

ECOSOC Resolution 2002/16

International cooperation in the prevention, combating and elimination of kidnapping and in providing assistance for the victims

The Economic and Social Council,

Convinced that the kidnapping of persons is a serious crime and a violation of the right to individual freedom, as well as other fundamental rights, including international humanitarian law applicable in situations of armed conflict,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000, in which the Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, an instrument forming part of the legal framework necessary for international cooperation in the fight against kidnapping, especially kidnapping committed for the purpose of extortion,

Noting the transnational nature of organized crime and the tendency of organized criminal groups to expand their illicit operations,

Concerned by the growing tendency of organized criminal groups to resort to kidnapping, especially kidnapping for the purpose of extortion, as a method of accumulating capital with a view to consolidating their criminal operations and carrying out other illegal activities, such as illicit trafficking in firearms, money-laundering, drug trafficking, illicit trafficking in human beings and crimes related to terrorism,

Convinced that the links between various illegal activities and organized criminal groups pose an additional threat to personal security and the quality of life, hindering economic and social development,

Convinced also that one of the most effective ways to combat organized crime is to trace, detect, freeze and confiscate the assets of criminal groups in order to undermine their structure,

Recalling the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held in Vienna from 10 to 17 April 2000, which was convened with the intention of adopting more effective concerted action, in a spirit of cooperation, to combat the world crime problem,

Recalling also the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/59 of 4 December 2000, in which Member States participating in the Tenth Congress declared their intention to strengthen international cooperation in order to create a conducive environment for the fight against organized crime,

Concerned about the increase in kidnapping in various countries of the world and by the harmful effects of that crime on the victims and their families, and resolved to support the provision of assistance to them and measures to protect them and promote their recovery,

1. *Vigorously condemns and rejects* the worldwide practice of kidnapping, in any circumstance and for any purpose, which consists in unlawfully detaining a person or persons against their will for the purpose of demanding for their liberation an illicit gain or any other economic gain or other material benefit, or in order to oblige someone to do or not do something, and resolves to treat it henceforth as a serious crime, particularly when it is connected with the action of organized criminal groups or terrorist groups;

2. *Urges* Member States that have not already done so to adopt the legislative or other measures necessary to establish as a serious crime in their domestic legislation kidnapping in all its modalities, especially kidnapping committed for the purpose of extortion, in accordance with the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;

3. *Encourages* Member States to foster international cooperation, especially mutual legal assistance and collaboration between law enforcement authorities, through information exchange with a view to preventing, combating and eradicating kidnapping, in particular kidnapping committed for the purpose of extortion;

4. *Exhorts* Member States that have not already done so, in furtherance of the fight against kidnapping, to strengthen their measures against money-laundering and to provide international cooperation and mutual assistance through the tracing, detection, freezing and confiscation of proceeds of kidnapping, in order to undermine the structure of organized criminal groups;

5. *Invites* Member States to provide to the Secretary-General information on the practice of kidnapping and on relevant domestic measures that have been taken, including those related to support and assistance to the victims and their families;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General, drawing upon extrabudgetary contributions or within existing resources, based on replies received from Member States and in coordination with competent entities of the United Nations system, to report to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its thirteenth session on the factual and legal situation of kidnapping throughout the world, including the situation of victims, and to submit a progress report on that subject to the Commission at its twelfth session.

*37th plenary meeting
24 July 2002*