

**ADDRESS BY BARONESS SCOTLAND TO  
UNITED NATIONS CRIME CONGRESS- APRIL  
2005-BANGKOK**

Mr Chairman,

On behalf of the United Kingdom I would like to thank the government of Thailand for organising this event and for their wonderful hospitality

It is my great honour to address the 11<sup>th</sup> International Crime Congress ~~in~~ particularly since in our current role ~~of~~<sup>as</sup> chair of the G8 and forthcoming presidency of the European Union, we are provided with challenges and opportunities to promote work on international cooperation in the fight against organised crime both through these groups and other regional and international fora.

Organised crime and terrorist groups are often transnational in nature- they do not respect borders. As such, we must take a comprehensive international approach to combat these phenomena. This relies on being able to cooperate at the international level with confidence in the legal framework of other countries for the enforcement of law and the respect for human rights. For this reason we welcome very much the UN conventions that provide us with the necessary legal framework. Full implementation by Member States of the requirements of The United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime and The United Nations Convention against Corruption must be our priority. It is important that collectively we keep a strong focus on the implementation of these Conventions. We should not lose this focus or

weaken our ability to act in this area by spreading our resources too thinly with time consuming negotiations aimed at developing new instruments, which it seems to us, are unnecessary at this time.

I am pleased to say that the United Kingdom has, this month, enacted new legislation which should enable us to ratify these two conventions in the near future.

International cooperation is key to fighting terrorism and the United Kingdom is committed to working with partners to further this agenda. For example we are looking forward to working with other EU member states on the delivery of the EU Action Plan on Terrorism. Our G8 Presidency has been taking forward delivery of the G8 initiative to enhance aviation security and tackle other aspects of terrorism and organised crime. We have been

participants in the elaboration of the Council of Europe's draft Convention for the Prevention of Terrorism. It has been proposed that this European Convention, when finalised, will be an open treaty available to all States to sign. In this context, we welcome the agreement in New York on the Nuclear Terrorism Convention. It is also in this spirit of progress that we urge all Member States to renew their determination to reach agreement on the text of the UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism as soon as possible.

One of the strongest weapons the international community has in the fight against transnational organised crime and terrorism groups, is our ability to disrupt their funding. In this regard the UK has developed some of the most comprehensive

domestic legislation in the world, which has proved invaluable in our domestic law enforcement work. Seizing the proceeds of crime is a vital tool - the Proceeds of Crime Act has provided UK law enforcers with the robust legislation they need to enable them to deny organised criminal gangs the fruits of crime. The impact of this legislation can be witnessed by fact that £84 million has been seized in the course of the last year - a substantial increase over previous years

The international approach to combating organised crime, if it is to succeed in the longer term, must fully include the rule of law and sustainable development underpinned by democracy, good governance and human rights. Corruption undermines all of these and so we welcome the

number of signatures and ratifications of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and we look forward to its early entry into force. The international community also has a responsibility to ensure that terrorists and organised crime groups cannot find safe havens by preying on weaker states. Well organised technical assistance for developing countries, based around the framework of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption is of paramount importance for reducing the destructive negative impact of corruption on sustainable development.

The United Kingdom would like to express our appreciation for the sponsorship by Canada of the recent UN Intergovernmental Expert Group meeting, which provided an invaluable forum for

discussion of the study on fraud and the criminal misuse and falsification of identity. Fraud is very damaging in itself but is also employed by organised criminal and terrorist groups and we would support broadening the scope of the study to cover the fraudulent use of documents, particularly travel documents, terrorism and other areas of organised crime.

*In addressing all these issues it is of the utmost importance that we do not lose sight of the*  
Moving on to talk about an issue of particular  
*needs and just expectations of the UK*  
interest to the UK, it is worth remembering that for every crime there is a victim as well as a perpetrator. The UK government strongly supports the principle of restorative justice and is currently undertaking significant research in this area. It is our belief that this approach can not only address the needs of victims, it is also an effective measure

However the research data  
in respect of the latter is not  
clear. Thus although we  
believe that it is of critical  
importance to establish a  
robust evidence-based implementation  
strategy if its impact on recidivism  
is to be established.



to reduce the rate of reoffending. We are pleased that this work has been given such a high profile by the congress and is being taken forward at an international level. As restorative justice develops and is adapted to different situations and systems in different jurisdictions, it is important that basic standards are applied. The United Kingdom welcomes the UN's "Declaration of Basic Principles" in providing guidance and encouraging debate. This is still an evolving area of work and it is important that we learn from one another's experience and share good practice.

In conclusion, Mr Chairman, this Congress has provided an excellent platform for the international community to continue to develop the effectiveness

of our ability to protect our citizens from crime and to develop international systems based on the rule of law and sustainable development. We look forward to working with all our international partners both bilaterally and multilaterally to formulate a strategic and lasting approach. Transnational organised crime and terrorism are huge threats to our peace and security. We must continue to cooperate at every level using the existing frameworks to build on the successes we have already achieved in combating these threats.

Thank you Mr Chairman