



Security Council

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Letter dated 17 February 2010 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a concept paper for the briefing to be given by Mr. A. M. Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to the Security Council on 24 February 2010 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gérard Araud



Annex to the letter dated 17 February 2010 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Threats to international peace and security: concept paper in preparation for the briefing by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The Security Council and transnational threats

The Security Council has several times noted with concern the consequences of transnational threats, such as organized crime and drug trafficking, for international peace and security.

It has repeatedly noted the role played by drug trafficking and organized crime in the emergence of conflicts in places such as Afghanistan (resolutions 1817 (2008) and 1890 (2009)), Haiti (resolution 1892 (2009)) and Guinea-Bissau (presidential statements of 15 October 2008 and 5 November 2009).

It also considered the issue from a more general point of view in resolution 1373 (2001) on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (the Council “[noted] with concern the close connection between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, money-laundering, illegal arms-trafficking, and illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other potentially deadly materials”) and in the presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/32) on peace and security in Africa (“the Security Council notes with concern the serious threats posed in some cases by drug trafficking and related transnational organized crime to international security in different regions of the world, including in Africa”).

A threat to security

Transnational threats create roots for the development of regional and global tensions. Drug trafficking and related transnational organized crime encourage money-laundering and make possible the financing of non-governmental armed groups. Organized crime networks threaten effective State control on borders and territories. They undermine the authority of States, spread corruption and weaken economic development. Therefore, they pave the way for radicalization processes that can lead to violent extremism and terrorism. Insurgents and criminals develop close ties to profit from this instability and in some cases create the conditions for such instability.

As a matter of fact, transnational threats are a destabilizing factor in every crisis where the United Nations operates. They take advantage of the weakness of States in conflict situations and make the return to peace and economic development a more protracted and more difficult process for those States.

A growing challenge

The international community has adopted several conventions in order to counter transnational threats in a comprehensive approach:

- the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961,

- the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971,
- the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988,
- the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000,
- the United Nations Convention against Corruption of 2003.

However, in the last decade, advances in technology, open borders and open markets have created greater cross-border opportunities for criminal groups. As a result, organized crime has diversified, gone global, and has reached macroeconomic proportions. It has developed even closer links with drug trafficking, corruption and terrorism. It poses a greater threat to national and global security than when the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was adopted. No part of the world is immune. Particularly vulnerable are post-conflict regions, areas where the rule of law is weak and countries that suffer from underdevelopment.

Briefing by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The purpose of the meeting proposed by France, to be held on 24 February 2010, is to draw greater attention to the consequences of transnational threats for regional and international security, mobilize political will to act and give added support to the more effective use of United Nations instruments and tools designed to prevent and control crime.

The discussion will open with a briefing by Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Possible themes of discussion may include the following:

- *Legal basis*: Current challenges 10 years after the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
- *Multilateral cooperation*: Strategy to reduce vulnerability to drugs and crime, when threats come from non-State and transnational actors which are not accountable to intergovernmental bodies or respectful of sovereign borders;
- *Information*: Threat assessment, intelligence-sharing, mutual legal assistance and strategic analysis;
- *Role of the United Nations*: Mainstreaming of the issue of crime prevention as a factor in conflict prevention strategies, conflict analysis and assessment and planning of integrated missions;
- *Role of the Security Council*: Opportunity, as appropriate, for regular briefings by a representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on transnational threats, in particular transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, on a semi-annual basis.