



## MEETINGS COVERAGE

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# MEMBER STATES ADOPT DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT TO INTEGRATE CRIME PREVENTION, CRIMINAL JUSTICE INTO POST-2015 AGENDA, AS UN CONGRESS OPENS IN DOHA

## Debate Focuses on Link between Human Rights, Rule of Law, Sustainable Development

The success of the United Nations work in the post-2015 era depended upon the central and cross-cutting elements of crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law, stressed high-level speakers as they opened the Thirteenth Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Doha today.

Adopting a statement to that effect, participants committed themselves to integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda, including strategies and goals related to sustainable development.

By the text of the “Doha Declaration” (document [A/CONF.222/L.6](#)), participants acknowledged the 60-year legacy of United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice and reaffirmed the cross-cutting nature of those elements. They committed themselves to holistic and comprehensive approaches to countering all forms of crime, violence, corruption and terrorism, and to ensuring that those responses were implemented in a coordinated, coherent way.

Also by the 13-page Declaration, participants acknowledged that sustainable development and the rule of law were strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and reaffirmed their commitment and strong political will in support of effective, fair, humane and accountable criminal justice systems and the institutions comprising them.

To those ends, they further committed to a number of specific actions, including the adoption of comprehensive and inclusive national crime prevention and criminal justice policies and programmes; ensuring the right of everyone to a fair trial without undue delay; reviewing and reforming legal aid policies; mainstreaming a gender perspective and youth-related concerns into criminal justice efforts; and countering corruption and enhancing transparency in public administration; among others.

“Our goal is for the world to say with one clear voice, ‘today was safer and more equitable than yesterday, and tomorrow will be better than today’,” said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon during the ceremonial opening of the Congress. Crime was devastating individuals, communities and nations around the world, he said, pointing, in particular, to drug-related violence, terrorism, human trafficking and wildlife crime. The year 2015 was pivotal, as the new sustainable development agenda’s success depended on the centrality of the rule of law.

International cooperation and coordination were critical, he said, encouraging every country to ratify and implement conventions against drugs, crime and corruption and international instruments against terrorism and to support the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. “Our duty to the citizens of the world is to act today to prevent funds from being used to deliver tomorrow’s death and destruction,” he added.

“The rule of law at all levels is among the most important guarantees to ensure development and justice,” said Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa al Thani, Prime Minister of Qatar, who was elected President of the Congress by acclamation today. He said that the meeting was taking place at a time when tensions and conflict were leading to terrorism and insecurity around the world. National and regional efforts to combat crime must be consolidated; however, that could only take place if all States adopted fair policies and abided by their enforcement in accordance with international law.

Yury Fedetov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Secretary-General of the Congress, said that the meeting presented an opportunity to take stock and agree on robust responses to address crime, violence, corruption and terrorism, which represented some of the most pressing challenges and biggest threats to sustainable development. “Crime harms us all, in all parts of the world,” he said, adding that poor and vulnerable communities often felt the worst impact, serving as hotbeds for corruption and human trafficking. Despite the fall in violent crime globally, homicide levels in low- and lower-middle-income countries were on the rise.

Sam Kutesa, President of the General Assembly, said that, whether it was armed violence by criminal gangs or drug smuggling, trafficking humans or human organs, terrorism or cybercrime, corruption or other forms of transnational organized crime, there was a compelling case for enhanced international action to combat and dismantle networks and platforms that perpetuate those crimes. He welcomed the Congress’ focus on new and emerging trends, including wildlife and forest crime.

“Neither rampant crime nor related poverty will disappear tomorrow,” said Martin Sajdik (Austria), President of the Economic and Social Council. By the beginning of 2016, he said, the world would have adopted 17 sustainable development goals, including a goal aimed at fighting the disastrous effects of crime on development. The purpose of the Congress was to create the global strategy to stamp out crime for the coming five years and to ensure action towards implementing the post-2015 development agenda. “These are not just worthy causes, they are fundamental to us as human beings and as custodians of this planet,” he said.

As part of the ceremonial opening of the Congress, Mr. al Thani took up the report of the pre-Congress consultations on procedural and organizational matters, as well as other procedural documents. Participants then elected, by acclamation, the members of the General Committee of the Congress. Seven members were elected from the African Group: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa and Tunisia. Six members were elected from the Asia-Pacific Group: China, Indonesia, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon and Thailand. Five members were elected from the Latin American and Caribbean Group: Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico. Three members were elected from the Eastern European Group: Azerbaijan, Croatia and Latvia. Six members were elected from the Western European and Other States Group: Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands.

Aside from the presidency of the General Committee, which was held by Qatar, participants also elected South Africa as First Vice-President, Latvia as Rapporteur-General, Mexico as Chairperson of Committee I and Finland as Chairperson of Committee II.

Participants saw a video on the Doha Youth Forum, which was held in advance of the Congress, and heard a briefing by its representatives. They also saw a video commemorating 60 years of the United Nations work on crime prevention and criminal justice.

Also speaking today were ministers, Government officials and representatives from Brazil (on behalf of the “Group of 77” developing countries and China), Nigeria (on behalf of the Group of African States), Jordan (on behalf of Asian States), Panama (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States), Japan, Serbia, Turkey, Italy, Czech Republic, China, Slovakia, Oman, Sweden, Luxembourg, Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova, Austria, Iran, Thailand, Costa Rica and Pakistan, as well as the European Union.

The Congress will resume its work on Monday, 13 April, at 10 a.m.

## Opening Remarks

ABDULLAH BIN NASSER BIN KHALIFA AL-THANI, Prime Minister of Qatar and President of the Congress, said the meeting was taking place at a time when tensions and conflict were leading to terrorism and insecurity around the world. Qatar was hosting the Congress to help combat crime, which was hindering the achievement of sustainable development and other essential global goals. National and regional efforts to combat crime must be consolidated; however, that could only take place if all States adopted fair policies and abided by their enforcement in accordance with international law. Crime prevention should include combating corruption, providing social services, combating poverty and ensuring economic inclusion of all sectors of society.

In light of the negative impact of crime on development, integrating criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda and the post-2015 sustainable development agenda was critical. In that context, Qatar had undertaken an initiative to create a regional fund for victims of the conflicts in the Middle East region, he said, calling on all partners to take part. “The rule of law at all levels is among the most important guarantees to ensure development and justice,” he said. Qatar had made strides in transparency and combating terrorism. He went on to say that “double standards” in implementing criminal justice constituted a major hindrance. Violations took place around the world and their selective enforcement could not be tolerated. In that context, the Security Council must be committed to international criminal justice in its truest sense.

BAN KI-MOON, United Nations Secretary-General, said crime was devastating individuals, communities and nations around the world, with thousands killed by drug-related violence and terrorism each year, more than 40,000 women murdered by their partners and hundreds of thousands of women and young girls coerced by human traffickers into lives of sexual slavery and immense suffering. Wildlife was also under severe threat, with more than 1,200 rhinos slaughtered by poachers last year in South Africa alone. Feeding off corruption, crime obstructed good governance, undermined institutions and the rule of law, threatened peace and security, hindered development and violated human rights. This year was pivotal, as Member States would meet in September to consider a post-2015 development agenda that could pave the way to a better future for billions of people. The new agenda’s success depended on the centrality of the rule of law. Indeed, “there can be no sustainable development without human rights and the rule of law”, he said.

International cooperation and coordination were critical, he continued, encouraging every country to ratify and implement conventions against drugs, crime and corruption, and international instruments against terrorism, and to support the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). “We must also adapt to changing times,” he said, highlighting that cybercrime was now a billion dollar “business” in online fraud, identity theft and lost intellectual property, affecting millions worldwide, including businesses and Governments. Growing links between organized crime and terrorism had also seen sharp increases in funding terror through criminal networks. “We must work to stop crime and extremism being seen as attractive or necessary options — especially by youth,” he said.

To address that challenge, the United Nations was taking steps in that direction, including focusing on equitable, sustainable development, supporting rule-of-law assistance and security-sector reform in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and developing a plan of action on preventing violent extremism. The United Nations was also coordinating with partners a General Assembly high-level debate on how to counter increasing violent extremism and terrorism. In addition, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and other relevant Assembly and Security Council resolutions had been adopted, he said, urging nations and partners to strongly support the implementation of those instruments.

“Our duty to the citizens of the world is to act today to prevent funds from being used to deliver tomorrow’s death and destruction,” he said, emphasizing that the sustainable development agenda could reduce inequalities, promote human rights and make our world a better place for all. “Our goal is for the world to say with one clear voice: ‘Today was safer and more equitable than yesterday, and tomorrow will be better than today.’ If we deliver on our promise, if we can build a world of justice and equality, we will have been part of an extraordinary achievement for billions of people.”

YURY FEDOTOV, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Secretary-General of the Congress, said the world had come together to define a transformative post-2015 development agenda that could foster human progress and bring an end to poverty and inequality. The Congress presented an

opportunity to take stock and agree on robust responses to address crime, violence, corruption and terrorism, which represented some of the most pressing challenges and biggest threats to sustainable development. Central to that effort was strengthening the rule of law, which meant securing justice for all. "Crime harms us all, in all parts of the world, whether we are talking about corruption, cybercrime or violence; countries of origin, transit or destination for trafficking victims and smuggled migrants; producers and consumers of illicit drugs; or supply and demand for illegal forest and wildlife products or cultural property," he said.

Poor and vulnerable communities felt the worst impact, he continued. Even though violent crime had dropped globally, homicide levels in low- and lower-middle-income countries had increased by 10 per cent over the past decade. In addition, corruption affected more people in low-income countries and many human trafficking flows were directed from poor areas to more affluent ones. Weaker rule of law also tended to be linked to lower levels of economic development, he said, noting that in 2013, about one quarter of prisoners worldwide had been detained without a trial, with that percentage rising to one half in low- and lower-middle-income States.

More must be done to safeguard and sustain development through fair and effective crime prevention measures and criminal justice systems that enabled police, prosecution, courts and prisons to function effectively and to respect the rule of law and human rights standards, he said. The political declaration the Congress would adopt and its implementation could contribute to achieving the goals to be set out in the post-2015 development agenda. For its part, UNODC stood ready to help translate the vision to be agreed upon in Doha into work on the ground that made a difference in the lives of people everywhere.

Mr. AL-THANI, in his capacity as Congress President, then introduced the Doha Declaration (document [A/CONF.222/L.6](#)), saying it reaffirmed the commitment and strong political will in support of effective, fair, humane and accountable criminal justice systems. The Declaration also acknowledged that sustainable development and the rule of law were strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

The Congress then unanimously adopted the Declaration.

SAM KUTESA, President of the General Assembly, said the Congress was an opportunity to review collective efforts that could feed into the ongoing intergovernmental process for formulating an inclusive and transformative post-2015 development agenda. Whether it was armed violence by criminal gangs or drug smuggling, trafficking humans or human organs, terrorism, cybercrime, corruption or other forms of transnational organized crime, there was a compelling case for enhanced international action to combat and dismantle networks and platforms that perpetuate those crimes. As the Secretary-General's report noted, terrorism and drug-related crimes in particular had increased since the Congress had been held in 2010. He was pleased the current Congress would focus on new and emerging trends, including wildlife and forest crime, which not only threatened environmental sustainability, but affected national economies and contributed to grave security risks.

Good governance, including respecting the rule of law, was an "essential ingredient" for sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development, he said. In that regard, all efforts should be made to create peaceful, just and prosperous societies by strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice systems, norms and standards, while combating the threats that undermined them, in particular transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking and corruption. Emphasis should especially be given to building capacity in crime detection and prevention, sharing of quality crime information and data and forensic analysis.

Steps taken thus far were encouraging, he said, emphasizing that goal 16 of the sustainable development goals sought to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. At the Assembly's high-level thematic debate in February, delegates had produced an important outcome highlighting the relationship between rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice, and sustainable development. They had also underlined urgent needs, including strengthening the implementation of legal frameworks and enhancing international cooperation. Hoping those conclusions would help guide the Congress, he said "let us use this forum to generate concrete ideas that can positively contribute to the ongoing negotiating process for the post-2015 development agenda in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice".

MARTIN SAJDIK (Austria), President of the Economic and Social Council, underlined the timeliness of the Congress, saying that if everything worked out as planned, by the beginning of 2016, the world community

would have “done its paperwork”, with 17 sustainable development goals at its heart, to make the world a better place. More specifically, goal 16 aimed at fighting the disastrous effects crime had on development, with targets to end, among other things, abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children, to promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice, and to combat illicit financial and arms flows and reduce corruption and bribery in all its forms.

As the means of implementing that goal should be oriented towards strengthening relevant national institutions for preventing violence and combating terrorism and crime, he said, UNODC was well placed to assist nations in capacity-building efforts. As the new goals rolled out in 2016, implementation would first occur at the national level, where Governments were answerable to parliaments and accountable to people. That was where shared global aspirations would gain life and be observed, measured and evaluated by each country, in accordance with its national development priorities. For its part, the Economic and Social Council would continue to serve as the platform for collective and integrated action in the implementation of the United Nations development agenda.

Going forward, partnerships of all kinds would become ever more critical and would need to be effectively aligned with a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development. The Economic and Social Council was the “partner for the partners” in that regard. “Neither rampant crime nor related poverty will disappear tomorrow,” he said, emphasizing that the purpose of the Congress was to set the agenda against crime for the coming five years and to ensure action was taken towards implementing the post-2015 development agenda. “These are not just worthy causes, they are fundamental to us as human beings and as custodians of this planet.”

## Statements

EVANDRO DE SAMPAIO DIDONET ([Brazil](#)), speaking on behalf of the “Group of 77” developing countries and China, said sustainable development and the rule of law were strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and respect for and promotion of the rule of law at national and international levels were essential to preventing and countering crime in all its forms and manifestations. The rule of law required strong and efficient justice-sector coordination, as well as effective interagency cooperation and coordination between United Nations offices and activities. The Crime Congress was not only a forum for debating issues related to crime and criminal justice, but was also an opportunity for Member States to provide strategic orientation to other policymaking bodies in that area, in particular to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. In that context, the Congress should address emerging manifestations of crime, as well as existing modalities of crime that had been reinforced in recent years, including the illicit trafficking of cultural property and related offenses.

The Group of 77 recognized the increasing links between transnational organized crime and other illicit activities, in particular drug trafficking and money-laundering, and in some cases terrorism and its financing, he said. It also reaffirmed the need to enhance bilateral, regional and international cooperation in the areas of information exchange, extradition and mutual legal assistance in line with domestic legislation. Expressing concern about terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, he called on Member States to continue to give each other technical assistance to build capacity to effectively respond to new strategies employed by terrorists. He also drew attention to cybercrime and wildlife crime, and strongly condemned all forms of violence against women, children and migrant workers and their families. He further expressed the Group’s serious concern over any form of ranking of Member States for purposes of international cooperation in criminal matters, and called on Member States and relevant organizations to avoid such rankings and unilateral actions, as well as sanctions that might weaken their ability to fight against such crimes.

ABEL ADELAKUN AYOKO ([Nigeria](#)), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States and associating himself with the Group of 77 and China, reiterated his unequivocal condemnation and serious concern about the rise in terrorism and terrorist acts in all parts of the world and stressed the necessity of tracking the perpetrators of those acts and bringing them to justice while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Group also expressed its deep concern at the increase in incidents of kidnapping and hostage-taking by terrorist groups, as well as at the increasing links between terrorist activities and transnational organized crime. The Group continued to protect children and youth in order to prevent their involvement in crime or victimization by crime, especially in post-conflict societies, as one of its highest priorities. In that regard, the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and United Nations norms and standards towards development policies in the area of juvenile justice was critical.

Among other things, he condemned violence against migrants and their families and encouraged countries to enhance cooperation in a comprehensive manner to develop effective measures to prevent the smuggling of migrants. He welcomed the work of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Group on the Revision of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, which had met in Cape Town, South Africa, in March. He further reaffirmed the Group's commitment and strong political will in support of effective, fair and accountable criminal justice systems and institutions comprising them. In that regard, the Group encouraged all Member States to take concrete steps to ensure effective implementation of the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems by developing national plans for review and reform of legal aid policies.

BASSAM SAMEER AL-TALHOUNI, Minister for Justice of Jordan, speaking for the Group of Asian States, said building on the Salvador Declaration, which recognized the centrality of crime prevention and development, the Doha Declaration reiterated the importance of promoting peaceful, corruption-free and inclusive societies for sustainable development while focusing on a people-centred approach that provided justice for all. Despite progress made in enhancing the international legal framework, many issues remained of paramount concern, among them environment-related crime and cybercrime. In addition, trafficking in cultural property and related offences continued unabated and the international response must catch up, including with effective protection and recovery initiatives.

While the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Convention against Corruption formed the pillar of the international legal framework, the efficacy of those instruments depended on the implementation of their provisions and international cooperation, he said, urging States to ensure the return of illicitly required assets to the country of origin. He also called on Member States to integrate rights-based, gender-specific approaches in national crime prevention and criminal justice policy. Among the Group's other concerns were smuggling migrants and terrorist attacks, he said, stressing the importance of inter-agency cooperation and technical assistance for transferring technology to and building capacity of criminal justice systems in order to prevent and suppress crimes, including terrorism.

GLORIA DEL CARMEN YOUNG CHIZMAR (Panama), speaking for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, said criminal justice efforts must include vulnerable groups, including children and adolescents, and such initiatives played a role in economic and sustainable development. Concerned about a lack of monitoring mechanisms in the Convention against organized crime, she called on all States to take action in applying the instrument and its protocols. Also concerned about the trafficking of migrants, as well as the spread of small arms and light weapons, she welcomed the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty.

On tackling corruption, she underlined the importance of strengthening international cooperation and ensuring the return of trafficked products to their countries of origin. Regional cooperation should also be bolstered with regard to initiatives, including the Red de Fiscales contra el Crimen Organizado and the Conferencia de Ministros de Justicia de los Países Iberoamericanos. The region was also combating new and emerging transnational crimes, including cybercrimes and trafficking migrants, she said, adding that the Group was very concerned about the phenomenon of gangs affecting Central American States, particularly El Salvador. The Group also reaffirmed its commitment to efficient and impartial justice systems, including the need for policies aimed at rehabilitation and social reintegration as well as ending impunity. The promotion of a culture of peace and justice was fundamental for sustainable development.

GYORGYI MARTIN ZANATHY, representative of the European Union, said crime prevention and criminal justice systems played a crucial role in promoting sustainable development. Strongly condemning recent terrorist attacks in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, she said such threats could only be countered through international cooperation and determined national action. Underlining the need to counter threats posed by multiple links between transnational organized crime, terrorism and its financing, she called on all States that had not yet done so to accede to relevant legal instruments and for States Parties to use those tools alongside relevant United Nations resolutions to enhance international cooperation in countering all forms of terrorism.

Member States must promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, she said. All States should abolish the death penalty and condemn all acts of violence against women and children. Among the European Union's concerns, sexual orientation and gender identity continued to be used to justify serious rights

violations and transnational organized crime and corruption were undermining development and democracy. For its part, the European Union was committed to preventing trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants and was stepping up efforts against wildlife crime, she said, calling on Member States to take national measures to prevent and combat crimes, including counterfeiting and fraudulent medicines. She urged Member States to fully and effectively involve civil society, the private sector, academia, media and other stakeholders, and underlined that education and awareness-raising on human rights and the rule of law also played a crucial role in those efforts.

KOTARO OHNO ([Japan](#)) said safe and peaceful societies were essential in achieving the sustainable development goals, with crime prevention and criminal justice playing a critically important role. A culture of lawfulness supported the rule of law, which should permeate society. Citizens' participation was crucial, he said, pointing to national examples, including the "saiban-in" system, which, since 2009, had appointed lay judges that tried, with professional judges, certain serious criminal cases. Terrorism acts and the "borderlessness" of criminal activities, including cybercrime, were growing concerns and Japan was addressing those issues by, among other things, signing a joint action plan with UNODC and providing assistance in strengthening counter-terrorism measures. After receiving heart-warming support following the 2011 earthquake, Japan was reminded of the importance of mutual help and would further strengthen its support to foreign countries, he said, adding that Japan was honoured to host the Congress in 2020.

IVICA DAČIĆ, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, said organized crime directly threatened and undermined the authority of States, thus disabling their development. Discrimination, injustice and poverty were directly linked to crime growth. Success in providing education, jobs and personal development, as well as humane treatment and a holistic judicial system, would diminish crime's stronghold in society. Broad international consensus had been reached on the rule of law and justice being core elements for enhancing sustainable social and economic development. Serbia actively sought to prevent and suppress corruption, especially through steps intended to make the work of State administration bodies more transparent and promote integrity and reliability of the criminal justice system. Serbia was also taking all necessary measures to fight cybercrime and money-laundering, it was cooperating in the area of the fight against trafficking in narcotics and was a participating State in the regional programme for the promotion of justice and security in South-East Europe.

SEBAHATTIN ÖZTÜRK, Minister of the Interior of Turkey, said transnational organized crime was a major challenge to international security and development. Socioeconomic challenges provoked the criminal mind and vice versa, he said, which was why strategies to combat crime should be consistent with the sustainable development agenda. National, regional and international strategies must be applied in an integrated manner. In Turkey and the wider Middle East region, the problem of foreign fighters was a serious threat, but was only one aspect of the problem. In that regard, Turkey had long combated corruption, terrorism and other types of crimes, and had intensified its border-protection measures to combat human trafficking and the smuggling on migrants. Cultural property was the most valuable wealth of nations, he said, adding that Turkey was among the richest countries with regard to cultural monuments and artefacts. The illicit trafficking in such cultural properties had become an urgent crime, and in order to effectively counter it, the world needed a strong, legally binding international treaty. He hoped that the Doha Declaration would pave the way for promoting peace for future generations.

ANDREA ORLANDO, Minister for Justice of Italy, associating himself with the European Union, said the rule of law — together with the promotion of human rights, democratic institutions, effective governance and the fight against corruption — was a fundamental aspect of a fourth cross-cutting pillar of the post-2015 development agenda. In that context, Italy firmly supported the campaign for the abolition of the death penalty. The dramatic resurgence of the terrorist threat in Europe and the Mediterranean, as well as in the Middle East and Africa, illustrated the urgent need for the international community to strengthen judicial cooperation and the exchange of information. Italy was actively preventing and countering transnational organized crime, with a particular focus on fighting criminal networks involved in the smuggling of migrants across the Mediterranean. He therefore called on Member States to ensure the full and universal implementation of the Palermo Convention and the Protocols thereto, and to establish as soon as possible a review mechanism for those accords. He also drew attention to other evolving criminal phenomena, namely the illicit trafficking in cultural property, environmental crimes and counterfeiting.

ROBERT PELIKÁN, Minister for Justice of the Czech Republic, said that since the last Congress, his country had taken a number of steps, including adopting legislation on issues such as cybercrime and juvenile justice. Crime prevention was organized at national, ministerial and local levels to ensure maximum impact on the ground. As the Internet and mobile phones were a part of daily life, the Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime was the principal instrument to fight that scourge and, since it was open to non-members, served as a basis of international cooperation in that regard. In addition to addressing prevention efforts, the Czech Republic was also focused on reducing recidivism through its 2009 Penal Code, including through serving sentences at home. At present, the national probation and mediation service was responsible for the recidivism programme, but the Government was looking to contract an electronic surveillance system to simplify and better control the process.

AIYING WU, Minister for Justice of China, said the Congress had played a pivotal role in helping Member States to improve their efforts. The international community should continue to support initiatives to tackle current forms of crime, she said, noting that the United Nations was taking on a new mission to help all countries address global challenges and achieve sustainable development. There was a clear link between crime prevention and criminal justice and sustainable development. The post-2015 agenda and the Doha Declaration would provide guidance over the next five years. In that vein, she appealed to all parties to raise the bar for international cooperation in the new era. Cooperation on the ground must be stepped up to create a global framework for fighting crime and global coordination must be strengthened to tackle cybercrime. China highly regarded the rule of law and had created a strategic blueprint for improvements in several areas. It had strengthened its work in crime prevention and criminal justice, passing legislation on a range of issues and conducting awareness campaigns on the rule of law. It had also bolstered transparency in the justice system and had concluded 129 treaties with States regarding extradition and other matters.

TOMÁŠ BOREC, Minister for Justice of Slovakia, said prevention was the least expensive and most effective way to deal with crime. Slovakia supported effective, fair, humane and accountable criminal justice systems involving the active participation and inclusion of all individuals and, as such, had developed a crime-prevention strategy. "There can be no security and no development without justice," he said. Crime prevention and criminal justice created safer and richer societies. As such, policies should focus on education, work and the prevention of recidivism, as stated in the Declaration. For its part, Slovakia had introduced this year a house arrest system, which aimed at reducing overcrowding in prisons while improving the rehabilitation process of criminals. It was the role of leaders to shape a world in which people could enjoy freedom and prosperity, and to promote greater international cooperation, upholding the rule of law and ensuring the effectiveness of crime prevention and criminal justice systems, including by trying to integrate former criminals into society.

ABDULMALIK BIN ABDULLAH AL KHALILI, Minister for Justice of Oman, said the scourge of international crime needed joint policies and the rule of law must be upheld everywhere. For its part, Oman had worked with the international community to fight and prevent crime. Emphasizing the importance of strengthening the rule of law, he said efforts in that regard supported development. Oman's Constitution was a balance between freedom and human rights, and respect for law and order. Domestic legislation, including on penal proceedings and money-laundering, was in line with United Nations standards and principles. Over the years, no effort had been spared to promote international cooperation and the principles of mutual respect and mutual assistance in the fight against transnational crimes, including trafficking and cybercrime, on the basis of existing international instruments. Oman had also signed counter-terrorism instruments and had been active in that regard within the League of Arab States and other regional and international organizations. "Fighting crime can only be effective if it is done by all," he said.

MORGAN JOHANSSON, Minister for Justice and Migration of Sweden, said crime and justice could not be addressed solely at national levels and full cooperation was needed on all fronts. Human rights, democracy, the rule of law and sustainable development were closely linked and mutually reinforcing. However, the rule of law was not just a means to other ends, but a principle of governance to ensure the participation of all individuals, with gender equality being a fundamental international principle. "Women's rights are human rights" that could never be set aside with reference to culture, tradition or religion, he said, emphasizing that the Swedish Government called it a "feminist foreign policy". Turning to crime prevention, he said increased coordination was needed on a national level and Sweden was initiating a range of efforts, including reducing recidivism. It was also developing and sharing best practices regarding human trafficking. On international cooperation,

Sweden had made it possible, through national legislation, to cooperate with another State without the existence of an agreement on matters such as extradition and mutual legal assistance, he said, encouraging other States to examine ways to enable the broadest legal cooperation possible.

FÉLIX BRAZ, Minister for Justice of Luxembourg, associating himself with the European Union, said the Congress and the Declaration adopted would allow the international community to direct public attention to the situation of human rights, development and the negative impact of crime. The rule of law must always be underpinned by respect for human rights. The Declaration had at its centre the fight against terrorism and intolerance, which were never acceptable. "Fear and violence are not arguments, and we can never accept that," he said, adding that recent events in Paris, Tunis and Kenya were reminders of that fact. It was essential that States move away from a "national mindset", as there was a need for an international, modern framework for combating terrorism that furthered respect for human rights. Luxembourg had a draft law before its Parliament on fighting terrorism, emanating from the resolution adopted by the United Nations Security Council on that matter. Also reflected in the Declaration was the need to ensure gender equality in all areas, especially in crime prevention and in criminal justice systems. Luxembourg condemned all acts of terror against the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, which could not be ignored by the international community. He proposed that a paragraph on the death penalty be included in the Declaration.

FIKRAT MAMMADOV, Minister for Justice of Azerbaijan, said that, after the 2010 Congress in Salvador, his country had adopted strategies and action plans to combat corruption and human trafficking, and promote transparency and public participation. It had updated laws against terrorism and illegal migration, and criminalized taking part in international armed conflicts. A "profound" judicial reform was also under way, with the creation of a judicial council with gradually expanding powers. The Government had strengthened guarantees of judicial independence and introduced new mechanisms to combat influence and interference with judge's activities. Prison reform focused on modernizing prison infrastructure, ensuring prisoners' rights and making punishment more humane. The public, especially human rights advocates, were active in the process of securing prisoners' rights and their rehabilitation. Azerbaijan had joined all European regional instruments to combat the growth of transnational crime, and had adopted specific laws on extradition and legal aid. One fifth of the country was occupied due to aggression by neighbouring Armenia. In that uncontrolled, conflict-affected territory, there were more than 1 million refugees and internally displaced people. Hundreds of historical and cultural monuments had been looted and destroyed.

NATALIA GHERMAN, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova, noted the inextricable link between criminal offenses, justice and socioeconomic development. Hence, the post-2015 development framework should tackle those challenges as an essential precondition for sustainable development. Crime and violence, including homicide and drug trafficking, were rampant in many parts of the world, seriously jeopardizing peace and prosperity. In the past decade, the level of organization of criminal groups and networks had grown at an unprecedented pace and new crimes such as cybercrime, cyberbullying and online child abuse were evolving. Colossal amounts of resources and finances were extracted from legitimate economies, weakening them and hurting people's livelihoods, as well as challenging and undermining the authority of Governments, destabilizing societies and causing social unrest. The Republic of Moldova was firm in its promise to deliver on a comprehensive judicial reform agenda in order to ensure respect for the rule of law. She went on to describe specific endeavours in such areas as tackling transnational organized crime and the smuggling of nuclear and radiological materials, among others.

WOLFGANG BRANSTETTER, Minister for Justice of Austria, said the rule of law and sustainable development were strongly connected and advancing the rule of law was essential in economic and human rights development. Human rights standards were currently being tested by terrorists and the radicalization of young people. Failure was not an option, he said, condemning the ongoing destruction of cultural property by terrorist groups. Austria was participating in discussions on the Council of Europe counter-terrorism convention and was strongly committed to promoting human rights and justice. He called on all States to introduce a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to abolishing that measure. As children were vulnerable, Austria was working with Thailand on steps to stop violence against them. His country also strongly supported United Nations efforts to combat human trafficking. Corruption could destroy years of efforts and gains in sustainable development and Austria was supporting several initiatives to combat it. Progress had been made over the years, especially with the crime congresses, he said, grateful for the work done by UNODC.

MOHAMMAD BAGHER OLFAT ([Iran](#)) said that since justice was important in the divine religions as was the promotion of justice in Islam, Iran had placed justice at the top of its agenda. The judiciary was making its utmost efforts to improve the criminal justice system by making better use of Islamic principles and rules alongside the latest developments in crime prevention and criminal justice. Iran had, among other things, drafted a new bill on crime prevention, revised legislation and adopted a new law against corruption and money-laundering. Reiterating a call by the Group of 77 and China to avoid unilateral actions and sanctions that could weaken the cooperation framework and a State's capabilities to fight crime, he said sanctions would promote informal financing channels that facilitated crimes such as money-laundering. Turning to the heinous crimes of terrorist groups in the Middle East, he said the international community should spare no effort to address that scourge, including by blocking their financial resources, while respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of affected States. As Iran tackled the ever-growing drug trafficking problem, he expected the international community to play a role based on shared responsibility. Such cooperation on criminal matters was indeed the cornerstone of coordinated efforts and that approach should be used to combat emerging threats, including cybercrime.

PAIBOON KOOMCHAYA, Minister for Justice of [Thailand](#), said the justice system was an essential part of the rule of law and his country had taken a number of steps, including the development of a new law based on United Nations principles and guidelines that would provide assistance to those involved in criminal proceedings and expand community-based justice nationwide. Fighting corruption was a national priority and investments were needed for prevention efforts, including education and strengthening public-private partnerships. Drugs also threatened development and more robust international cooperation was required to tackle those challenges. Among other concerns, in 2014, the Government had declared a zero-tolerance policy on human trafficking and had regarded environmental crimes and cybercrime as priority areas. "I hope that the Doha Declaration will provide us with a road map for our future course," he concluded.

CRISTINA RAMÍREZ CHAVARRIA, Minister for Justice and Peace of [Costa Rica](#), cited measures by her country over the last five years, including a constitutional reform increasing the minimum national budget for education, which would help to prevent crime. The Penal Code had been reformed with regard to gender issues and the judiciary had taken several steps concerning crimes committed by minors. Three laws had been passed on organized transnational crime and its new and emerging forms: the Statute to Fight Human Trafficking; an amendment on the regulation of cybercrime; and the Statute for the Donation and Transplant of Human Organs and Tissues. They provided a regulatory framework for such activities in compliance with human rights. There was a close link between the rule of law and sustainable development, which were mutually reinforcing. In order to consolidate the rule of law and achieve sustainable social and economic development in low- and middle-income countries, it was essential to strengthen programmes and strategies on crime prevention, mainly by improving and expanding quality education and fighting the growth of inequality. Noting the human and institutional cost of drug trafficking in Central America and that a significant part of its proceeds were confiscated in developed countries, she called on those countries to provide technical aid to Central America and transfer a percentage of the proceeds of crime prevention programmes for the region's youth.

ABDUL QADIR BALOCH, Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions of [Pakistan](#), said the topics under discussion had gained greater urgency in recent years as crime had become more organized and lucrative, with gains made exceeding the gross domestic product of many countries. Common challenges of drugs, corruption, trafficking in persons and smuggling migrants, as well as terrorism, demanded concerted responses as problems transcended national borders. For its part, Pakistan had been at the forefront of anti-drug campaigns and had committed itself to combatting corruption. Terrorism remained a common challenge for all, he said, noting that in his country, it was an unfortunate by-product of political and geostrategic developments in the region. As such, Pakistan would continue to cooperate and coordinate with the international community in addressing those and related issues, he said, pointing out that such efforts must respect national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of States. Other concerns included trafficking in persons and smuggling migrants, and Pakistan had taken a number of relevant measures in that regard. New challenges, including cybercrime, also required a common response, as did organized crime. "Together," he concluded, "we can and we must build a better and brighter future."