

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

STATEMENT TO THE TENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS

BY

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HEAD OF ZAMBIAN DELEGATION

Mr. President,

Allow me to express my delegation's Congratulations on your assumption of the Presidency of the TENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS. We are confident that under your stewardship, the congress will bear a fruitful outcome. I would also like to facilitate other officers on their election and assure you all of my delegation's full support in your important task.

Mr. President,

Crime rate throughout the world, and particularly in developing Countries is on a rapid increase and evidence to the effect that the world has been caught in a vicious crime wave is readily available in that the political leadership, the police, the judges, the magistrates, and of course, the public at large, have almost become daily spokesmen on crime through various newsmedia and other fora. Police Services for example, have in their possession data on Crime Statistics to prove that the cry against crime is not an empty slogan.

Crime, and in particular violent crime holds countries to ransom. It is, in one way or another affecting every member of Society on daily basis.

It is affecting the economy. It is affecting foreign investments. It is affecting the outflow of valuable human resources. It is affecting the rich. It is affecting the poor. It is affecting our lives, our physical and spiritual well being. It is affecting our future and stability. It is threatening the very fibre of our Society.

Historically, Crime has been confined to single States or Cities, Nowadays however, as the world order has changed during the past decades, Crime has expanded its area of interest to become a TRANSNATIONAL phenomenon and has changed its nature of operations. Crime has now become ORGANISED with syndicates who have the ability to penetrate and use institutions of the State. They have good state contacts which enable their criminal operations to run more smoothly, while forewarning crime bosses of any government attempt at crackdown. Syndicates of Organised Crime have a hierarchy of control with clearly designated rank structures and systems of promotion and payment. They generally operate according to sophisticated procedures often through legitimate business interests, to launder money obtained through illegal activities. These Organisations also have access to weapons to ensure that 'business routes' are protected and (where necessary) potential competitors eliminated.

Organised criminal cartels have no respect for countries' boundaries; they collaborate and share criminal intelligence amongst themselves. On the Contrary, Police forces operate in isolation, thereby making it difficult to fight transnational crime. Inorder for us to succeed in our fight against organised and transnational crime, it is imperative for us to stop being individualistic in our operations and start working closely and sharing criminal intelligence. I am pleased, nonetheless, to state that in the Southern African Region, there is practical co-operation between Police Forces of member states in the fight against transnational crime. Since 1997, for example, member states have had joint operations in all member states, targeting THEFTS OF MOTOR VEHICLES, DRUG TRAFFICKING, ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS AND PRECIOUS STONES etc. Results of these Joint Operations have been encouraging. Furthermore, Police Forces of Member States are sharing Criminal Intelligence, an action that has notably kept criminal cartels on the run.

2. EFFECTIVE CRIME PREVENTION

Mr. President,

Having expounded and seen how organised criminal syndicates operate, I will now proceed to talk about EFFECTIVE CRIME PREVENTION. This is an important area to law enforcement officers because PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE.

Crime can be reduced if approached systematically. Crime Prevention involves responding to a few priority problems using different types of approaches. These approaches aim at addressing the causes of, and opportunities for, particular crime problems. Crime Prevention is also about ensuring that laws are enforced and that fear of crime is reduced.

Crime is usually caused when three things happen:

- (i) there is a willing or vulnerable victim (target),
- (ii) a willing and able offender, and
- (iii) an environment or location which is conducive to committing an offence (i.e there are few Police Officers or other security personnel, the area is unlit or deserted etc)

To reduce crime, something needs to be done about all the factors illustrated above. In case of a robbery, for example, the Police could patrol the area, and if called to the scene of crime, arrest the offender. With the assistance of the Police, the Courts could convict and sentence the offender.

However, improving street lighting, planning the layout of parking lot and where the shopping centre is situated,

cutting the long grass etc. can not be undertaken by law enforcement agencies. These are functions of local government, local business, owners of shopping centre and the Community.

The principle behind crime prevention strategy is to engage the assistance of all those who can (and should) help to solve a crime problem. Since no single agency is responsible for all the elements that cause crime, a joint effort is needed. This is what is referred to as the "PARTNERSHIP" approach. Partnership brings together those who have something to contribute.

I Thank you, Mr. President.