END WILDLIFE CRIME

UNTOC COP 12 – Agenda item 1.f: general debate

Oral statement by the ADM Capital Foundation for the Global Initiative to End Wildlife Crime

Thank you Chair, distinguished delegates,

Illicit trafficking in wildlife is the most well-known crime that affects the environment, and the most well advanced in terms of UN resolutions. It also has the most devastating consequences, for ecosystems, species, communities, and human and animal health.

In May 2022, the adoption by consensus of the historic CCPCJ Resolution 31/1 on "Strengthening the international legal framework for international cooperation to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in wildlife" marked the first time that a UN resolution mentioned a potential new global agreement on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife, or any crime that affects the environment. There have been significant efforts by States, as well as civil society, to make illicit trafficking in wildlife a topic of increased attention through the CCPCJ and the UNTOC. At this COP there are several side-events on this topic, including one organized by Brazil and sponsored by Peru, Angola and Costa Rica, together with 15 other organizations. It will take place on Thursday at 2pm. Most importantly, draft Resolution L.9 on "Enhancing measures to prevent and combat crimes that affect the environment falling within the scope of the UNTOC and the Protocols thereto" has been submitted by Brazil, France and Peru.

We warmly welcome this draft resolution. However, we should not seek to homogenize these crimes - they have a common thread but they are different in their scale, nature and impact; including their transboundary impact. We consider the draft fails to recognise the extraordinary efforts made by Presidents, Ministers and Diplomats over the past decade to advance efforts to tackle wildlife trafficking. The draft omits any reference to the six UNGA resolutions on tackling wildlife trafficking, the critical role played by rangers in tackling environmental crimes, especially wildlife crimes, and the historic CCPCJ Resolution 31/1.

We encourage delegates to support the adoption of draft Resolution L.9, with amendments, and to launch an intergovernmental expert group that can consider the possibility to elaborate an additional protocol or protocols to the UNTOC, including on wildlife crime. We need to urgently scale up efforts to tackle these serious transnational, organized crimes, including by strengthening international cooperation. That is exactly what this critically important Convention was created to advance, including through the adoption of additional protocols.

The Global Initiative to End Wildlife Crime has published written comments and suggestions on language to include in the draft Resolution, and can provide these to State representatives upon request.

Thank you.

Email: ana@endwildlifecrime.org | **Website:** endwildlifecrime.org