Official Launch of the new Regional Programme - Eastern Africa Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in Eastern Africa Regional Programme 2016-21

29 August 2016

Excellencies,

Ambassadors and High Commissioners,

Invited guests,

Colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very proud and pleased to be here today with you all at the official launch of the new Regional Programme 2016-2021. It is wonderful to see so many highly regarded representatives from all the countries in the beautiful Eastern Africa region. It gives me a great deal of inspiration to see so many countries working together to achieve a common goal whose benefits will be felt by countless individuals.

The Eastern Africa region encompasses both developing and fragile states, a combination that provides fertile ground for criminal networks to exploit these differing contexts. These networks engage in the trafficking of persons, drugs, firearms, and natural resources, and profit and launder the proceeds of such crimes throughout the region. Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants (TIP/SOM), and terrorism, have been increasingly detected in recent months, and pose significant threats to human security both in and beyond the region. Corruption and a weak rule of law facilitate criminal networks and the markets they serve. Furthermore, together with the Southern African region, Eastern Africa is home to half of the world’s population infected with and affected by HIV and AIDS, including vulnerable populations such as people who use drugs and those in prison.

The New Regional Programme diligently seeks to address these issues and enhance the rule of law to meet security, justice and health priorities. The new Regional Programme provides a platform to tackle cross-cutting issues that spans across borders.

In addition to working on issues of security and the rule of law, the New Regional Programme is critical as it is aligned with the aspirations of the African Union’s Vision 2063 Agenda and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 3, 5.2, 15.7 and 16. On 25 September 2015, Member States formally adopted “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The Agenda is intended as “a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity that seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom.”

In particular, the 2030 Agenda affirms explicitly that “there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.” This Agenda reflects many aspects that the new Regional Programme seeks to address because it draws together issues of rule of law, human rights, development, equality and peace. The Agenda is a universal agenda that will provide significant transformations and a new global partnership.

Furthermore, the new Regional Programme is incredibly beneficial because it seeks to assist Member States to be able to achieve the goals as defined in the new global agenda for development, the Sustainable Development Goals.

Together, the new Regional Programme and the Sustainable Development Goals provide a way to conduct its work in a holistic way that seeks to address the root causes of the challenges to security, rule of law and health. I am very honored to be here with you all to launch such an important programme.

Once again, I wish you a successful launch.

Thank you for your kind attention.