**Remarks by the BIMSTEC Secretary General at the 13 Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime**
**Vienna, Austria, 20 October 2026**

Mr. President, Executive Director of UNODC, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Namaskar, Good Afternoon.

Thank you Mr President for giving me the floor. I congratulate you on your election as the President. BIMSTEC welcomes the opportunity to participate at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. I thank ED of UNODC for her invitation.

**Mr President, Distinguished Delegates**

BIMSTEC is an Inter-Governmental Organization, comprising seven countries located contiguous to and around Bay of Bengal - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Established in 1997, BIMSTEC serves as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia, providing a platform for its seven Member States to advance regional cooperation to address shared developmental and security challenges. Security cooperation has been an important pillar of BIMSTEC's agenda for regional cooperation, aimed at addressing transnational security threats faced by its 7 member States. The comprehensive agenda of BIMSTEC security cooperation covers all the key security challenges, such as terrorism, human trafficking, illicit drug trafficking, money laundering, financing of terrorism, cyber security and maritime security.

Apart from Expert Groups and Joint Working Groups and their Sub-Groups, the National Security Advisors of the BIMSTEC member States have been meeting regularly to supervise and guide BIMSTEC cooperation in security sector. In a significant development, BIMSTEC Home Ministers met earlier this month in New Delhi to conduct a comprehensive review of security sector cooperation under BIMSTEC. In all the domains of security cooperation, BIMSTEC member States have developed Plans and Frameworks for cooperation and taken steps to create institutions and platforms for engaging in tangible cooperation, which has been focused on capacity building, information and intelligence sharing and collective action.

BIMSTEC has made steady progress in developing policy and legal frameworks necessary to combat transnational organized crime. The First Meeting of BIMSTEC Home Ministers adopted Delhi Declaration, reaffirming the commitment of the Member States to deepen cooperation against terrorism and transnational organized crime. The BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking has been in force since March 2021 and is under implementation. The BIMSTEC Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, which provides a vital framework for cooperation in criminal investigations and proceedings, is expected to enter into force soon.

The draft of BIMSTEC Convention Against Trafficking Persons has been agreed and is likely to be signed soon. BIMSTEC is engaged in negotiations to finalize the drafts of two other Conventions: Convention on Extradition and Convention on Transfer of Sentenced Persons.

The details of various initiatives taken by the BIMSTEC member States for cooperation in various kinds of transnational organized crime are provided in my full statement. I would just like to highlight the proposal for establishment of BIMSTEC Regional Security Cooperation Centre (BCRSC) in order to enhance consultation, coordination and cooperation in security sector, given the interlinkages amongst various transnational crimes.

BIMSTEC attaches particular importance to its partnership with the UNODC. A Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation between BIMSTEC and UNODC was signed at the Sixth BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok in April 2025. It provides a vital framework for strengthening cooperation against transnational organized crime and the related security threats. Both the UNODC and BIMSTEC are keen on full and effective implementation of this MoU. The BIMSTEC Member States have approved a Plan of Action for the implementation of the MoU and we hope it will receive the requisite concurrence of UNODC. We look forward to translating the agreed areas of cooperation into practical initiatives that will strengthen the capacity of our institutions and enhance the response of our member States to transnational crime.

The progress in regional security cooperation under BIMSTEC has contributed to the efforts of the BIMSTEC member States in combating drug trafficking and other organised crimes. In this context, BIMSTEC is keen to cooperate with UNODC and other international and regional organizations to achieve the shared goals. Provision of technical assistance, capacity-building, exchange of good practices and other kinds of support to strengthen national capabilities and promote coordinated regional action will be welcomed by BIMSTEC.

BIMSTEC is forward to working closely with UNODC and all relevant partners to advance our shared objective of preventing and combating transnational organized crime and promoting a safer, more secure and resilient Bay of Bengal region.

To conclude, I thank you all for your kind attention. I thank the Conference success in attaining its objectives.