European Regional Preparatory Meeting  
for the Fourteenth United Nations  
Congress on Crime Prevention and  
Criminal Justice  
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Draft report  

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Addendum  

II. Conclusions and recommendations  

1. The Secretary of the European Regional Preparatory Meeting recalled that the main theme, agenda items and workshops of the Fourteenth Congress had been carefully identified by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and adopted by the General Assembly. In that regard, she highlighted that, building on the success of the Thirteenth Congress and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/206, all efforts had been made to ensure that the overall theme, agenda items and workshop topics were streamlined. She reminded participants that, since the main theme was designed to serve as an umbrella for the substantive agenda items and workshop topics and for the discussions under those that would take place at the Congress, they were invited to engage in a general, aspirational discussion with regard to the relationship between the main theme and the substantive agenda items of the Congress, as well as the policy implications of that relationship. She explained that, in order to facilitate the preparations for and discussions at the regional preparatory meetings and the Congress itself, the discussion guide had clustered the agenda items that dealt with issues of broad and global importance together with the relevant workshop topics, on the understanding that the latter were designed to cover more specific topics and draw on practical experiences and approaches.  

2. Presentations were delivered by representatives of the Secretariat introducing the main theme, substantive agenda items and workshop topics.  

3. Stemming from the meeting, the following summary of deliberations was prepared and recommendations were identified, which were not negotiated by the participants.

Summary of deliberations

4. In undertaking a reflective historical exercise, the meeting noted that since the Fourth United Nations Congress held in Kyoto, Japan in 1970, enhanced and strengthened efforts were undertaken by the international community to prevent and counter crime. Such efforts included the adoption of important crime prevention and criminal justice standards and norms, as well as the entry into force and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the two United Nations Conventions on Transnational Organized Crime and Corruption and a number of anti-terrorism instruments. While these developments were evidence of advancements over the years in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, fifty years later, crime, terrorism and violence continued to persist and flourish. The meeting highlighted that despite the efforts of the international community in preventing and combating crime since the Fourth United Nations Crime Congress, this phenomenon continued to evolve due to the modus operandi of criminal organizations, which often choose weak institutions in order to operate with impunity.

5. The meeting also discussed the fact that the similarities in the issues facing the international crime prevention and criminal justice community made the Fourteenth Congress an opportune forum to discuss innovative and progressive solutions to ensure enhanced and strengthened crime prevention and criminal justice responses that uphold the principles of the rule of law, justice and human rights.

6. It was also noted that there had been a growing consensus that the rule of law was the foundation needed for sustainable development, and that the criminal justice systems and the institutions comprising them were fundamental infrastructures for the achievement of the goals and targets as set forth by the Sustainable Development Agenda, in particular but not excluded to SDG 16. Some participants noted that some important criminal justice concerns were not included in the Sustainable development Agenda. The 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development was mentioned to be a complementary framework. Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law were to be considered as a value “per se”, even in the most developed societies.

7. It was also noted that for the rule of law to prevail and for a peaceful, just and safe society to be established, building trust and confidence among the general public towards the law and its enforcement and fostering a culture of lawfulness were essential. The importance of involving all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, to complement the work of governmental institutions, was also mentioned.

8. The importance of focusing on the work of criminal justice practitioners was also underscored. As such, providing the necessary resources and capacity-building and appropriate training for practitioners, as well as strengthening international cooperation at the practitioner’s level were identified as critical factors for advancing crime prevention and criminal justice, also in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The importance of strengthening the collection of crime data and the exchange of information were also mentioned.

9. The important role of UNODC as fundamental partner in assisting Member States in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice and the central mandate of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice were also stressed.
Outcome of deliberations

10. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Focus the discussion at the Fourteenth Crime Congress on the most urgent crime and security threats and criminal justice challenges, as experienced by national practitioners, academia, and civil society. Consider thereby the challenges encountered in upholding the principles of the rule of law, human rights, peace and justice, particularly in the most difficult times when confronted with threats of organized crime, terrorism and violence;

(b) Strengthen coordination and cooperation between governments, as well as among governmental authorities, the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders including the private sector and civil society to ensure a multi-stakeholder approach to crime prevention and criminal justice, including in the implementation of the relevant goals and targets under the Sustainable Development Agenda;

(c) Promote strengthened cooperation between criminal justice practitioners and relevant stakeholders and promote public-private-partnership in crime prevention efforts. In this regard, the role of partnerships was underpinned as key in ensuring a multi-stakeholder approach which included non-traditional criminal justice sectors such as the education, health and social welfare sectors. In addition, partnerships with the local community and the private sector were also considered important in strengthening public support for more effective governments’ initiatives in crime prevention;

(d) Support UNODC in continuing and further strengthening its leading role in supporting Member States in implementing their commitments in the outcome documents of the crime congresses and other relevant resolutions, including the provision of technical assistance, capacity-building and UNODC’s ability to provide a platform for dialogue among practitioners aiming to enhance international cooperation in criminal matters and in disseminating evidence-based knowledge on crime-related matters including comparative statistical data.

B. Substantive items and workshops

1. Comprehensive strategies for crime prevention towards social and economic development (agenda item 3); and evidence-based crime prevention: statistics, indicators and evaluation in support of successful practices (workshop 1)

Summary of deliberations

11. A number of participants expressed satisfaction with the attention being devoted to crime prevention in the substantive agenda for the forthcoming Crime Congress.

12. The Meeting confirmed that a comprehensive crime prevention strategy is a key element for social and economic development. Participants named various root causes to be taken into account in successfully preventing crime, especially with regard to the background of offenders, such as age, lack of education, poverty, family problems, mental and physical health issues, and belonging to a minority group.

13. A number of participants stressed that crime prevention strategies should be developed with a special focus on children and youth at risk, and a targeted and individualized approach should be followed to address their vulnerability. Early detection of behaviour prone to crime and involvement of the family in the treatment of young offenders were referred to as useful measures.

14. The need for a gender-sensitive approach was raised by many participants. It was noted that the empowerment of women was key to prevent sexual violence and domestic violence. The importance of participation of women at all levels of the criminal justice system was also mentioned.
15. Reference was made to the prevention of environmental crime and wild life crime as an example for which comprehensive strategies should be applied and it was proposed that the workshop of the Fourteenth Congress could explore how evidence-based information could be provided to potential actors in these crimes, including local communities and consumers, who may not be aware of the criminal nature of selling and buying those products.

16. The need for a comprehensive strategy to prevent corruption was also mentioned, as corruption was considered to be a major obstacle to social and economic development as well as to the upholding of human rights.

17. Reference was made to the Guidelines for Cooperation and Technical Assistance in the Field of Urban Crime Prevention, which were adopted by ECOSOC in 1995, and it was mentioned that since, gangs were increasingly behaving like transnational organized crime groups and that, thus, specialized and targeted approaches were needed to respond to gangs and other urban crime threats, particularly to prevent youth recruitment and involvement and to rehabilitate gang members as constructive members of society. The need to address new trends in drug trafficking and the need to prevent bias-motivated crimes, before they would create cycles of hatred and violence or pose broader security challenges, were also mentioned.

18. The Meeting stressed that crime prevention strategies should be adopted and implemented not only at a national level but also at the local level. Many participants highlighted the vital role of the community in crime prevention and referred to measures and good practices developed, ranging from education to breaking the solidarity between criminal organizations and citizens. Participants mentioned that fostering a culture of lawfulness as an effort by the government to enhance public confidence in the law and its enforcement, could contribute to the prevention of crime. Reference was made in this regard to the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime.

19. The Meeting also underscored the need for the engagement and cooperation not only of the law enforcement and criminal justice institutions but also of relevant stakeholders, such as educational institutions, health-care sector, welfare sector, social workers, faith-based organizations, private companies and NGOs.

20. Many participants noted that crime prevention strategies needed to be based on evidence. The International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes was mentioned as a useful tool developed by the CCPCJ and the Statistical Commission to work towards harmonized criteria for the collection of data. Reference was made to challenges faced in using such classifications in accordance with domestic legislation. It was further mentioned that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice could learn from the experience made by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs with the gathering of information in the follow-up to the 2016 General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem.

21. The importance of exchanging information and identifying statistical tools on criminal offences, especially also on trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation and on violence against women, were also highlighted.

**Outcome of deliberations**

22. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Develop comprehensive crime prevention strategies based on an understanding of the root causes of crime, such as age, lack of education, family and financial background of offenders, and address such factors in a holistic manner, acting thereby in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, including the local community and civil society;

(b) Give due consideration to gender-related issues as well as to the vulnerability of children and youth at risk in developing crime prevention strategies;
(c) Enhance the role of the community in developing and implementing comprehensive crime prevention strategies by taking measures such as community policing and fostering a culture of lawfulness, including through youth education and awareness raising with a view to foster public trust in the law and its enforcement, and to break the solidarity between the criminal organizations and citizens;

(d) Strengthen the cooperation of governmental actors with all relevant stakeholders including educational institutions, health-care sector, welfare sector, social workers, faith-based organizations, private companies, academia and NGOs;

(e) Consider undertaking new strategic approaches at the national and international levels to analyse recent trends and best practices to prevent and counter, among others, environmental crime, wildlife crime, gangs and other urban crime threats, new trends in drug trafficking and bias-motivated crimes;

(f) Call on UNODC to give due consideration to the latest challenges that law enforcement authorities are facing and to assist Member States in successfully addressing new crime trends;

(g) Strengthen the work of the CCPCJ, including with regard to data collection and analysis, and increase national efforts to collect and share gender and age-disaggregated data on crime and criminal justice systems to support evidence-based crime prevention measures, including through monitoring various forms of illicit trafficking and of violence against women.

C. Other issues

23. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Ensure the continuity of the successful experience of finalizing the negotiations on the Congress Declaration in Vienna, for its adoption at the opening of the Crime Congress. It was suggested that the preparatory process for the formulation of the future Kyoto Declaration should be carried out in a timely manner and that a workplan and a time table for the negotiations may be circulated in advance;

(b) Elaborate the future Kyoto Declaration as a short and concise document sending a strong political message, thereby demonstrating the commitment of Member States, at the highest-level;

(c) Build on and carry forward the commitments reflected in the Doha Declaration;

(d) Provide the future Kyoto Declaration with a clear substantive structure which could be built on the overall theme, agenda items and workshop topics;

(e) Reflect in the future Kyoto Declaration elements such as the need to: reinforce that each Member State has the sovereign responsibility to ensure the safety of their own citizens, to define and enforce criminal laws, to protect and promote human rights, and provide access to justice; strengthen international cooperation across borders; focus on public-private partnerships in the context of crime prevention and encourage Member States to take measures to foster a culture of lawfulness; highlight the role of national law enforcement and criminal justice practitioners in helping inform global policy on crime prevention and criminal justice;

(f) Strengthen the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in advancing the implementation of the outcome of the crime congresses, in particular the future Kyoto Declaration, by providing a forum for the exchange of good practices, experiences, challenges and lessons learned in implementing the outcome documents of the crime congresses and ways to strengthen international cooperation also in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(g) Continue the good practice of organizing a Crime Congress regional preparatory meeting for States members of the Economic Commission for Europe to
ensure a balanced regional perspective into the preparatory process, and consider reflecting the requirements for conference management services in the budget of future Crime Congresses.