

**12th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Closing Press Conference**

Press Briefing by National Secretary for Justice of Brazil

SALVADOR, 19 April (UN Information Service) – The Government of Brazil would use confiscated proceeds from money-laundering and other crimes to fund implementation of the main United Nations treaties on transnational organized crime and corruption, the country's National Secretary for Justice said in Salvador, Brazil, today.

Speaking at a press briefing following the conclusion of the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Romeu Tuma, Jr., said Brazil would also use such seized assets to provide other developing countries with the technical support they needed to reform their criminal justice systems, through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The decision was in line with article 30 of the Palermo Protocol, on transnational organized crime, and article 62 of the Merida Convention, on corruption, Mr. Tuma said, in reference to those provisions, which relate to economic development and technical assistance.

"It could be a great instrument for countries to build structures to fight crime," he added, noting that it was the first decision of its kind by any country. Urging other States to follow his country's lead, he said Brazil had \$3 billion in assets confiscated overseas, noting that if all countries allocated 5 per cent of the value of the recovered funds, they could finance 30 congresses.

Responding to questions about a proposed United Nations asset-recovery fund, he said the report of the Congress cited explicit guidelines on reducing bureaucratic hurdles to the repatriation of assets. The report of Committee I also addressed asset recovery, but Brazil was the only country so far to put the idea into practice. The President of Brazil and the Justice Minister were now studying the percentage of proceeds recovered to be allocated, he added.

In terms of concrete action resulting from the Congress, he said it had produced a Charter, a Declaration, and a final report, which would be debated in Vienna next month by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. "The event was an important benchmark," he said, noting that participants had agreed on the need for a universal tool for cooperation in tackling the emerging threat of cybercrime. They "had the courage to discuss in-depth controversial issues," he said, stressing that State sovereignty had limits and that physical borders were no excuse for impunity.

Also attending the briefing was John Sandage, Executive Secretary of the Congress, who said its participants had set standards for updating existing commitments, starting with prison reform. They had recognized new threats to security and justice in the last five years, including identity theft and environmental crime, as well as initiating proceedings to address them through a criminal justice response. That breakthrough would be the main legacy of Salvador, he said.

More than 3,000 participants from 102 Member States, in addition to Palestine and international, regional and non-governmental organizations, participated in the Twelfth Crime Congress.

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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
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