

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:

**Message to 12th UN Congress on Crime Prevention  
and Criminal Justice  
Salvador, Brazil, 12 April 2010**

Delivered by Mr. John Sandage, Officer-in-Charge, Division for Treaty Affairs,  
UN Office on Drugs and Crime

SALVADOR, 12 April (UN Information Service) – Organized crime poses a threat to international peace and security like never before. It is a major impediment to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. And it inflicts grave harm on the vulnerable, people and countries alike – such as women, children and migrants, and societies suffering weak governance or mired in underdevelopment and conflict.

Ten years after the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and at a time of growing concern about the dark side of globalization, the world looks to this Congress to provide a better understanding of the state of crime, and to strengthen the criminal justice response.

Sharpening our legal weapons is a must. I urge all States to ratify and implement the Palermo Convention and its three Protocols, and to establish a mechanism to review implementation – as was done last year at Doha for the UN Convention against Corruption.

I also urge you to strengthen bilateral, regional and international cooperation. This must be more than an inter-governmental process; it should involve civil society, the media, the private sector, criminal justice experts, social scientists, and local and regional authorities. We are all affected by crime; therefore we have a shared responsibility to act.

Finally I urge you to be more innovative. When it comes to emerging threats such as cyber-crime, environmental crime and counterfeiting, we must stay one step ahead of the criminals. We must also be more effective in stopping the money flows enabled by corruption and money-laundering.

The United Nations, for its part, is taking a “one UN” approach by bringing crime prevention into the mainstream of our work, particularly in conflict prevention, peace-keeping and peace-building. Crime is also increasingly on the agenda of the Security Council. We are stressing the need for human rights to be at the forefront of efforts to prevent and punish crime. And we are focusing not just what we are against – crime – but what we are for: justice and the rule of law.

Thank you for your commitment to this effort. I look forward to continuing to work with you to reduce vulnerability to the global threat posed by crime, and to improve security and justice for all.

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