates in practical ways with many other countries in the fight against organised crime, for example through police and customs officers based in British Embassies throughout the world, and through partnerships between our police forces and specified countries. We will support further initiatives of this kind.

One example is the establishment of a Criminal Intelligence Unit to tackle organised crime in Kosovo. As has already been announced by our Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, the UK has decided to contribute around 20 police and Customs officers and analysts to the United Nations International Police to help set up this Unit.

A major theme in this Congress is innovation: the adoption of new measures to meet new challenges. The UK also welcomes the initiatives under way in international and regional fora to combat organised crime. The UK is participating actively innovative initiatives in a number of international and regional fora, including the work by the Financial Action Task Force on noncooperating jurisdictions, and the negotiation of a Cybercrime Convention in the Council of Europe. This Congress provides a valuable opportunity for spreading the word about new and better methods of cooperation.

The UK Government has also been determined to improve the UK's own performance as a judicial cooperation partner to other countries, as well as the performance of our dependent territories. For example, the UK has recently embarked on a complete review of its Mutual Legal Assistance procedures. This review will culminate in the introduction of new legislation, as well as implementing the new procedures and practices envisaged in the EU Convention currently under negotiation.

On extradition, too, we have recently announced plans to review our procedures, with the aim of speeding up and streamlining the assistance we give to other jurisdictions.

A second example is the attack on the assets of criminals. The UK is determined to do more to prevent criminals from laundering their money through its financial centres and investment markets. We are actively examining the mechanisms by which criminal assets can be traced and confiscated, and we aim to bring forward detailed proposals for improvement early this summer.

The UK continues to encourage high standards of financial regulation in our Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies with a view to the promotion of effective anti-money-laundering measures and regulatory structures within those jurisdictions. For example, the Edwards Report on Financial Regulation in the Crown Dependencies of Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man, published in November 1988, while finding much to commend in the systems already in place, has prompted those Islands to upgrade their regulatory legislation and structures. All three jurisdictions have brought into operation comprehensive all-crimes money-laundering legislation. Moreover, a Review is currently being carried out of financial regulation in the finance centres among our Overseas Territories.

The United Nations has played an important role in mobilising the international community against crime. It has led the way in the fight against drug trafficking, and I welcome the attention it is now giving to other types of organised crime. I strongly endorse the UN's general aim of promoting tough and effective law enforcement, balanced by effective safeguards for human rights and standards of justice, in accordance with the priority themes of the UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme. The Centre for International Crime Prevention plays a very constructive role in promoting the rule of law and strengthening criminal justice systems worldwide.

In order to make the best use of the resources available, I would emphasise the importance of focussing on tangible outcomes. Meetings should be short, focussed and lead to concrete results. Programmes of technical assistance

should in the same way be designed to achieve measurable changes on the ground.

Mr/Madam Chairman, our experience in the UK has already demonstrated the benefits of effective crime prevention and law enforcement. By involving the whole local community, high-crime neighbourhoods have escaped the downward spiral of delinquency and economic decay, and have again become safe places to live.

In the same way, I believe that effective measures against organised crime and corruption in any part of the world will create a virtuous circle that encourages investment and economic progress. I believe that this Congress will have achieved one of its most important goals if it mobilises political will and the resources of the world community to that end. And the United Kingdom will continue to give its full support to such international efforts to fight organised crime and to reinforce the rule of law.