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European Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

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Draft report

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Addendum

II. Conclusions and recommendations (*continued*)

B. Substantive items and workshops

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

1. The meeting underscored the importance of building effective, accountable and fair crime prevention and criminal justice systems at all levels, and the importance of providing technical assistance and capacity building to practitioners working in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice to strengthen these systems and the institutions comprising them.
2. It was highlighted that prompt access to legal aid and legal assistance was to be provided to all, including, amongst others, women, children and the elderly. Reference was made to the UN Principles and Guidelines on the Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems as well as to regional instruments and initiatives.
3. Participants emphasized the importance of early identification of and contact with at-risk children and youth in order to prevent their entry into the criminal justice system. In this regard, participants highlighted that the Fourteenth Crime Congress should explore best practices for helping youth in contact with the criminal justice system to transition away from criminal behaviour and become law-abiding citizens.
4. The importance of partnerships with all relevant stakeholders and broad community support was highlighted as being key to address the victimization of



children as well as to prevent youth involvement in crime. The meeting also noted the importance of showcasing and analyzing good practices involving local education and youth service authorities, law enforcement, civil society, community and faith-based organizations, and families.

5. The importance of upholding the rule of law and human rights in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice was emphasized by participants.

6. The meeting further highlighted that a culture of lawfulness was key to national efforts to prevent and combat organized crime, corruption and violence.

Outcome of deliberations

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

(a) Focus on the urgent priority of building effective, accountable, impartial and inclusive criminal justice institutions, including through enhanced technical assistance;

(b) Integrate the objective of building effective, accountable, impartial, and inclusive institutions into national bilateral assistance efforts, as well as into UNODC's global, regional, and country-specific technical assistance programmes;

(c) Identify and promote practical solutions to facilitate fair and equal access to justice for all;

(d) Promote the exchange of good practices and experiences on preventing the victimization of children and youth as well as on preventing their involvement in crime, including by the promotion of programmes that facilitate early contact between local law enforcement and youth;

(e) Provide regular updates on progress made at the domestic level with the implementation of global standards and norms in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, including, amongst others, the Nelson Mandela Rules (revised Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners), which include relevant provisions and minimum standards to ensure access to justice and procedural rights for suspects;

(f) Promote best practices regarding alternatives to incarceration, in particular for youth offenders, and support programmes that are proven to help keep communities safe while reducing recidivism and minimizing disruption to families;

(g) Discuss the relationship between the rule of law and a culture of lawfulness in the context of the Fourteenth Crime Congress, in order to have a meaningful debate on this relationship, as well as on the culture of lawfulness as an important notion in the context of crime prevention.
