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Joint Constructive Dialogue on the UNTOC Review Process, following the 16th meetings of the Working Groups on Technical Assistance and International Cooperation

For Panel Discussion III CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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**Delivered by Ms. Alexa Dominique Pascual,
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Representative to the United Nations and UN System Institutions in New York
On behalf of the DMUN Foundation**

Thank you, distinguished Chair, Excellencies, and esteemed colleagues.

My name is Alexa Dominique. I am from the United States, and I speak on behalf of the DMUN Foundation, a youth-led civil society organization focused on global research, policy development, and multilateral engagement. We work to amplify youth voices in international governance processes, particularly in matters of peace, security, and transnational justice.

We welcome this Joint Constructive Dialogue following the sixteenth meetings of the Working Group of Government Experts on Technical Assistance and the Working Group on International Cooperation. As civil society actors, we commend the efforts to enhance cross-border



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cooperation and strengthen technical capabilities under the UNTOC framework. These steps are vital to ensuring that the Convention remains a living instrument—responsive to the complex realities of transnational organized crime.

However, we respectfully emphasize the urgent need to center youth and community engagement more deliberately in the review process.

Youth are both targets and first responders in the fight against organized crime. From cybercrime and human trafficking to arms and drug trafficking, we are impacted not only as victims but as critical stakeholders in prevention, detection, and resilience-building. Yet, we continue to see limited space for young people in the technical and political discussions that shape this Convention's implementation.

In light of this, we offer three key recommendations:

1. Institutionalize the role of youth-led organizations in the technical assistance component of the UNTOC review process.

This could take the form of dedicated youth working groups or formal observer roles for youth-led civil society in national and regional assessments. Young people possess innovative, locally grounded knowledge—particularly in areas such as digital literacy, education, and peer engagement—that can enrich the Convention's capacity-building strategies.

2. Strengthen multi-stakeholder international cooperation mechanisms that include civil society and youth networks.

International cooperation cannot be effective without trust and transparency at the grassroots level. We urge Member States to consult youth actors when designing joint operations, technical exchanges, and regional cooperation platforms. This is especially critical in contexts where trust in institutions is low and organized crime has deeply entrenched itself in community structures.

3. Embed youth-specific indicators in the self-assessment tools and reporting frameworks.

By tracking how Member States engage youth in their national responses to organized crime, we can better identify gaps in prevention and protection. This also ensures accountability in aligning national efforts with international youth and crime prevention standards.

Chair, the commitment to “leaving no one behind” must extend to the global youth population, which comprises more than half the world’s citizens. If we are to build resilient institutions and effectively counter transnational crime, then youth cannot remain on the periphery of this process.

We appreciate the continued openness of the UNODC Secretariat and Member States to civil society input and look forward to seeing stronger mechanisms for sustained, inclusive engagement as we move toward the next review cycle.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this important dialogue.