

**The Statement of the Lithuanian Head of Delegation, Minister of Justice
Dr. Gintautas Buzinskas to the Eleventh United Nations Congress
On Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

April 18-25, 2005, Bangkok, Thailand

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Lithuania I express the gratitude to our host Thai Government and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for *an excellent organisation* of this important congress to debate a wide range of most pertinent issues.

Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement of the European Union delivered by the Minister of Justice of Luxembourg. Using this opportunity let me *share our national experiences on regional co-operation*, which plays a *significant* role in complementing the global *endeavours* in fighting various phenomena of crime.

Mr. President,

Since *almost ten years* the Baltic Sea region countries *closely cooperate* when dealing with the common crime related issues. The co-operation involving the *eleven* Baltic Sea region countries has proved *dynamic, effective* and *adapted to* the modern challenges. The main object of the co-operation is related to narcotics, money laundering, corruption, trafficking in human beings, trafficking in stolen vehicles as well as environmental crime.

A special regional framework, namely the Baltic Sea Task Force on organised crime, *has been established*. Being comprised from the different law enforcement and prevention institutions, it provides a basis for an *on-going, daily co-operation among them*. This direct co-operation among joint investigative teams – has proven to be an efficient tool in combating organised crime.

In the context of the regional activities, I particularly would like to emphasize the question of the protection of witnesses and victims. *It is essential for the state to be able to protect those individuals*. Being actively involved in witness and victims protection *a clearing house on the witness and victims protection within the Task Force have been entrusted to Lithuania*. Additional bilateral activities on witness protection are practically carried out in several Baltic Sea region states as well. The tailor oriented training programmes for various professionals are also essential to ensure effective response to the new challenges arising in the fight against organised crime.

Such a close co-operation on the political and on the practical level between existing structures has *gained mutual trust, which is a vital condition for the successful co-operation*. The work of our regional structures is coordinated with other states and international organisations, especially Europol and Interpol. We believe that such regional co-operation provides an added value and complements efforts of the different institutions.

Mr. President,

In the context of our current debate on the new legal instruments the special emphasis should be devoted to the implementation of the existing legal documents, in particular in the anti-corruption field. In our view, it is of the utmost importance to *fully implement already existing* international documents before engaging into the complex and difficult negotiations on the new instruments. On its part, Lithuania is among the signatories of the UN *Convention against Corruption and is committed to ratify it before the end of this year*. The *existing political will* among the key political forces as well as national legal framework and the institutional capacities *will allow us to undertake this serious commitment*. After being a recipient country for number of years, Lithuania *increases* its assistance *capabilities* to share our transformation experiences with other countries, especially those *adjacent* to our region.

In conclusion, *distinguished colleagues* it is our joint responsibility to reinforce our efforts against various crime phenomena's, which affects the global economy; a stability of the states, especially those in the post-conflict zones, and our society as a whole. We commend the United Nations Secretariat as well as various intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals present here who on the daily basis carry out this *arduous* work in monitoring the situation and jointly working to provide the efficient strategies to combat the international crime.

Thank you for your attention.