

**12th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
10th Plenary Meeting (PM)
High-Level Segment**

**High-level Segment of Crime Congress Hears Call for ‘Spectacular
Breakthroughs’ towards Concrete Action against Offenders**

Speakers Underline Need for Greater International Cooperation in Face of Emerging
Criminal Networks

SALVADOR, 17 April (UN Information Service) – Delegates at a special, three-day segment of the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice urged members this afternoon to take concrete action in the next five years, building upon “spectacular breakthroughs” on controversial issues relating to the prosecution, sentencing and custody of offenders, and on a possible new treaty on emerging forms of transnational offences such as cybercrime.

Addressing the high-level segment, which runs from 17 to 19 April, Congress President Luiz Paulo Barreto, Brazil’s Minister for Justice, pointed to growing links between organized crime and conventional crime, saying its impact was evident in the illegal drug trade, saying that by taking advantage of corruption within States, international crime syndicates had succeeded in weakening law enforcement, with armed violence producing discernible effects on human, social, political and economic development.

He noted that States were unanimous in their stance against transnational organized crime, agreeing that the best way forward was establishing a cooperative network against it. The Congress itself was an example of such cooperation, demonstrating the ability of States freely to discuss controversial themes, which in turn had already translated into “spectacular breakthroughs”.

But many States still lacked a culture of cooperation, noted Gilson Dipp, Brazil’s National Inspector of Justice. Speaking alongside Mr. Barreto, he stressed the need for more agile communication between judges from different countries, but admitted that, even with sufficient mutual trust between judges from nation to nation, lack of knowledge about various tools for international cooperation could be an obstacle.

In the face of such challenges, Argentina’s representative said, it was important for States to set a clear agenda for the next five years. He said criminal justice policy had long been the realm of academics, jurists and politicians, calling on Governments to step up to the plate and turn ideas into reality. States needed clear definitions for criminal behaviour and the right kind of punitive response for various crimes. However, they should resist the temptation to criminalize -- and thus punish -- all anti-social behaviour as a first response, he emphasized.

A major concern was the uneven pattern of sentencing, whereby punishment was most frequently and intensely imposed on the most vulnerable segments of the population, whose crimes tended to be minor in comparison with those that got away. A top priority of the Argentine Government was to prosecute crimes against humanity committed under the last military dictatorship, including forced disappearances, he added.

The Special Representative of the United States Secretary of State called on the international community to ready itself for new forms of transnational crime, in which organized networks of criminals demonstrating ever-increasing sophistication and global reach were converging and reinforcing each other, collectively manipulating financial markets, engaging in money-laundering and smuggling illegal goods worth billions of dollars around the globe.

Countering such threats was important, but success in doing so would require shared responsibility and partnerships, she said. One task for the Twelfth Crime Congress was to translate from words into action international agreements such as the Convention on Transnational Organized crime, with its 154 States parties, and the Convention against Corruption.

John Sandage, Executive Secretary of the Crime Congress, said that with a week of intense deliberations behind them, political leaders would, in the next two days, have a chance to provide further impetus to the strengthening of crime prevention and defining the legacy of Salvador by adopting a common declaration.

Also delivering statements during the ceremonial opening of the high-level segment were Fernando Schmidt, Chief of Staff to the Governor of the hosting Brazilian state of Bahia, and Gilmar Mendes, President of the country's Supreme Court.

Other speakers today were Government Ministers and other senior officials from Spain (on behalf of the European Union), Zimbabwe (on behalf of the African Group), Finland, South Africa, Azerbaijan, China, Qatar, Philippines, Morocco, Portugal, Mexico, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

The Congress also heard from the representatives of Algeria (on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries and China) and Argentina (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States).

In other business, the Congress elected Alina Popescu of Romania as Rapporteur-General, by acclamation.

The Crime Congress will reconvene at 10 a.m. Sunday, 18 April, to continue its high-level segment.

Background

The Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice met this afternoon to begin its high-level segment.

Ceremonial Opening

JOHN SANDAGE, Executive Secretary of the Congress, opened the segment by noting that the participants had behind them a week of intense deliberations that had examined the need to adapt criminal justice responses to evolving challenges. The next two days would give political leaders a chance to provide further impetus to strengthening crime prevention and defining the legacy of Salvador by adopting a common declaration.

GILSON DIPP, National Inspector of Justice of Brazil, said the lack of liquidity in many countries due to the global economic crisis had opened the door for money-laundering, corruption, human trafficking and other transnational crimes. The struggle against that situation could only be effective through international cooperation, but many States lacked a culture of cooperation. That must end because continuing on the same anachronistic path would not be effective. More agile communication was needed, he said, adding that judges in one country must talk with those in others. Underscoring the importance of mutual trust, he said an international judge could be a tool for international cooperation, but also an obstacle unless he knew the tools for international cooperation.

LUIZ PAULO BARRETO, President of the Congress and Minister for Justice of Brazil, said delegates had come a long way since the start of the Twelfth Congress. With a substantive agenda before them, they had made use of the opportunity to analyse best practices in criminal justice, on the advice of experts, non-governmental organizations and Government agencies from around the world. Global trends pointed to a growing association between organized crime and conventional crime, with the practice of corruption favouring transnational organized crime networks, he said.

Analyses showed that integrating urban planning policies with criminal justice policies and police action played an important role in reducing criminality, he said. Indeed, organized crime had been seen to have an impact on the illegal drug trade, weakening law enforcement, while boosting poverty and even environmental degradation. The Congress had provided an opportunity to discuss the importance of reducing and preventing armed violence, which had discernible effects on human, social, political and economic development.

He said it was important to strengthen the ability of States to collect accurate data and generate systematic reports on those subjects, both nationally and regionally, as well as within the United

Nations framework. Participants had also agreed on the importance of investing in “recovery of individuals” and in the improvement of prison systems. He expressed confidence that the Salvador Declaration would go a long way towards improving mechanisms for international cooperation, leading to effective results in the fight against organized crime.

For its part, he said, Brazil had been proud to contribute a fixed percentage of assets recovered from organized crime networks and corruption to a fund created by the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), to be invested in developing countries. Other countries should adopt the same course of action, in view of its impact in strengthening international judicial cooperation. There was also a need to support the Optional Protocol to the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, dealing with human trafficking, as a way to intensify cooperation among the relevant institutions in countries of origin, transit and destination.

He said States were unanimous in their stance against transnational organized crime, agreeing that the best way forward was through the establishment of a cooperative network against it. The Congress itself was an example of such cooperation, demonstrating the ability of States freely to discuss controversial themes, which in turn had already translated into “spectacular breakthroughs”. Congratulating all participating delegates and to all those who had helped to organize the Congress, he expressed confidence that the high-level segment would produce a new spectrum of possibilities to better fight crime while equipping criminal justice systems with the tools they needed to tackle challenges.

FERNANDO SCHMIDT, Chief of Staff to the Governor of Bahia State, Brazil, said the country had invested in structural areas to help prevent crime and improve public safety. It had worked to develop culture, education and employment, and to reinforce the dignity of prison inmates through improved services and infrastructure, in line with United Nations standards. Those steps had led to a reduction in overcrowding, particularly in cosmopolitan areas. For its part, the Bahia government had created 30 reading rooms, housing some 12,000 books, to fight illiteracy.

The Office of the Prosecutor, the Office of the Public Defender and the judiciary were involved in the fight against homophobia, he said, adding that the state government had launched social work programmes to reach out to at-risk children. It had invested strongly in programmes to integrate the police force, in addition to setting up digital police precincts and police intelligence to fight drug trafficking, money-laundering, corruption and human trafficking. Bahia was focused on creating a culture of peace, in partnership with civil society and society at large, he said.

GILMAR MENDES, President of the Supreme Court of Brazil, said criminal justice systems throughout the world faced similar problems, especially in relation to their prison systems. It was important to highlight the work of Brazilian groups that had studied the country’s prison situation, which was “chaotic”, as reported in the media. There had been great failures in prosecution procedures, which were wracked by inertia and inefficiency. In turn, there was a prevailing sense of impunity in the country, high rates of recidivism and prison rebellions. The criminal justice system also made excessive use of preventive imprisonment, which made it difficult to execute arrests warrants.

The courts lacked people with technical knowledge, and there were not enough defenders to represent the thousands of individuals in custody while awaiting trial, he said. Studies had shown a kind of “prison deficit”, with the number of inmates overshooting the actual space in prisons by 167,000 places. That number was growing by roughly 7 per cent each year, he said, adding that there were thousands of arrest warrants still to be executed. Initial efforts to reduce overcrowding by releasing individuals found to be “unduly imprisoned” had helped, as had exercises to rationalize prison expenditure. Those actions had resulted in the equivalent of 50 midsized prisons in freed-up space.

He warned, however, that those efforts would go for nought unless Brazil moved on to the second stage -- changing the prison situation permanently. To start with, the country would require voluntary defendant groups to pitch in. It would also need a management plan for criminal courts. The “begin-again process” to reduce recidivism should be expanded, with a view to reducing recidivism to 20 per cent in the first year, reducing the prison population by 10 per cent each year. That policy was popular with the public, he said, adding that Brazil had made provisions to help find jobs for 10,000 ex-offenders in 2010, with the help of civil society and business.

To improve the management of penal execution, he said Brazil had begun using information technology to establish more efficient control and surveillance processes, verify that sentences were being served, and ensure that prisoners benefited from the right to parole. It was to be hoped that in

the next 12 months, more than 50 per cent of the country would operate such “virtual courts”, with the pilot project having begun in the north-east.

The National Council of Justice worked closely on such efforts with various other relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Justice, he said. In addition to modernizing the penal system, the goal was to increase transparency and make procedural processes effective and efficient. Brazil had barely begun its journey, but the results so far were promising, he noted, pointing out that all those advances had been realized through partnerships between the right bodies at the highest levels.

High-level Segment

TAOUS FEROUKHI (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the “Group of 77” developing countries and China, emphasized the importance of full implementation of United Nations norms and standards on crime prevention and criminal justice, and disseminating them to ensure greater respect for the rule of law and human rights, while helping to promote socio-economic development. It was also important to review mechanisms for implementing the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which was linked to money-laundering, corruption and human trafficking. Equally important was enhancing international cooperation on extradition and mutual legal assistance. The Congress was not merely a debating forum, but also an opportunity for the international community to provide a strategic orientation for the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in terms of tools for prevention, prosecution and punishment.

Expressing concern about illicit trafficking in cultural property, which damaged the cultural heritage of nations, she said the Congress was the appropriate forum for raising awareness of that crime and adopting practical measures, in partnership with other organizations, to ensure the proper return of property. She also condemned all forms of violence against women, including female migrant workers, and called on the international community to prevent, prosecute and penalize such crimes, while ensuring that victims had access to justice and effective compensation for the harm they suffered as a way to integrate gender perspectives into the criminal justice system.

She expressed strong concern about violence against migrant workers, particularly their mandatory detention, criminalization and ill treatment in the context of border control, which contravened international human right law and must end. The Group of 77 was also concerned about the increasing smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons. States should provide appropriate protection and assistance to victims of trafficking, she said, expressing support for restorative justice and alternatives to imprisonment in addressing overcrowding in prisons. It was a global concern that required urgent measures, and UNODC needed sustainable resources to implement its mandate in that regard. The Group of 77 called on States and the donor community to step up funding for that purpose.

JUAN CARLOS CAMPO MORENO, Minister for Justice of Spain, speaking on behalf of the European Union, said the last few days of the Congress would enable States to confirm agreement on the political declaration, as well as the outcomes achieved in the Committee meetings and plenary discussions. The high-level segment gave States the opportunity to send a clear message to society concerning the determination of Governments to prevent and combat crime in all its forms, while enhancing criminal justice systems. Indeed, United Nations congresses were “very good occasions” for policymakers, practitioners, academia and civil society representatives to exchange views and experiences on emerging trends.

He said the European Union had supported the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime from its inception, and believed that a strong, effective review mechanism was needed to help the Conference of Parties in its implementation. To produce a sustained reduction in crime levels while ensuring respect for fundamental freedoms was a major challenge in the time of globalization and the revolution in information technology. A primary objective of the European Union, he continued, was to create an area of freedom, security and justice for its citizens, and it had established the multi-annual Stockholm Programme for 2010-2014 to carry out that objective. It also wished to protect the rights of suspected and accused persons in criminal proceedings, which was essential to ensuring mutual trust between Member States and the public, he said.

He stressed the importance of an integrated and coordinated approach to victims of repeated violence in close relationships, gender-based violence, hate crimes, and those subjected to crimes in States of which they were not nationals or residents. The European Union was undertaking action to strengthen measures to address violence against women, including through better information collection and special protection measures easily accessible to victims. Safety on the streets was

another concern, and the inclusion of young people in conflict resolution and social responsibility programmes was an example of how that problem was being tackled.

Protecting the public against serious and organized crime was pivotal in European Union countries, he said, adding that a major aim of the European Union was to simplify and enhance the effectiveness of criminal procedures, with the associated intention of improving the rights and rehabilitation of offenders. Eurojust, a judicial cooperation network, had produced several cooperation agreements, and the European Arrest Warrant had become a key instrument for efficient judicial cooperation within the bloc.

Trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of persons, were a particular focus, as was cybercrime, he continued. The Budapest Convention on cybercrime, open to accession by all States around the world, should become the legal framework of reference in combating that menace. The European Union was active in MONEYVAL, a committee of experts on the evaluation of anti-money-laundering measures, and had created a decentralized computer network, FIU.NET for faster asset-recovery activities. Emphasizing the importance of raising awareness of graft, he said that States parties to the United Nations Convention on Corruption had produced, in Doha, Qatar, in 2009, a breakthrough peer review mechanism on its effective implementation. Later this year, the International Anti-Corruption Academy, a joint initiative of UNODC and the Government of Austria, would be promoting anti-corruption measures other States should find worth considering.

JOHANNES TOMANA, Attorney General of Zimbabwe, speaking on behalf of the African Group, said the Congress themes of children, youth and crime; smuggling of migrants; trafficking in persons; money-laundering; cybercrime; terrorism and the link between drug trafficking and transnational organized crime were serious concerns that threatened achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Protecting children from crime, especially in post-conflict societies, was a priority for the African Group, and particular attention must be paid to the need for reliable data on its root causes. He urged States to give effect to victims' rights, as set forth in the United Nations Declaration on Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power.

Calling for technical assistance to strengthen legal frameworks and build capacity to prevent and suppress terrorism, corruption, money-laundering and trafficking in persons, he urged strong international cooperation to tackle hostage-taking by criminal networks. He also expressed strong concern about violence against migrants, migrant workers and their families due to racism, particularly the practice of mandatory detention, criminalization and poor treatment of irregular migrants at international borders. It was a violation of human rights law and must cease, he said, encouraging States to ratify the relevant international legal instruments.

He called for strong support for the African Union Plan of Action to fight terrorism, drug trafficking and other transnational organized crimes, for the African Centre for Study and Research on Terrorism, as well as other relevant African mechanisms. Despite a wide range of international measures, gender-based violence and violence against children continued, he noted, calling on States to step up efforts to end it. Overcrowding in prisons was another major concern, and the African Group needed technical assistance to build capacity in prison reform and management, including adequate training for criminal justice practitioners. He also recommended the development of an international convention on cybercrime.

EUGENIO MARIA CÚRIA (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, underscored the importance of improving the quality of life around the world through better cooperation at the national, local, regional and international levels. He invited States to consider the advisability of establishing a mechanism to ensure the implementation of existing anti-crime treaties, especially the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its additional protocols, as well as a mechanism to analyse the effects of its implementation.

He said measures to tackle organized crime should overlap with initiatives on sustainable development, human rights, social inclusiveness, the rule of law and good governance. Crime prevention plans should also aim to keep children away from crime, reduce the use of detention for juveniles, and apply social policies centred on education and youth employment. Furthermore, crime prevention policies required an inclusive approach, in which Governments, civil society, the media and the private sector were involved in equal measure.

Other issues deserving attention included migration, he said, stressing the importance of viewing it not only from a security standpoint, but also as a development issue. Another focus should be depriving criminals of their assets, he said, adding that there was much need for international cooperation to dismantle the financial underpinnings of criminal organizations. Several countries in

Latin America and the Caribbean had established innovative approaches to freezing and seizing assets, reversing the onus of proof with respect to the origin of property, civil forfeiture, and other measures, he said, noting that terrorists funded their activities through drug trafficking, firearms smuggling, kidnapping and other unlawful activities.

He also called on States to consider a comprehensive strategy to deal with cybersecurity. The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean had a three-pronged approach to the issue: a regional response team to handle computer incidents; technical standards to guarantee computer security; and legal requirements to strengthen monitoring. New techniques were needed to deal with crimes committed with new technologies, which should be underpinned by mutual legal assistance between nations, he said.

The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States supported the proposal to begin work on revising, updating and bolstering the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, he said. It would soon start the task of reviewing existing national legislation dealing with cybercrime, with a view to pinpointing gaps that could be filled by a new universal instrument -- an initiative that would hopefully be supported by States worldwide. Technical assistance to developing countries was fundamental to helping developing countries implement their international obligations, he said, emphasizing he need to equip UNODC with predictable, sustained resources to carry out that mandate. At present, 80 per cent of its finances were from extrabudgetary sources and thus reliant on voluntary funding, he noted.

TUIJA BRAX, Minister for Justice of Finland, said his country was drafting an action plan for the long-term reduction of violence against women. Finland had held a public debate over the effectiveness of its Restraining Order Act, which, according to specialists, was useful but required monitoring and follow-up. The Government was currently testing risk-assessment tools and the possibility of introducing electronic monitoring in the most severe cases. It was vital to develop both legal reforms and support services for victims of violence, such as family shelters, telephone hotlines and social support.

It was also crucial to develop rapid investigative measures to tackle cybercrime, she said. Finland had been actively involved in negotiations on the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, and among the first countries to ratify it, she said, strongly encouraging others to accede to the treaty. As for overcrowding in prisons, she noted that in the 1960s and 1970s, her country had had the highest rate of incarceration in Western Europe. Thanks to a long legislative programme, the rate had fallen to the lowest in the region by the 1990s without negatively impacting security. Finland's alternative measures, such as mediation between victims and offenders, could be adapted elsewhere, she said.

NOSIVIWE MAPISA-NQAKULA, Minister for Correctional Services of South Africa, associated herself with the Group of 77 and China, and described trilateral talks involving her country, Brazil and India, in which they had identified areas of cooperation in fighting crime. The theme of the Twelfth Congress showed that, despite 55 years of success, the world as a whole still faced enormous challenges with regard to preventing crime, including corruption, which had the effect of undermining economic growth. South Africa's national goals centred on addressing youth crime, and protecting the rights of women, children and people with disabilities, she said.

Noting that terrorism was also a concern, she said her country had made major advances in that regard, through its Protection of Constitutional Democracy against Terrorist and Related Activities Act, operational since May 2005. Human trafficking, cybercrime, money-laundering and xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals were also important challenges, she said, adding that South Africa advocated closer collaboration and cooperation among law enforcement agencies, as well as the exchange of useful information. It called for the adoption of the draft supplementary United Nations rules on the treatment of women prisoners and non-custodial measures for women offenders. South Africa also supported calls to strengthen UNODC by providing it with financial resources commensurate to its task.

FIKRAT MAMMADOV, Minister for Justice of Azerbaijan, said crime prevention was not a task solely for law enforcement, but also required policies aimed at improving social welfare. Azerbaijan's recent economic strengthening had enabled the Government to increase funding for the criminal justice system. The Government had increased its budget for the courts more than 10-fold since 2005, in addition to significantly raising funding for law-enforcement agencies. Profound judicial reform and the creation of the Judicial Legal Council had improved access to justice and the effectiveness of the criminal justice system.

He said that, after gaining independence, his country had been the first country in the Commonwealth of Independent States to transfer its prisons from the jurisdiction of the Interior Ministry to the Ministry of Justice. It had expanded its penitentiary system eight-fold in the last five years thanks to the modernization of the prison infrastructure, with a focus on ensuring the rights of prisoners, particularly the right to qualified medical assistance. As a result, the death rate among prisoners had fallen 12-fold in the last 15 years.

Noting that the construction of new prisons was not a panacea, he stressed the need to seek alternatives to arrest and incarceration. The number of lawyers in Azerbaijan had more than doubled since the Eleventh Crime Congress in Bangkok. Parliament had adopted amnesty legislation and the President had pardoned more than 5,000 people. Azerbaijan had invested in professional training to improve the justice system's efficiency, he said.

JULIO CÉSAR ALAK, Minister for Justice of Argentina, speaking in his national capacity, stressed the importance of setting a clear criminal justice agenda for the next five years. Criminal justice policy had kept academics, jurists and politicians busy thus far, and it was up to Governments to ensure that their opinions were consistent with actual policy. One area deserving attention was sanctions, in particular the right kind of punitive responses to various crimes, he said, adding that criminalization should not be the first response. It should be undertaken when all other methods of regulating illegal behaviour had failed.

He said his country was currently striving to establish a democratic criminal justice policy based on a quest for truth and justice, in which a major priority was to prosecute crimes against humanity committed under Argentina's last military dictatorship, including forced disappearances. In addition, Argentina was focused on developing a normative framework to fight the financing of terrorism and the concealment and laundering of assets of illicit origin, including those acquired through the drug trade. It was also working on laws to criminalize human trafficking and cybercrime, among other things. Witness protection and investment in prison infrastructure were important considerations, as was restoring the vote to people in custody.

In addition to creating a new definition for criminal behaviour, he said, there was a need to set clear sentencing guidelines, since punishment was often meted out in an unequal way, being most frequently and intensely meted out on the most vulnerable segments of the population. The country was engaged in comprehensive reform of its criminal code, with more than 1,000 amendments already made. They would be sent to Parliament for approval "very soon", alongside a draft criminal procedure code governing the use of the most modern techniques.

Indeed, the time had come to create a universal instrument to combat cybercrime, he said, emphasizing that a group of intergovernmental experts should begin analysing the issue with a view to creating a universal instrument. It should also proceed to review the Standard Minimum Rules on the Treatment of Prisoners, with a view to reaching a binding international accord on that issue. Finally, it should strive to update the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons, keeping in mind the importance of criminalizing both buyers and sellers.

AIYING WU, Minister for Justice of China, said that in recent years, his country had made tireless efforts to improve domestic legislation to prevent and combat crime. It had constantly improved criminal legislation, amending the criminal law many times to include provisions on organized crime, ethnic discrimination, money-laundering and cybercrime, among other areas. In 2006, the National People's Congress Standing Committee had promulgated the Money Laundering Act.

China followed criminal justice policies to severely punish acts of terrorism, but showed leniency to juvenile and petty-crime offenders, giving them lighter sentences to reduce the prison population, she said. In 2009, 378,000 people had been reintegrated into society. Thanks to those and other efforts, recidivism had been restricted to 0.2 per cent. The Government was working to strengthen occupational training for criminals so they could overcome difficulties in finding employment and education and in reintegrating into society. Since 2004, the Government had been working on reforming the justice system and enhancing the use of traditional jurisprudence.

The international community faced increasingly complex threats in terms of transnational organized crime, terrorism and international economic crimes, she noted, calling on States to ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, and to accede to and ratify the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and other relevant instruments. Strengthening efforts to end organized crime was a shared concern and necessity, she added.

ABDULLA BIN NASSER BIN KHALIFA AL THANI, Minister of State for Interior Affairs of Qatar, said his country had established laws to protect children, women and the elderly against exploitation. At the international level, Qatar had acceded to a number of Arab and international instruments concerning those vulnerable groups, and had also ratified the Anti-Terrorism Strategy and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. It participated regularly in seminars to train officials in those fields.

In terms of terrorism, he said, the country was cooperating with other Arab countries in an anti-terrorism convention in addition to bilateral actions with other countries. In combating corruption, Qatar had enacted domestic laws in keeping with the relevant international conventions. It strove to ensure that law enforcement authorities kept pace with emerging challenges, while upholding national constitutional guarantees.

On the basis of UNODC guidelines, Qatar had created information centres to combat the proliferation of narcotic drugs, and undertaken joint activities with other Gulf States, he said. The country was also taking action to prevent trafficking in persons, since it was a popular transit area. Similarly, it had undertaken efforts to combat money-laundering, enacting laws and participating in a Middle East and Africa working group on the subject. Qatar would host the Thirteenth Crime Congress in Doha, he said, inviting Member States to take part in 2015.

CELIA CAPDOCIA-YANGCO, Secretary for Social Welfare and Development of the Philippines, said her country continued to build on its achievements in many areas of crime prevention and criminal justice, with landmark legislation on juvenile justice, money-laundering, asset recovery, terrorism, violence against migrants and trafficking in persons. In 2006, the Government had enacted the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act, which provided for restorative justice in the treatment of children. The Anti-Child Pornography Act, which had taken effect in February, made child pornography a violent crime. With its enactment, the Philippines had become one of a few countries to require the filtering and blocking of software for Internet service providers.

The 2007 Human Security Act, which criminalized terrorism, had placed the Philippines on a par with its South-East Asian neighbours in the fight against terrorism, she said. The 2001 Anti-Money Laundering Act had been amended to authorize the Anti-Money Laundering Council to inquire into, and undertake the freezing and forfeiture of assets belonging to suspected terrorists and their accomplices. A six-year strategic plan of action against trafficking served as a blueprint for action by all Philippine entities, she continued. A national referral system for the recovery and reintegration of trafficked persons had been created to guide service providers. The Government had established a Women and Children Protection Centre in 2008, she said, calling for universal adherence to the United Nations Conventions on Transnational Organized Crime, and the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers.

MOHAMED NACIRI, Minister for Justice of Morocco, said globalization called for greater efforts to combat crime than in the past. Well aware of the dangers that crime posed to peace and security, the Government of Morocco had adopted a multidimensional strategy to mitigate the impact of crime while respecting human rights. Trafficking in human beings was a primary concern, and the law on the entry and residency of foreigners had been amended to accord with United Nations conventions. It had also created a strategy on migration and border services, which permitted the monitoring of human-trafficking networks. Efforts were under way to protect children's rights, through amendments to national legislation that was constantly evolving, he said.

Aware of the dangers posed by terrorism, Morocco supported United Nations initiatives in that area, he said. At the same time, it had put measures in place to combat drug trafficking and money-laundering, and to monitor the effectiveness of steps taken in those fields. The national law on money-laundering was recognized internationally, and had created a special unit to monitor financial transactions, he said, adding that the Government was currently putting forward recommendations on ways to prosecute such cases. It was also actively monitoring the Internet to tackle cybercrime. Morocco had a framework for the proper treatment of prisoners with the ultimate aim of reintegrating ex-offenders into society.

ALBERTO SOUZA MARTINS, Minister for Justice of Portugal, said cooperation among States, the United Nations and other organizations was important in the fight against terrorism, economic and financial crimes, trafficking in persons and cybercrime, which must be fought at the global level as they could not be conquered by States on their own. Respect for the rule of law, democracy and human rights was also important, he added, noting that all must do their part on the basis of mutual trust and recognition of the legal systems of different States.

He said his country was doing its part in the context of the Portuguese-speaking countries, which had approved conventions on extradition, mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and transfer of sentenced persons. Portugal also collaborated with UNDOC and United Nations peacekeeping missions, and contributed to development in post-conflict countries, he said, adding that criminal justice reform was necessary to ensure restorative justice and alternative dispute mechanisms.

He said public awareness campaigns were important in fighting social exclusion, and reform of juvenile justice was needed to improve conditions in prisons. The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules on the Treatment of Prisoners and other conventions were not enough, he said, while emphasizing that States must implement and follow them up. Portugal supported the assessment mechanisms of the Convention against Corruption, and called for similar means in the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols.

MONTE RUBIDO GARCIA, Deputy Secretary for Crime Prevention and Human Rights of the Federal Secretariat of Public Safety of Mexico, recalled that in 2007, his country had put a strategy in place to attack all forms of crime, since some criminal organizations possessed sophisticated weapons and enjoyed the support of certain economic and social actors. The Government had dealt serious blows to organized crime, but criminal groups had managed to undermine public safety and security in certain areas.

With gangs fighting for territory in which to market drugs, he said, it was necessary to formulate clear strategies and become part of international anti-crime efforts to ensure the fight in Mexico was successful. An integrated approach was needed to fight the drugs trade, he said, underscoring the importance of targeting producers, as well as transit and consumer countries alike. No one was immune as drugs killed everywhere they were produced, sold and distributed.

In recent years, the Government had transformed the national public safety and criminal justice system, he continued. However, a model of security that focused only on punitive measures would never suffice. A focus on social development and security was needed since detention and sanctions would never fully end crime. Mexico had launched the "Let's Clean up Mexico" programme to end delinquency and violence, as well as programmes to make schools safe and reclaim public spaces from criminals.

ELIZABETH VERVILLE, Special Representative of the Secretary of State of the United States, said that, since the Congress held no official policymaking authority, delegates had the freedom to generate ideas and initiate discussions on a wide range of criminal justice topics. States should seize the opportunity to take stock of its work over the past five years and to discuss the future challenges they would face in implementing past commitments.

Through its hard work over the past decade, the Congress had brought into force five legally binding anti-crime instruments, she noted. Notably, 2010 marked the tenth anniversary of the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, which had 154 States parties. It would soon celebrate the fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention against Corruption, an event that the international community had recently reaffirmed by creating a new peer review mechanism to help promote and strengthen implementation. The task today was to translate the words of those instruments into concrete action, she said, calling for effective mechanisms in that regard.

Looking ahead, the international community must ready itself for new forms of transnational crime, she continued, pointing out that many international criminal syndicates were demonstrating greater sophistication and global reach. Their networks had no clear hierarchy, and sometimes formed briefly to capitalize on opportunities of convenience. Many were converging and reinforcing each other, she said, noting that collectively, they manipulated financial markets, laundered ill-gotten profits and smuggled billions of dollars in illegal goods around the globe.

Countering such threats was important, but success would require shared responsibility and partnerships, she said. States must take stock of implementation challenges and gaps, while focusing cooperatively and collaboratively on providing technical assistance to meet those needs. That portion of the work of the Congress required continuing and thoughtful deliberation, most of which would necessarily move to the halls of the United Nations in Vienna, for the work of the Crime Congress was just the beginning, not an end in itself.

TOSHIAKI HIWATARI, Prosecutor-General of Japan, said it was Governments' "basic and vital duty" to build a society in which people could live peacefully. Japan had long been said to be the safest country in the world, but recently, for various reasons, the number of crimes committed there

had been increasing. For that reason, Japan was launching a variety of initiatives to regain its status as the safest country, including measures to enhance international cooperation.

Turning to corruption, he said it had the capacity to weaken national political and economic structures, and stressed the importance of every country playing its role in creating a “globally flourishing society”, in which no country could afford indifference to corruption in other countries. Nothing was more important than the political will of leaders to eradicate corruption, and the Congress should reaffirm its commitment in that regard. Hoping to help countries achieve that goal, Japan had provided capacity-building programmes in Asia.

GUN-HO CHO, Deputy Prosecutor General of the Republic of Korea, said globalization and “informatization” were increasing trade, investment and people-to-people exchanges among countries while also deepening the “transnationalization” of crime. Beyond traditional crimes, such as trafficking in persons, drug smuggling and bribery, rising new criminal trends such as money-laundering, cybercrime and terrorism were crossing borders, negatively affecting all nations and the current domestic and international instruments were insufficient in addressing them.

He said his country was actively involved in developing and spreading exemplary policies and best practices, providing technical, financial and investigative support. Domestically, the Government had amended its laws to impose heavier penalties on sex offenders, and had enacted the DNA Database Act in 2009 to collect DNA samples from felony offenders and suspend the statute of limitations until suspects were arrested, if scientific evidence such as DNA samples were available.

To tackle corruption, the Government had enacted and amended special acts to confiscate and enforce penalties on all funds corruptly sent abroad, he said. The Supreme Prosecutor’s Office was responsible for tracking such funds and monitoring money-laundering. A system to report suspicious transactions now allowed easy identification of illegal financial transactions. The Republic of Korea would be hosting the Fourth World Summit of Prosecutors General, Attorneys General and Chief Prosecutors in 2011, he said, extending an invitation to all delegates.

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For further information:

To download the press kit and other information (also in Portuguese), visit:
www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/en/events/2010/12th-crime-congress.html
www.un.org/en/conf/crimecongress2010/

For live webcast: www.un.org/webcast/crime2010