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Addendum

Multidimensional approaches by Governments to promoting the rule of law by, inter alia, providing access to justice for all; building effective, accountable, impartial and inclusive institutions; and considering social, educational and other relevant measures, including fostering a culture of lawfulness while respecting cultural identities, in line with the Doha Declaration

Proceedings

1. At its 12th and 13th plenary meetings, on 10 and 11 March 2021, respectively, the Congress considered agenda item 5, entitled “Multidimensional approaches by Governments to promoting the rule of law by, inter alia, providing access to justice for all; building effective, accountable, impartial and inclusive institutions; and considering social, educational and other relevant measures, including fostering a culture of lawfulness while respecting cultural identities, in line with the Doha Declaration”. For its consideration of the item, the Congress had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the Doha Declaration on Integrating Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice into the Wider United Nations Agenda to Address Social and Economic Challenges and to Promote the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels, and Public Participation ([A/CONF.234/12](#));

(b) Report of the Executive Director on the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals ([A/CONF.234/13](#));

(c) Working paper prepared by the Secretariat on multidimensional approaches by Governments to promoting the rule of law by, inter alia, providing access to justice for all; building effective, accountable, impartial and inclusive institutions; and considering social, educational and other relevant measures, including fostering a culture of lawfulness while respecting cultural identities, in line with the Doha Declaration ([A/CONF.234/6](#));



(d) Background paper prepared by the Secretariat for the workshop on education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime ([A/CONF.234/10](#));

(e) Report of the Secretariat on the outcome of the expert group meeting on integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies ([A/CONF.234/14](#));

(f) Working paper prepared by the Secretariat on developments regarding crime prevention and criminal justice as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic ([A/CONF.234/15](#));

(g) Discussion guide for the Fourteenth Congress ([A/CONF.234/PM.1](#)).

2. The 12th plenary meeting was chaired by Jalal E. A. Alashi (Libya). A representative of the Secretariat introduced the agenda item, and a summary of the conclusions of workshop 3, on the topic “Education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime”, was presented by the moderator of that workshop. Statements were made by the representatives of Japan, China, Colombia, Thailand, the United States, Indonesia, South Africa, Viet Nam, Nigeria, Argentina, Turkey, Morocco and Bangladesh. Statements were also made by the observers for the United Nations network on racial discrimination and protection of minorities, the Criminologists Society, the Artificial Intelligence 4 Development Agency and Soroptimist International.

3. The 13th plenary meeting was chaired by Yamauchi Yoshimitsu (Japan). Statements were made by the representatives of Canada, Israel, Mexico and Honduras.

General discussion

4. Speakers noted that the rule of law was essential to the realization of safe, peaceful and secure societies in which law was applied in an objective, impartial manner. Speakers emphasized the need to promote a culture of lawfulness that permeated society so that citizens both trusted and respected the law and criminal justice institutions. It was noted that, to achieve those goals, a multidimensional, holistic and long-lasting approach was needed that included partnerships with stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector. Many speakers emphasized that only through such an approach could Member States achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16, which was noted as being foundational to the success of the entire 2030 Agenda.

5. To foster the rule of law and safeguard human rights, many speakers noted that a multicultural and gender-based approach was required to address issues particular to diverse populations. The need to address the needs of women, youth, the poor and other stakeholders as fundamental to the promotion of the rule of law and the need to ensure that everyone was treated fairly, equitably and without discrimination was underlined. Some speakers stressed the need to identify institutional needs through a scientific and data-driven process in order to strengthen the relationship between public institutions and the people.

6. Speakers highlighted the importance of preventing and countering corruption in both the public and private sectors to strengthening the rule of law, building effective, impartial and inclusive institutions and fostering integrity, transparency and accountability. In that context, some speakers highlighted the adoption of national anti-corruption, criminal justice and judicial reform strategies and reported on progress in their implementation. Other speakers noted the benefits of using technology and promoting digitalization through e-government practices with regard to strengthening transparency and ensuring accountability. Speakers highlighted recent measures adopted to prevent corruption, including to detect and prevent conflicts of interest, establish monitoring and oversight systems and facilitate international cooperation.

7. With regard to the judiciary, speakers emphasized the importance of judicial integrity and transparency, including in terms of access to information, the objective assignment of cases, judicial recruitment based on merit, and oversight and accountability mechanisms. Speakers also noted that judicial independence was essential for ensuring the fair and objective adjudication of cases and upholding the rule of law. It was noted that the Global Judicial Integrity Network, supported by UNODC through the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, provided a valuable platform for discussing issues of judicial integrity and independence, sharing good practices and developing materials to strengthen judiciaries worldwide.

8. In terms of criminal justice, speakers emphasized that public trust and confidence could be built through sound legal frameworks, strengthened witness and whistle-blower protection and compensation for victims of crime. Some speakers reported on measures taken to increase the capacity of law enforcement entities to better detect and investigate crime, in particular transnational organized crime, such as trafficking in drugs, trafficking in persons and money-laundering.

9. Some speakers described measures taken to reform their national criminal justice systems, including the establishment of specialized units to lead reform processes, focusing in particular on the criminal justice needs of women, youth and the elderly. A number of speakers noted the value of public participation to the reform process through various public forums. Speakers identified measures to promote alternatives to incarceration, programmes that fostered vocational skills training and education, and measures to ensure the successful reintegration of previously incarcerated persons into society. The Nelson Mandela Rules, the Tokyo Rules and the Bangkok Rules were recalled in that regard.

10. Speakers highlighted the need to redouble efforts to ensure access to justice and the provision of legal aid, in particular for vulnerable members of society, including victims of crime, the elderly, people with disabilities, youth, stateless populations and indigenous populations, through a people-centred approach to justice, and to ensure fair and transparent due process of law. Gender-based and domestic violence were highlighted as requiring additional attention and specialized approaches. Challenges were noted, including the costs associated with providing legal assistance and extending access to justice to all parts of a country, in particular rural areas. Some speakers shared experiences in addressing such challenges through innovative approaches to legal aid, including the establishment of specialized bodies and networks of legal aid providers and the fostering of community-based solutions to access to justice challenges. Speakers noted the benefits of partnerships with civil society, educational institutions and the private sector in such efforts. In addition, the Buenos Aires Declaration on the Implementation of the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems was recalled, in which States were called upon to strengthen international cooperation for an international legal aid network. Several speakers emphasized the importance of enhancing the provision of legal aid, including through public legal service systems, noting the importance of the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems.

11. Many speakers underlined the importance of education in terms of raising awareness and understanding of the rule of law, reducing corruption and violence, and increasing public trust in criminal justice institutions. It was noted that the rule of law could not be strengthened without close partnerships with educational institutions. In that regard, some speakers highlighted programmes designed to involve and empower youth in public decision-making processes and policy development, and underlined the usefulness of the educational materials developed by UNODC through its Education for Justice initiative.

12. Speakers welcomed that the Kyoto Declaration placed emphasis on cooperation at the national and international levels to improve common understanding of rule of law challenges and to share good practices. Speakers acknowledged the emerging

challenges presented by the COVID-19 global pandemic, in particular in the health sector, which included the influence of large-scale organized criminal activities and the diversion of resources from other sources, to addressing pandemic response and recovery. It was noted that States might need to take account of the “new normal” during the recovery process and adjust criminal justice responses to meet new challenges in the current context.
