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Report of the African Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Addis Ababa from 9 to 11 April 2019

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [56/119](#), on the role, function, periodicity and duration of the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, the General Assembly decided that each congress should be preceded by regional preparatory meetings and also decided to call future congresses United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice.
2. The Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Lessons Learned from United Nations Congresses on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its meeting held in Bangkok from 15 to 18 August 2006, discussed how to incorporate regional concerns and perspectives into the preparation of the congresses. The Group stressed the importance of regional preparatory meetings as a key preparatory tool for the congresses and noted that, despite globalization and the increasingly transboundary nature of criminality, different regions of the world continued to have different concerns, which they wanted to see properly reflected in the consideration of various topics by the congresses ([E/CN.15/2007/6](#), para. 23).
3. In its resolution [72/192](#), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to facilitate the organization of the regional preparatory meetings for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and to make available the necessary resources for the participation of the least developed countries in those meetings and in the Fourteenth Congress itself, in accordance with past practice and in consultation with Member States. In the same resolution, the Assembly encouraged the relevant United Nations programmes, specialized agencies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as other professional organizations, to cooperate with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the preparations for the Fourteenth Congress.
4. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, to prepare a discussion guide for the regional preparatory meetings for the Fourteenth Congress and for the Congress itself in a timely manner, and invited Member States to be actively involved in that process.
5. At its twenty-seventh session, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice considered the draft discussion guide. In its resolution [73/184](#), the General Assembly took note with appreciation of the draft discussion guide and requested the Secretary-General to finalize it in a timely manner, taking into account the recommendations of the Commission, as well as additional comments and feedback from Member States, in order to enable the regional preparatory meetings for the Fourteenth Congress to be held as early as possible in 2019. The finalized discussion guide ([A/CONF.234/PM.1](#)) was published in September 2018.
6. In its resolution [72/192](#), the General Assembly encouraged Governments to undertake preparations for the Fourteenth Congress at an early stage and by all appropriate means, including, where appropriate, the establishment of national preparatory committees. Also in that resolution, as well as in resolution [73/184](#), the Assembly urged participants in the regional preparatory meetings to examine the substantive items on the agenda and the topics of the workshops of the Fourteenth Congress and to make action-oriented recommendations to serve as a basis for the draft recommendations and conclusions for consideration by the Congress.

II. Conclusions and recommendations

7. The Secretary of the Meeting recalled that the main theme, agenda items and workshops of the Fourteenth Congress had been carefully identified by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and adopted by the General Assembly. In that regard, she highlighted that, building on the success of the

Thirteenth Congress and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/206, all efforts had been made to ensure that the overall theme, agenda items and workshop topics were streamlined. She reminded participants that since the main theme was designed to serve as an umbrella for the substantive agenda items and workshop topics and for the discussions under those that would take place at the Congress, they were invited to engage in a general, aspirational discussion with regard to the relationship between the main theme and the substantive agenda items of the Congress, as well as the policy implications of that relationship. She explained that, in order to facilitate the preparations for and discussions at the regional preparatory meetings and the Congress itself, the discussion guide had clustered the agenda items that dealt with issues of broad and global importance together with the relevant workshop topics, on the understanding that the latter were designed to cover more specific topics and draw on practical experiences and approaches.

8. Presentations were delivered by representatives of the Secretariat introducing the main theme, substantive agenda items and workshop topics.

9. Stemming from the Meeting, the following summary of deliberations was prepared and recommendations were identified, which were not negotiated by the participants.

A. Main theme of the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice: “Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda”

Summary of deliberations

10. Many participants noted that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a collective commitment of the international community to be implemented at all levels, national, regional and global, and highlighted the importance of joint actions, including in the African region, to achieve the Agenda’s goals and targets, including to end poverty, reduce inequality, foster economic growth, ensure equitable access to health and justice, address the specific needs of vulnerable members of society, including women, youth and children and people with special needs, promote a culture of lawfulness, ensure that no one is left behind, and take into consideration the national specificities of the countries in the region.

11. Many participants welcomed the overall theme of the Fourteenth Congress (Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda), as well as the regional preparatory meetings held in all regions of the world. It was emphasized that the overall theme of the Fourteenth Congress was essential in highlighting the importance of ensuring social justice and building effective crime prevention and criminal justice systems that were robust and respectful of the rule of law and human rights, thereby ensuring access to justice for all. The importance of fighting against impunity was also mentioned.

12. The importance of 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, adopted by the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, was highlighted, and many participants shared information about specific efforts for the implementation of the Doha Declaration. The important role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in providing essential input for the 2030 Agenda process, in particular with respect to Sustainable Development Goal 16, and the recognition of the relationship between the rule of law and sustainable development, were highlighted by a number of participants.

13. Participants shared information on national and regional legislative, institutional and operational efforts in the field of crime prevention and criminal

justice, which included supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through multisectoral coordination mechanisms ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are involved; strengthening institutions involved in crime prevention and criminal justice including in post-conflict situations; and addressing persistent and emerging challenges such as cybercrime, wildlife crime, corruption, terrorism, arms trafficking, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, money-laundering, illicit financial flows, the exploitation of national resources, climate change and environmental challenges, and illicit trafficking in precious metals and in cultural property. UNODC was commended for providing support in the region.

14. Some participants highlighted that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provided a framework for addressing crime prevention and criminal justice challenges within the broader context of promoting sustainable development. Reference was made to the importance of Member States engaging in the meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development to be held in July 2019.

15. Many participants underlined the mutually reinforcing relationship between the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice and sustainable development, and participants underscored that the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16 was key for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It was also noted that the 2030 Agenda complemented ongoing efforts of the international community to address crime, including the international legally binding framework for international cooperation in criminal matters such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto. Some delegations highlighted the importance of harmonizing legislation in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice in the region, with a view to strengthening judicial cooperation and fostering joint actions in the region.

16. A number of participants underscored the importance of enhanced international cooperation and partnerships and of enhancing the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building in the region to ensure the comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In addition, several participants underscored the importance of inter-agency cooperation and encouraged all relevant stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels, within their mandates, to join efforts in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including relevant United Nations entities, international and regional organizations, the public and private sectors, academia and civil society.

Outcome of deliberations

17. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Encourage the countries of the region to actively implement the goals and targets set in the 2030 Agenda, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 16, ensuring the contributions of all relevant stakeholders, taking into consideration the national specificities of the countries in the region;

(b) Emphasize the importance of international cooperation and partnerships, and the enhanced provision of technical assistance and capacity-building for criminal justice practitioners, including training for law enforcement officials, in countries of the region, in order to ensure the practical implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Kyoto declaration;

(c) Pursue a holistic approach to crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law, strengthen public institutions and the role of the general public, promote a culture of lawfulness as an approach to foster the general public's trust and respect for the law and its enforcement, and promote access to justice through legal aid;

(d) Underscore the people-centred aspect of the 2030 Agenda and reflect this approach in crime prevention and criminal justice policies in the region, giving due

consideration to the different stakeholders involved, including police, prosecutors, defence attorneys, judges, and victims and witnesses, as well as society as a whole;

(e) Underscore the importance of implementation at the national, regional and international levels, with all relevant stakeholders, including relevant United Nations entities, international and regional organizations, the public and private sectors, academia and civil society, joining efforts and creating synergies, within their mandates;

(f) Underline the importance of measuring tangible progress made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and consider taking steps towards harmonizing national efforts in the region, including by using established regional mechanisms;

(g) Emphasize the importance of promoting public-private partnerships in crime prevention efforts and undertaking multi-stakeholder approaches, and enhance collaboration between crime prevention and criminal justice practitioners, civil society and the general public, in particular by exploring innovative and effective ways to conduct public-private partnerships and inter-agency cooperation.

B. Substantive items and workshops

1. Comprehensive strategies for crime prevention towards social and economic development (agenda item 3); and evidence-based crime prevention: statistics, indicators and evaluation in support of successful practices (workshop 1)

Summary of deliberations

18. Participants recognized that poverty, hunger, unemployment and inequality, including gender inequality, were root causes of crime and violence and that crime prevention strategies should include specific measures to address these causes. Many participants underlined that educational, social and health measures were important tools to advance crime prevention efforts and address some of the root causes of crime.

19. It was further stressed by many participants that education played the role of catalyst within integrated crime prevention approaches. The need to advance local, national, regional and international efforts to promote education with a view to empowering the public, in particular children and youth, in assuming their role as agents of positive change, was emphasized by a number of participants. Reference was made in that regard to the involvement of youth in major events such as the International Youth Forum.

20. The importance of promoting a culture of lawfulness within the context of crime prevention, which focuses on fostering trust and respect among the general public for the law and its enforcement, was underscored by several participants.

21. Many participants noted that youth and children were key players in crime prevention initiatives and that the forthcoming Congress should, among other things, focus on practical measures that prevent the recruitment and involvement of children and youth in crime.

22. A number of participants further noted the importance of community-based policing in preventing crime at the local level. It was mentioned that addressing extremism could not be accomplished without the cooperation of communities with the police, which in turn fostered public confidence in law enforcement authorities.

23. The importance of integrating a gender perspective into crime prevention and criminal justice measures and policies and of ensuring that the specific needs of women were taken into account in all crime prevention strategies, was emphasized by several participants.

24. It was recognized that the provision of public services and adequate resources, including human resources, was key for effective crime prevention and criminal justice systems.

25. Participants underscored the importance of investing in training and capacity-building for practitioners, including prosecutors, police officers and probation and correction officers, as well as the need to enhance cooperation and coordination among criminal justice practitioners to effectively address crime, including transnational organized crime, at the national, regional and international levels.

26. It was noted that the evolving nature of gang-related violence and other urban crime challenges required specialized and targeted crime prevention approaches, in particular to prevent the involvement of youth, and that UNODC could support Member States in analysing recent trends and good practices to address gang-related violence and urban crime.

27. The importance of evidence-based crime prevention, including by strengthening data collection, was emphasized. Many participants highlighted the need to monitor, assess and evaluate the impact of crime prevention programmes to better inform future responses. The need for reliable statistics on crime and justice responses, including for research purposes to develop policies to prevent crime and reoffending, was also highlighted by some participants.

28. It was mentioned that climate change had an impact on crime and violence and should be considered in crime prevention strategies and policies.

Outcome of deliberations

29. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Consider the links between poverty and crime and their impact on sustainable development when developing comprehensive crime prevention strategies or action plans to implement measures to reduce inequalities conducive to crime, while paying special attention to the needs of the most vulnerable members of society;

(b) Promote employment, including through measures such as transitional jobs and microcredits, improve living and housing conditions, and promote access to public services, education and the Internet and new technologies for all, with a view to reducing inequalities and increasing resilience to crime;

(c) Offer vocational training programmes and programmes to prevent drug abuse and radicalization within penitentiary systems;

(d) Promote awareness-raising to fight against all forms of extremism, xenophobia, racism and hatred, while encouraging religious dialogue and mutual understanding, as well as the use of modern media to increase awareness;

(e) Enhance cooperation among competent authorities to provide children and youth with educational programmes that provide them with the necessary knowledge, values and skills to contribute to building peaceful, just and inclusive societies;

(f) Promote measures that foster a culture of lawfulness to prevent crime, and promote effective community policing practices with a view to strengthening trust and cooperation between citizens and the police;

(g) Address the impact of informal economies on crime and strengthen the cooperation with the private sector and civil society, including by fostering public-private partnerships, in preventing and responding to crime;

(h) Develop, strengthen and implement comprehensive and integrated crime prevention strategies, and make gender-sensitive measures an integral part of them;

(i) Provide technical support to practitioners, law enforcement officials and judges in order to ensure the full protection of children and their rights;

(j) Strengthen the capacity of law enforcement officials and criminal justice officers through training as a key element to address crime at the national level, and

strengthen cooperation among practitioners at the regional and international levels; and continue to call upon UNODC to provide technical assistance upon request;

(k) Improve data collection and enhance cooperation in the field of crime statistics to strengthen the capacity of Member States in collecting and analysing crime-related data, including through support provided by UNODC, and adopt evidence-based crime prevention strategies and criminal justice responses to crime.

2. Integrated approaches to challenges facing the criminal justice system (agenda item 4); and reducing reoffending: identifying risks and developing solutions (workshop 2)

Summary of deliberations

30. Several participants highlighted the importance of a victim-centred approach in criminal justice measures, prioritizing the dignity, human rights, safety and well-being of victims. Many participants highlighted the importance of protecting the rights of the victims, sharing concrete national efforts undertaken in countries of the region to ensure a victim-centred approach. In this context, emphasis was placed on the needs of women and children as particularly vulnerable victims of crime, as well as on national efforts to eliminate violence against them.

31. Many participants also highlighted the importance of focusing on the protection of young people and children. With regard to juvenile delinquency, a number of participants underscored the importance of providing legal assistance and alternatives to incarceration, including social reintegration and rehabilitation initiatives through educational programmes. Good practices were shared on the establishment of juvenile or child-friendly courts, as well as the involvement of specially trained investigators, for criminal justice proceedings that catered to the specific needs of children and young people in contact with the criminal justice system.

32. Efforts to address violence against children, including violence committed by parents, guardians and caretakers, as well as economic and sexual exploitation of children, were discussed, with a number of national initiatives being shared, including efforts focused on addressing kidnapping of children and on providing social protection measures.

33. The importance of addressing violence against women in the region was highlighted by many participants, who, among other things, reported on national efforts to criminalize all forms of violence and abuse, provide targeted assistance and support and ensure access to justice for victims of violence. One delegation stated that categorizing women as vulnerable members of society implied that discrimination against women was not dealt with sufficiently in the region, thereby highlighting the importance of the full implementation of existing international commitments, including the Beijing Declaration. In addition, the importance of reviewing national legislation to ensure laws did not discriminate against women was underscored. The role played by non-governmental organizations was highlighted in that context.

34. A number of participants highlighted the importance of taking into consideration the specific needs of women, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, in prison settings. In that regard, the importance of implementing international standards and norms, in particular the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules), was highlighted.

35. Participants further discussed effective measures to prevent reoffending, highlighting the importance of adequate risks and needs assessment of offenders, and shared good practices regarding alternatives to imprisonment and restorative justice which not only addressed the challenge of prison overcrowding but also, when accompanied by adequate rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, resulted in the

reduction of reoffending. In that regard, experiences were shared regarding the use of electronic probation equipment and the provision of social work outside prison settings.

36. Many participants underlined the importance of national, regional and international cooperation and coordination at all levels, including through public-private partnerships and enhanced community engagement in addressing reoffending. The provision of vocational training and reintegration and rehabilitation programmes, including access to social and medical services and housing opportunities upon the release from prison, were considered conducive to successful reintegration. Some participants highlighted the importance of tailoring rehabilitation and social reintegration efforts to the needs of individuals, including by examining personal history, mental condition, family environment and social relationships.

Outcome of deliberations

37. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Promote a victim-centred approach in the criminal justice system, especially for crimes involving women and children as victims of violence and all forms of exploitation targeting women, children and vulnerable members of society;

(b) Revise laws and policies that are discriminatory against women;

(c) Consider the use of alternatives to incarceration, which may minimize disruption to families and livelihoods and thereby reduce recidivism;

(d) Increase efforts to address prison overcrowding, including by implementing alternatives to imprisonment, including through criminal justice and legislative reforms to widen the use of non-custodial measures in national legal systems; and strengthen technical capacities to implement non-custodial measures for some crimes;

(e) Strengthen regional and international cooperation and coordination among relevant authorities, and encourage the use of international and regional cooperation mechanisms with a view to preventing and addressing crime in the region, including trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants;

(f) Strengthen the implementation in the region of international standards and norms on crime prevention and criminal justice, particularly the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules);

(g) Enhance cooperation between criminal justice institutions and other relevant organizations and foster public-private partnerships and community engagement, with a view to promoting a culture of lawfulness and facilitating the reintegration of offenders in society and prevent reoffending;

(h) Enhance efforts to prevent reoffending, through the identification of good practices in assessing the risks and needs of each individual offender, including personal history, mental condition, family environment and social relationships, when designing rehabilitation and social reintegration plans for offenders;

(i) Consider the establishment of indicators to measure progress made in the national implementation of international commitments, including with regard to the rights of women;

(j) Enhance technical assistance and capacity-building for criminal justice officials and call upon UNODC and other international and regional assistance providers to further strengthen the provision of technical assistance upon request.

3. **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 (agenda item 5); and education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime (workshop 3)**

Summary of deliberations

38. Participants recognized that strong, effective and accountable institutions, access to justice for all and the fostering of a culture of lawfulness among the general public were essential for strengthening the rule of law. Participants highlighted efforts to reform national administrations and legislative frameworks, aimed at strengthening the transparency and efficiency of government institutions. Information on the establishment of independent oversight authorities, as well as hotlines for reporting various forms of crime, was shared.

39. The importance of ensuring legal assistance and access to justice for all was highlighted by some delegations, and it was noted that access to justice should also take into account restorative justice measures, in particular for children and young people, in addition to traditional criminal justice responses.

40. Participants noted that, for the promotion of the rule of law in society, Governments may consider focusing on ways and means to enhance knowledge and respect of the general public for the law and its enforcement. In this regard, participants referred to national efforts in promoting public awareness in the communities about the existence of laws, legal remedies and legal aid services, including through using modern technology, such as social media.

41. Participants reported on good practices, experiences and challenges in strengthening the accountability of criminal justice institutions, the use of restorative justice, promoting legal aid, including in rural areas and communities, and access to legal aid by indigent and vulnerable people such as migrants and victims of human trafficking.

42. The importance of adopting, reinforcing and effectively implementing anti-corruption laws and strategies to strengthen the transparency and accountability of public institutions and build trust among the general public was noted by a number of participants.

43. The importance of promoting the use of information technology for the benefit of educating the general public, in particular the development of educational resources and tools for children and youth, was also mentioned.

44. Specific reference was made to the role of youth forums, including at the forthcoming Youth Forum of the Fourteenth Congress, as a platform to strengthen the engagement and empowerment of youth as future agents for positive change in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice.

Outcome of deliberations

45. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Develop national education campaigns and strategies involving all relevant sectors of the society to increase awareness and knowledge of the rule of law and to foster a culture of a lawfulness among the general public;

(b) Promote and raise awareness of a culture of lawfulness among children and youth to enhance their understanding of the rule of law, and to reduce conflicts with the law, including by introducing a curriculum for educational settings, and consider organizing youth forums on crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law at the global, regional and national levels;

(c) Adopt, reinforce and effectively implement anti-corruption laws and strategies to strengthen transparency and the accountability of public institutions and build trust among the general public;

(d) Foster and strengthen the use of information and communication technology to promote the rule of law, develop mechanisms to give citizens access to information about public services and the related legislative frameworks, and ensure that institutions are transparent and accountable so that the general public can file timely reports or complaints of crimes;

(e) Improve and broaden public access to legal information, including through the use of information and communication technology, to ensure access to justice for all;

(f) Take measures to increase access to justice for victims of crime, in particular people in vulnerable situations such as victims of human trafficking, thereby also enhancing efforts to avail interpretation services for those victims;

(g) Undertake appropriate and comprehensive strategies, policies and programmes to establish legal aid services and to ensure that access to legal aid is provided at all stages of the criminal justice process and is effective, credible and sustainable, providing access to free legal aid for indigent people.

4. International cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address all forms of crime: (a) terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; and (b) new and emerging forms of crime (agenda item 6); and current crime trends, recent developments and emerging solutions, in particular new technologies as means for and tools against crime (workshop 4)

Summary of deliberations

46. Participants highlighted the paramount role of international cooperation to address and tackle all forms of crime, especially terrorism and transnational crime, such as trafficking in persons, narcotic drugs, cultural property and firearms, smuggling of migrants, poaching, illegal mining and illicit trafficking in precious metals, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, cross-border motor vehicle theft, cybercrime and money-laundering. The strengthening of bilateral and multilateral partnerships among relevant authorities was considered critical in the prevention of transnational organized crime.

47. A number of participants highlighted the importance of regional cooperation and coordination among practitioners and policymakers through regional mechanisms to exchange good practices and work on joint solutions. It was noted that countries do not function in isolation from one another and that effective and timely information-sharing, as well as enhanced technical assistance and capacity-building, was essential to effectively responding to challenges. Information on the work of relevant mechanisms, such as the Africa Prosecutors Association, was shared in this regard.

48. Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, which posed a serious threat to security and transcended cultures and geographical boundaries, was noted as a major international challenge that required a comprehensive response. Reference was made to the risks relating to emerging forms of terrorism such as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism.

49. The misuse of information and communication technology facilitated a wide range of terrorism-related activities, including financing of terrorism, incitement, recruitment, training and the spreading of propaganda material. Reference was also made to criminal activities such as hostage-taking, kidnapping and drug trafficking aimed at raising funds for terrorist activities. A number of national efforts to address the root causes and modus operandi of terrorism were presented by participants.

50. Participants addressed the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, thereby highlighting the misuse of the Internet, including social media, for recruitment

purposes, and reported on challenges relating to the identification of offenders and to social reintegration efforts when foreign terrorist fighters return to their country.

51. The importance of implementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the international conventions against terrorism and relevant Security Council resolutions, including Security Council resolution 1372 (2001) was highlighted.

52. Participants stressed that enhanced capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice practitioners as well as strengthened international cooperation were key to addressing new and emerging forms of crime. The use of regional platforms for the regular exchange of practical and operational information among criminal justice practitioners and institutions was considered a priority. The need to enhance cooperation between Member States, United Nations entities, international organizations, programme network institutions and civil society was underscored, and many participants commended the technical assistance provided by UNODC in various areas.

53. A number of participants referred to cybercrime as a serious threat to security and public order. It was noted that such crimes were no longer solely virtual but also physical when targeting physical infrastructure such as electricity plants. Reference was made to the importance of the work conducted by the open-ended intergovernmental expert group meeting on cybercrime, including with a view to discussing means to enhance international cooperation and find international solutions to counter cybercrime.

54. It was highlighted that cybercrime was also a major concern for financial institutions, regulatory agencies and law enforcement agencies on a global scale, with e-commerce and cryptocurrency often being misused for illegal activities, creating a conducive environment for money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. Cooperation with the private sector was considered essential to successfully address those crimes.

55. Participants took note of the unprecedented speed of technological innovation and stressed the need for law enforcement agencies and criminal justice institutions to keep up with technological developments in order to be equipped to effectively address crime in its all forms and manifestations, and to address challenges relating to new technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, robotic process automation, virtual reality and the Internet. The importance of public-private partnerships was underlined in that context.

56. Participants mentioned that trafficking in wildlife, including trafficking in endangered species of wild fauna and flora and precious metals, as well as poaching, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and illegal mining, had a serious impact on the environment and needed comprehensive and urgent responses that gave due consideration to linkages to transnational organized crime, corruption and money-laundering.

Outcome of deliberations

57. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Examine the best possible approaches to further enhance regional and international cooperation in criminal justice among practitioners, in particular those in central authorities, including with a view to enhancing mutual legal assistance, extradition and the transfer of offenders;

(b) Ensure effective implementation of the provisions of the three international drug control conventions, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the international conventions against terrorism;

(c) Increase the provision of technical assistance, including the provision of technical equipment, and capacity-building for criminal justice institutions and practitioners, enhance cooperation among Member States and with relevant United Nations entities, international organizations and the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, and call on UNODC and other relevant international and regional assistance providers, such as relevant mechanisms, including the Africa Prosecutors Association, to continue to provide technical assistance and capacity-building for countries in the region;

(d) Strengthen cooperation at the international, regional and subregional levels to address threats posed by terrorism including foreign terrorist fighters, hostage-taking for ransom and the financing of terrorism, and enhance timely information-sharing and coordination among relevant authorities, logistical support for and capacity-building of practitioners in this regard;

(e) Enhance cooperation at all levels and provide training for criminal justice practitioners with regard to the evolving information and communication technologies and new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and big data, to address their misuse;

(f) Support training and technical assistance in building cybersecurity skills within criminal justice institutions in order to have a better understanding of activities of cybercrime criminals and be able to keep abreast with developments in equipment and technologies that enable the misuse of the Internet;

(g) Promote increased domestic and international collaboration to address cybercrime, including data-sharing, between governmental authorities, as well as with the private sector and civil society;

(h) Consider building on the work of the open-ended intergovernmental expert group to conduct a comprehensive study of the problem of cybercrime with a view to enhancing international cooperation and finding effective international responses;

(i) Adopt effective measures to prevent and counter environmental crimes, such as trafficking in wildlife, including endangered species of wild fauna and flora as well as poaching, and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, including by strengthening legislation, law enforcement efforts, criminal justice responses and international cooperation and capacity-building.

C. General issues

Summary of deliberations

58. A number of participants underscored the importance of ensuring a short and concise Kyoto declaration, sending a strong political message addressing the overall theme of the Congress, as well as reflecting regional challenges, priorities and specificities. It was proposed that a short political statement by the high-level representatives could be complemented with an action-oriented document containing practical policy recommendations.

59. Participants highlighted the key role played by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, addressing all aspects of crime prevention and criminal justice, providing a forum for sharing good practices, lessons learned and challenges, including in the implementation of the respective Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

Outcome of deliberations

60. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Envisage that the Kyoto declaration, sends a strong political message and be as short and concise as possible, including with regard to the joint commitment of

the international community to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, reflecting, on the basis of the principle of common and shared responsibility, key priorities for the region, including the importance of enhanced cooperation in addressing persistent and emerging challenges, such as cybercrime, wildlife crime, corruption, terrorism, arms trafficking, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, money-laundering, illicit financial flows, the exploitation of national resources, climate change and environmental challenges, and illicit trafficking in precious metals and in cultural property;

(b) Further strengthen the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice with a view to ensuring a comprehensive follow-up within the Commission on the outcomes of the United Nations crime congresses, including a focus on the sharing of good practices and lesson learned among relevant stakeholders, thereby also addressing the interlinkages among relevant Sustainable Development Goals and their targets.

III. Attendance and organization of work

A. Date and venue of the Meeting

61. The African Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was held in Addis Ababa from 9 to 11 April 2019.

B. Attendance

62. The following States members of the Economic Commission for Africa were represented at the Meeting: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

63. Japan was represented by observers.

64. The following entities of the United Nations system were represented by observers: Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

65. The following institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network were represented by observers: International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council (ISPAC), the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI) and United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

66. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented by observers: African Union Mission to the United Nations, Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and League of Arab States.

67. The following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were represented by observers: Action Jeunesse Pour le Développement (AJED-Congo), International Human Rights Observer, International Prison Chaplains Association, Open Society Foundation, Organization of la Francophonie, Penal Reform International and World Society for Victimology.

C. Opening of the Meeting

68. The African Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was opened on 9 April 2019 by the Secretary of the Meeting.

69. A representative of the UNODC Regional Office in Eastern Africa, speaking on behalf of the Executive Director, highlighted the importance of the United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice as a vital forum for taking stock of and assessing preparedness to deal with challenges and emerging threats and for undertaking a periodic review of crime-related standards and norms. Reference was made to the Ninth Congress, which was held in Cairo in 1995, whose thematic focus included international cooperation and technical assistance for strengthening the rule of law, which still remains very high on the international agenda and also has a clear link to the overall theme of the Fourteenth Congress. He further noted that the Fourteenth Congress would be held in Kyoto, Japan, where the Fourth Congress, the first Congress to be preceded by regional preparatory meetings, had been held 50 years previously. Since that time, the regional preparatory meetings had played a meaningful role in examining the substantive agenda items and topics of the workshops, and in making action-oriented recommendations from a regional perspective. The outcome of the Meeting would plant the seeds for the Kyoto declaration in 2020. He referred to the support provided by the host country of the Thirteenth Congress, which had been held in Doha in 2015, for the follow-up process. He emphasized that the Thirteenth Congress had focused on the mutually reinforcing relationship between the rule of law and sustainable development and that its political outcome had been well reflected in Sustainable Development Goal 16. The Fourteenth Congress, which would be held five years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, would provide an opportunity to take stock of and formulate practical and operational recommendations for action in support of peaceful and just societies.

70. A representative of the UNODC Programme Office in Addis Ababa highlighted the importance of the Fourteenth Congress for the African countries and provided information on UNODC ongoing programmes and capacity-building efforts that support practitioners and other relevant stakeholders in various areas of crime prevention and criminal justice.

71. Following the plane crash of the Ethiopian Airlines that occurred on 10 March 2019, participants conveyed their deep condolences to the Government and people of Ethiopia, as well as to the families of the victims. The meeting also observed a minute of silence following the death of Dimitri Vlassis, Chief of the Corruption and Economic Crime Branch of UNODC. Special tribute was paid by numerous participants to Mr. Vlassis for his human and professional qualities, as well as the remarkable work he accomplished throughout his long and rich career. Condolences were extended to his family, his close friends and the members of UNODC, who were his second family.

D. Election of officers

72. At its 1st meeting, on 9 April 2019, the Meeting elected, by acclamation, the following officers:

<i>Chair:</i>	Vivian N. Okeke (Nigeria)
<i>Vice-Chair:</i>	Nabil Hattali (Algeria)
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	Lunga Bengu (South Africa)

E. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

73. Also at its 1st meeting, the Meeting adopted its provisional agenda ([A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.1](#)), which read as follows:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
4. Main theme of the Fourteenth Congress: “Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda”.
5. Substantive items on the agenda and the topics of the workshops of the Fourteenth Congress:
 - (a) Comprehensive strategies for crime prevention towards social and economic development (agenda item 3); and evidence-based crime prevention: statistics, indicators and evaluation in support of successful practices (workshop 1);
 - (b) Integrated approaches to challenges facing the criminal justice system (agenda item 4); and reducing reoffending: identifying risks and developing solutions (workshop 2);
 - (c) 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 (agenda item 5); and education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime (workshop 3);
 - (d) International cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address all forms of crime: (a) terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; and (b) new and emerging forms of crime (agenda item 6); and current crime trends, recent developments and emerging solutions, in particular new technologies as means for and tools against crime (workshop 4).
6. Recommendations for the Fourteenth Congress.
7. Adoption of the report on the Meeting.

74. At the same meeting, the Meeting approved its organization of work. The list of documents before the Meeting is contained in the annex to the present report.

F. Other matters

75. A representative of Japan, the host country of the Fourteenth Congress, gave a briefing, which included a video presentation, to the participants about the organizational and substantive preparations for the Fourteenth Congress and the youth forum that would precede it. He provided some information about Kyoto, the city that would host the Fourteenth Congress. He also provided an overview of the deliberations and outcome of the Fourth Congress, which had been held in the same city in 1970 and resulted, for the first time, in the adoption of a political declaration.

76. The observer for the Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders made a statement, informing about their preparations for the workshops and activities to be held at the Fourteenth Congress. He encouraged Member States to consider including in their delegations experts who could offer

substantive expertise to the deliberations during the workshop. He further referred to the institute's effort to build an international network of its alumni, and encouraged the active participation of alumni members from various jurisdictions, including those from Africa, in the Fourteenth Congress.

77. The observer of the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council delivered a presentation on the arrangements for the ancillary meetings to be held during the Fourteenth Congress.

IV. Adoption of the report and closure of the Meeting

78. At its 6th meeting, on 11 April 2019, the Meeting considered and adopted its report ([A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2](#), [A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2/Add.1](#), [A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2/Add.2](#), [A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2/Add.3](#) and [A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2/Add.4](#)).

Annex

List of documents

A/CONF.234/PM.1	Discussion guide
A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.1	Annotated provisional agenda
A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2 and A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2/Add.1 , A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2/Add.2 , A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2/Add.3 and A/CONF.234/RPM.4/L.2/Add.4	Draft report
A/CONF.234/RPM.4/INF/2/Rev.1	List of participants
A/CONF.234/PM/CRP.1	Note by the Secretariat entitled “From policy directives to concrete results: a quinquennial strategic operational road map”
