

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I am here as Chair of the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the umbrella body charged with coordinating civil society engagement with the crime and justice mandates of the UN. We've been actively participating in the AHC sessions, and intersessional meetings throughout, alongside a wide cross section of active civil society, private sector and intergovernmental stakeholders.

The breadth and depth of that engagement between states and other stakeholders has been impressive, and we appreciate the spirit and nature of these exchanges – including at this reception here tonight. The convention, to be implemented successfully, will benefit from the ongoing engagement of diverse stakeholders, so we look forward to that spirit continuing.

We are therefore pleased to be working with UNODC Civil Society Unit to reach out to beyond the established group of stakeholders, to raise awareness and invite engagement from a broader constituency of civil society from around the world. And from the exchanges we have had with that broader group this week, it is clear that the concerns that have been raised throughout the process by private sector and civil society alike – on the convention's scope, on human rights, and on effective implementation – are of equal concern to individuals and organizations who are relatively new to the process.

Delegates - you are now at a crucial point in the negotiations under the Ad Hoc Committee. 3 weeks from today, you will be at the penultimate day of the Committee's mandate. Under that mandate, a draft convention is required to be delivered to the UN General Assembly.

Agreeing a draft convention, at the UN level, on the complex and multifaceted issue of cybercrime would be a great challenge in the best of times. However, as you all know, we are in fact living in a fragmented and fractious world.

It is therefore testament to the commitment to multilateralism of all of you that this process has kept going and has kept talking, despite the wide differences in positions that have characterized the AHC's negotiations.

Engaging on this is important, as the problems of cybercrime and of how criminals use the internet to carry out crimes across borders, and to evade detection, have got undoubtably worse. It is without question that law enforcement faces serious challenges in responding, and even in keeping up with the pace of change.

However, the internet itself is also evolving, and there has not been a convention or treaty that guarantees rights in the online space. That is why this negotiation is not, and has never been, just about international cooperation against cybercrime. There are a range of serious risks inherent in this negotiation, which are why stakeholders of all types have been consistent in calling strongly for a targeted scope, strong human rights safeguards, and transparency and accountability in the convention's implementation.

The broader and vaguer the scope, and the weaker or more absent the safeguards, the bigger risks the convention poses to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. At the same time, as long as there are risks to rights, there are risks to getting consensus, and to effective implementation, and to widespread ratification.

The views of the range of observers participating in the AHC from civil society, private sector and other stakeholders are well known, and are remarkably coherent despite our different backgrounds.

I ask you to pay attention to these contributions as you head into the final AHC – the stakes are high, and the impact of this treaty will be felt widely – one way or another. We will be following closely and telling you our opinion whenever we can!

We hope that this constructive and clear engagement can continue, whatever the outcome of the 7<sup>th</sup> AHC.

Thank you!