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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

Workshop 3. Education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime**

Background paper prepared by the Secretariat

Summary

The present background paper addresses the linkages between education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime. It first assesses the importance of involving young people in crime prevention and criminal justice activities in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as current opportunities in this regard and the perceptions that young people have thereon, including with regard to Sustainable Development Goal 16. Second, it addresses the catalytic role of education to foster and further meaningful youth engagement at the primary, secondary and tertiary education levels, providing examples of practices implemented by various actors and identifying the challenges to advancing this agenda.

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I. Introduction

1. The world's population of young people reaches about 1.8 billion. Member States increasingly recognize the importance of involving young people in decision-making – after all, addressing some of the major challenges in today's world inherently requires consideration of such a significant part of the population. In addition, not only will this significant part of the population be tomorrow's leaders, but they also exert leadership today. This is as true for such issues as the climate crisis as it is for crime prevention and criminal justice.

2. Within the crime prevention and criminal justice agenda, young people are traditionally considered from two perspectives. First, they can be seen as (potential) victims of criminal behaviour. In this regard, one can refer to recent data produced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). For example, both the *Global Study on Homicide 2019* and the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018* highlight the high proportion of young victims of crime. While boys and young men tend to constitute a significant proportion of homicide victims, girls and young women are statistically more likely to be victims of trafficking. Crime prevention is therefore undeniably relevant to young people under that perspective. Second, young people tend to be seen as potential perpetrators. As a matter of fact, a number of countries develop specific crime prevention policies focused on boys and young men.

3. However, engaging meaningfully with young people implies considering them as active agents of change. It requires considering young people as part of the solution and providing space for their involvement, from policymaking to implementation. This, on the other hand, requires young people to be informed about the main crime and justice issues that affect not only their local communities but also other people elsewhere. Therefore, the role of education is key to preparing today's young people to become actively engaged in finding solutions and partnering with Member States in promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels.

4. New frameworks on youth and sustainable development at the United Nations provide the ideal platform for specific consideration of meaningful youth engagement in promoting the rule of law, as well as on discussions concerning their education on such matters. Participants in the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice are therefore invited to reflect on the developments that took place in the wake of the Thirteenth Congress and the adoption of its outcome document, 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 (General Assembly resolution [70/174](#), annex), which, as detailed below, brings innovative policy considerations for education and youth engagement with regard to the rule of law. As the international community enters the final decade of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the involvement of young people becomes even more crucial to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels).

5. Acknowledging the local, regional and international realities with regard to crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law, participants also have the opportunity to reflect on how education and youth engagement can promote resilience to crime. The concept of resilience, in this context, relates to the leading role of young people in tackling the crime-related challenges around them and fostering positive change, thus coping with the complexities of their specific contexts.

6. Workshop 3 draws on the experiences of UNODC and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute in addressing education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime. The present paper has been written to inform participants of the outcomes of the regional preparatory meetings for the Fourteenth Congress relevant to the workshop.

7. “Youth” and “young people” are used interchangeably in the present document. The age range to which this category refers also tends to generate confusion. While the United Nations, for statistical purposes, considers young people as people between 15 and 24 years of age (A/36/215), other definitions may also be found, as in Security Council resolution 2250 (2015), where young people are defined as persons between 18 and 29 years of age. In order to follow as inclusive an approach as possible, and, the definition of “young people” followed in the paper has been of people of 15 to 29 years of age. In addition, focusing on youth and education also requires a broader look at the education sector. Educating young people on rule of law issues must involve different techniques and partnerships in the formal and non-formal education sectors and informal learning.¹

II. Youth engagement

A. Meaningful youth engagement and the 2030 Agenda

8. The international community has systematically reinforced the importance of involving young people in both policymaking and the implementation of governmental activities, especially after 2015. From a normative perspective, however, this commitment dates back further. The right of people to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives is recognized under article 25, paragraph (a), of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, while States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child are required under its article 12, paragraph 1, to assure to children who are capable of forming their own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting children. In the context of promoting the rule of law, promoting the contribution of the public to decision-making processes is also advocated as a key preventive measure in enhancing transparency in article 13, paragraph 1 (a), of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

9. Since 2015, however, a series of landmark documents has further reinforced the existing commitments that had been thereto agreed upon by United Nations Member States and the States parties to the aforementioned international legal instruments. These documents include the Doha Declaration, the 2030 Agenda and Security Council resolution 2250 (2015). In addition, these latest developments include specific reference to the importance of youth engagement for promoting the rule of law. In April 2015, the Doha Declaration became the first international declaration to specifically call for the involvement of young people in the promotion of crime prevention and criminal justice activities (resolution 70/174, para. 7), while also sending a clear message to Member States that sustainable development and promoting the rule of law were intrinsically connected. That year, the General Assembly also adopted the 2030 Agenda, in which it laid down as a key implementation principle that no one was to be left behind (ibid., para. 4) and recognized children and young people as a major group that should have a voice in the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Finally, in December 2015, the Security Council adopted resolution 2250 (2015), on youth, peace and security, in which it stressed the need to involve young people in relevant rule of law policymaking, including for the prevention of violence and the promotion of social

¹ According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) *International Standard Classification of Education 2011*, formal education is institutionalized, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognized private bodies, and – in its totality – constitutes the formal education system of a country. Non-formal education is also institutionalized, intentional and planned by an education provider. The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative or complement to formal education within the process of lifelong learning of individuals. Finally, informal learning is defined as forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate, but are not institutionalized. It is consequently less organized and less structured than either formal or non-formal education. Informal learning may include learning activities that occur in the family, workplace, local community and daily life, on a self-directed, family-directed or socially-directed basis.

cohesion. The number of significant developments in the area of youth empowerment that took place within the United Nations intergovernmental bodies in 2015 therefore make that year a milestone in the history of multilateral diplomacy.

10. Since then, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda has gained considerable traction. The establishment of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, as well as the significant level of involvement of Member States, civil society organizations and the private sector show the capacity to mobilize diverse groups of stakeholders, including youth organizations, around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

11. In that context, the Secretary-General launched an ambitious youth strategy in September 2018 that had been developed by the United Nations system, with input from youth organizations from civil society. The United Nations Youth Strategy outlines practical measures for how the United Nations should not only involve youth in support for the 2030 Agenda, but also work with Member States to ensure that young people themselves benefit from governmental efforts to promote the Sustainable Development Goals. The first priority of the Strategy is “engagement, participation and advocacy”, thus reflecting the ever-evolving and reinforced importance bestowed upon such actions by the international community. As stated in the Strategy, young people’s empowerment, development and engagement is an end in itself, as well as a means to build a better world.

12. Young people all over the world are drawn to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. They want to take an active part in implementing the Goals and their various targets and feel more than ever that they have a role to play in holding Governments to account. Examples of this involvement are the global climate strike movement and the [Youth Climate Summit](#), which took place in New York on 21 September 2019 and involved thousands of young participants. Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that young people around the world do not merely want to be heard, as their desire is to move beyond that and to be considered as equal partners in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and to participate in policymaking – hence the focus on the expression “meaningful” youth engagement. In addition, some Member States have developed national action plans to implement the 2030 Agenda that include youth engagement components.

13. While young people have taken a growing interest in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, that interest does not extend to all the Goals evenly. Platforms and networks to mobilize and systematize youth involvement in the implementation of some of the Goals, such as Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), Goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) and Goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), have multiplied since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. However, as there are only a limited number of initiatives for fostering active youth involvement in promoting the rule of law, which is mainly covered by Goal 16, together with other Goals and targets linked to it (the so-called Sustainable Development Goal 16+), the present workshop is aimed at drawing attention to this important topic and to how it relates to the overall theme of the Fourteenth Congress.

B. Working with young people to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals linked to peace, justice and institutions

14. As stated above, while young people constitute a sizeable portion of the world’s population, they are also disproportionately affected by crime and violence. In addition, it is not uncommon for them to be seen as the main perpetrators of crime. That said, young people are increasingly interested in promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels, as well as in fostering a culture of lawfulness in their communities. It is therefore noteworthy that, notwithstanding important advances, a

perception prevails among young people that there are still not enough opportunities for their meaningful engagement in promoting the rule of law (see E/CN.15/2019/CRP.5).

15. The 2030 Agenda presents an indivisible and integrated approach to sustainable development, and its Goals are complementary and interlinked. In this regard, young people recognize Goal 16 as an enabler, in the sense that its implementation is key to the achievement of other Goals. However, the road to the full implementation of the targets of Goal 16 is still long. In preparation for the high-level political forum on sustainable development held in New York from 9 to 18 July 2019, the Secretary-General issued a report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in which he stated that actions towards the achievement of Goal 16 were uneven and continued to deprive millions of their security, rights and opportunities and undermine the delivery of public services and broader economic development (E/2019/68, para. 37). This assessment was also shared by speakers during the forum with regard to the in-depth review of Goal 16, with one speaker stating that the international community was falling behind its Sustainable Development Goals commitments on those issues.²

16. Despite major achievements, much remains to be done to promote the rule of law and achieve Goal 16 and other Goals related to it. In this context, the need to involve a wide variety of stakeholders, including young people, is more time-sensitive than ever. This was a strong message that emerged during the Economic and Social Council Youth Forum held in New York on 8 and 9 April 2019 (see also E/CN.15/2019/CRP.5). Participants in the forum further echoed that call,³ asking Member States to involve young people in law drafting and policymaking, as their vulnerability also resulted from the lack of opportunities for their participation.

17. Young people are particularly concerned with how such issues as corruption, inequality, human rights violations, organized crime and conflict inhibit progress on, for example, ending poverty (Goal 1), ensuring health (Goal 3) and ensuring education (Goal 4) (see E/CN.15/2019/CRP.5). However, engagement opportunities are scarce. In preparation for the Congress, UNODC conducted a short online survey of young people to gather their views on how they saw their involvement in crime prevention and the promotion of a culture of lawfulness. The small number of responses notwithstanding (39), the results show that young people do not necessarily feel that there are enough opportunities for them to engage in crime prevention and criminal justice activities, with few of them having ever taken part in such activities or knowing how they could potentially contribute. Furthermore, the lack of opportunities for youth involvement in policymaking and implementation in the field of crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues is felt at the local, national and international levels.

18. Making the implementation of Goal 16 more inclusive also involves taking stock of and providing the adequate level of publicity to youth-led initiatives on crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues that are making an impact at the local, national and international levels. Civil society organizations and other formally and informally established entities led by young people have increased in numbers, and, as young people become more engaged, Member States can learn from, support and replicate good practices related to the implementation of Goal 16. This has the potential to further young people's engagement in support of the rule of law, as they are often inspired by their peers' successful stories elsewhere. The organization of youth forums, in this sense, can provide an ideal platform for the exchange of information with and the empowerment of young people, which has also

² Laura Chinchilla Miranda, former President of Costa Rica and Vice-President of the Club de Madrid, on behalf of the Club de Madrid, "Review of Sustainable Development Goal 16: peace, justice and strong institutions", statement at the high-level political forum on sustainable development 2019 under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, New York, 12 July 2019. Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>.

³ Chinchilla Miranda, "Review of Sustainable Development Goal 16".

been supported by Member States in the regional preparatory meetings for the Fourteenth Congress.⁴ In addition, young people are keen to participate in relevant intergovernmental forums, and Member States should be encouraged to include youth representatives in their delegations and national deliberations. During the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth 2019 and Youth Forum Lisboa+21 held in Lisbon on 22 and 23 June 2019, all delegations included young people, and participating countries and speakers strongly encouraged the wider participation of young people in regularly held sessions of intergovernmental bodies through their inclusion in Member States' delegations.

19. Finally, meaningful youth engagement is intrinsically linked to resilience-building. The capacity of societies to cope with challenges related to crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law is also dependent upon a whole-of-society approach. Accordingly, involving young people meaningfully can further support the development of resilience in communities.

III. Bridging the gap between education and the rule of law

A. Education as a means to empower young people to promote the rule of law

1. Education and the rule of law: a mutually reinforcing relationship

20. It is broadly recognized that education has a major role to play in shaping the values of future generations, building collective consciousness and reshaping societal preferences. In addition, education helps to develop the skills necessary to enact those values. Education can play a key role in fostering a culture of lawfulness and engaging society at large in promoting the rule of law. Through education, learners are socialized into adopting certain values, behaviours, attitudes and roles that form their personal and social identity. In the process, they also acquire and develop the cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural experiences and skills to potentially contest those norms and propose alternative expressions of identity and belonging that are more in line with their generation and world view. Learning can take place in formal, non-formal and informal settings. In primary and secondary schools, educators can encourage learners to value and apply the principles of the rule of law in their daily lives, allowing them to make decisions that are ethically responsible. Moreover, education can equip learners with the appropriate knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours that they need to contribute to the continued improvement and regeneration of the rule of law in society more broadly.⁵ At the tertiary education level, academia and higher education institutions are not only key to fostering research and providing data that may inform policymaking, but also recognized as places where the next generation will be empowered to become the leaders and professionals needed for tomorrow. Equally important to prosperity and innovation are leaders and professionals who promote the rule of law.

21. The Doha Declaration is the first political declaration in which Member States are called upon to integrate crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues into education systems.⁶ Since its adoption, this message has been reinforced,

⁴ A/CONF.234/RPM.1/1, para. 44 (i); A/CONF.234/RPM.2/1, para. 42 (e); A/CONF.234/RPM.3/1, paras. 59 (i) and (m); and A/CONF.234/RPM.4/1, para. 45 (b).

⁵ For more information on the role of education to promote the rule of law, see UNESCO and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Strengthening the Rule of Law through Education: A Guide for Policymakers* (Paris, 2019).

⁶ Although the Salvador Declaration on Comprehensive Strategies for Global Challenges: Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Systems and Their Development in a Changing World contains a reference to education (para. 43), it was restricted to education on the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice, a field thus significantly narrower than the scope 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.

starting with the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, and specifically target 4.7, by which Member States are called upon to engage in education on the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence. Moreover, ensuring education for all children and young people and the corollary eradication of illiteracy are fundamental to the prevention of crime and corruption and the promotion of a culture of lawfulness. In its resolution 6/10, the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption recognized that investing in anti-corruption education and enhancing professional capacities were effective ways to contribute to achieving sustainable development, safeguarding human rights and strengthening the rule of law. Furthermore, the General Assembly adopted resolution 74/172 on education for justice and the rule of law in the context of sustainable development.

22. Integrating rule of law issues into all levels of education requires a change in the way that all stakeholders involved in the process work and operate. One of the biggest challenges is building and operating multisectoral partnerships to promote and integrate crime prevention and criminal justice issues into all levels of education, in particular since rule of law issues are commonly viewed as an area of work associated with ministries of justice and the interior, including law enforcement agencies. In that context, educating on the rule of law must not be solely approached as a government-led initiative and should encompass a whole-of-society approach. Therefore, aside from the education and criminal justice sectors, the role of civil society organizations is vital to supporting educational efforts, both as partners in developing educational materials based on the rule of law and supporting outreach and dissemination activities to reach all other stakeholders, including children, students, parents, teachers, professors and the media, and for promoting peer learning among young people on rule of law issues. Ultimately, spotlighting the education sector and those working on such issues can reinforce the message that the rule of law and its promotion should not be restricted to law enforcement, and that everyone has a role to play in making societies resilient to crime.

23. Expectations as to the ethical standards to uphold in the public and private sectors can be raised from any early age. Working with children in a classroom setting at an early stage in their educational development therefore provides them with the knowledge and skills necessary to better understand and develop critical thinking around such issues as corruption, violence and other forms of crime. In addition, children can also learn that criminal justice systems should be fair, just and humane, and they can be made familiar with the challenges faced worldwide to guarantee that those systems operate in that way.

24. In primary and secondary education, the development of curricula is most often the responsibility of a centralized governmental entity, typically the ministry of education. Each curriculum and syllabus defined by such a body focuses on the knowledge and skills that students are expected to acquire by the end of secondary school. Values and knowledge of rule of law issues do not typically fall within the range of subject matters that regulatory governmental bodies require educational institutions to teach, although some elements of the rule of law can be found in subjects such as ethics, civic education or religious studies, depending on the country (E/CN.15/2017/6, para. 56).

25. Education on the rule of law should extend to tertiary education, where career-specific theory and practice meet to create the next generation of professionals entering the labour market. At that educational level, a multidisciplinary approach is essential to educating on rule of law issues. The wealth of issues connected with crime prevention and criminal justice can be addressed from different perspectives and include fields as varied as law, social sciences, political science, economics and science, technology, engineering and mathematics. In addition, the role of educators – in this case lecturers or professors – is key. While teachers play an important role in primary and secondary schools, this acquires another dimension in tertiary education, given the fact that, in most countries, government institutions in charge of higher education set minimum curricular standards and, therefore, that a significant level of decision-making with regard to content falls upon faculties. In

addition, academic freedom or, rather, the ability to set the content of one's individual course as an academic, plays an important role in tertiary education. In other words, lecturers consider it important to be able to shape their own curricula, inasmuch as they are allowed or encouraged to do so under their national normative frameworks. For those reasons, working with lecturers at the higher educational level is of significant relevance to developing internationally and locally relevant content, producing specialized knowledge and ensuring its application.

26. In July 2019, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2019/16, entitled "Integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies". Member States, among others, noted the importance of preventing the involvement of children and young people in criminal activities by supporting their development and strengthening their resilience to antisocial and delinquent behaviour. In this regard, the Council encouraged Member States in that resolution to use sports-based activities more widely to promote prevention in primary, secondary and tertiary education (see also A/CONF.234/4).

2. Cross-cutting issues

27. Educating on the rule of law requires the incorporation of cross-cutting issues into curricula and educational materials and tools developed for that purpose. Examples of such issues of relevance and of strategic value to that education include human rights, gender equality and the Sustainable Development Goals.

28. Crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues inherently relate to human rights, such as the right of children to be heard and express their concerns, enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the right to participate in public affairs, enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which may also be considered from the perspective of article 13 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (Participation of society). The fact that the rule of law inherently refers to the protection and promotion of human rights must therefore be effectively integrated into education in order to make societies resilient to crime. In addition, the human rights dimension of education on the rule of law supports the perspective of youth empowerment, especially since, as shown in the aforementioned examples, people – including young people – must be regarded as more than just bystanders and can actively support Governments with promoting the rule of law.

29. Gender equality is the focus of Sustainable Development Goal 5. Its indicators alone point to the amount of work yet to be done to achieve the Goal. In the context of crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues, gender dynamics are important. The *Global Study on Homicide 2019* and the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018* show how crime disproportionately affects women. To cite another example, there has also been an increasing body of knowledge developed on the gender dimensions of organized crime, terrorism and corruption. Today's young people, however, are more than ever conscious of the need to address gender equality in its various dimensions, and education on the rule of law should make use of this awareness to develop critical thinking among children and young people with regard to the relationship between gender equality and the rule of law.

30. Lastly, the 2030 Agenda has a noticeable appeal to young people, both in terms of awareness-raising and action orientation. Events such as the Youth Forum of the Economic and Social Council, as well as advocacy efforts undertaken by the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, demonstrate that young people worldwide are mobilizing and acting for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In that context, linking rule of law education to the Goals has the potential of increasing the interest of young people in crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law. Moreover, it can channel such education towards meaningful engagement and positive change with regard to such issues. Owing to their interrelated nature, the Goals can also support the creation of links between crime prevention, criminal

justice and other rule of law issues and efforts to end poverty (Goal 1) and reduce inequalities (Goal 10).

B. Best practices on promoting the rule of law through education

Initiatives at the global and local levels

31. The successful implementation of educational approaches to promote the rule of law depends on a balanced use of innovative methods through formal and non-formal education and informal learning. At the primary and secondary education levels, formal education curricula are formulated centrally through ministries of education or under their guidance by subnational entities. In addition, within the non-formal and informal learning sectors, different stakeholders undertake educational and awareness-raising activities aimed at promoting the rule of law and fostering a culture of lawfulness.

32. Within UNODC, the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration established the Education for Justice initiative. Since 2016, the initiative has developed resources for the primary, secondary and tertiary education levels that have benefited students, educators and academics worldwide (see also A/CONF.234/12). The initiative has focused on innovative methods to develop educational materials on rule of law issues for each level. At the primary and secondary education levels, these have included ludic tools, such as games and comic books. At the secondary and tertiary levels, the initiative has also sought to engage young people directly in developing solutions for rule of law issues through hackathons, support to youth-led conferences and National Model United Nations Conferences.⁷ At the tertiary level, the initiative has worked with hundreds of academics from more than 110 countries to develop peer-reviewed materials – university modules – to support teaching on crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues. In addition, UNODC has also brought together lecturers teaching those issues to facilitate the exchange of expertise and strengthen partnerships between the Office and academia in order to complement each other's efforts to meet Goal 16. Lecturers made their contributions through expert group meetings and the virtual peer review of the developed tools.

33. The reach of the Education for Justice initiative in the wake of the Thirteenth Congress and the adoption of the Doha Declaration shows the receptiveness of Member States to such materials. In addition, the first International High-level Conference on “educating for the rule of law: inspire, change, together” was held in Vienna from 7 to 9 October 2019 with positive feedback from Member States and the various participants from the criminal justice and education sectors alike.⁸

34. Within the scope of the Education for Justice initiative, UNODC has also established a partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), thereby strengthening the delivery of United Nations technical assistance by bringing together expertise on education, crime prevention and criminal justice, as well as, more broadly, rule of law development. This partnership has led to the development of tools for policymakers and educators in primary and secondary schools, in a process that involved government officials and educators. In addition, UNODC and UNESCO have also worked in close coordination on the dissemination of the Education for Justice university modules and to inform higher education institutions on opportunities afforded to them, such as the Education for Justice grant programme.

35. Furthermore, UNODC has worked closely with the International Association of Universities and other higher education partners to explore innovative approaches and

⁷ A National Model United Nations Conference is a simulation of the United Nations system in which students assume the roles of Member State delegates and are tasked with drafting a resolution on a specified topic, with a view to enhancing their skills and their understanding of the issues.

⁸ More information on the Conference is available at www.unodc.org.

partnerships to strengthen the role of educators and academia in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16.

36. Outside the scope of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, UNODC has also been involved in assisting academics with their teaching on anti-corruption issues through its Anti-Corruption Academic initiative. This initiative, which organizes multiple events every year, connects academics and lecturers with a view to fostering anti-corruption education worldwide. It acts as a central hub for anti-corruption education worldwide, bringing together professors at the global and regional levels, fostering networking and offering more than 1,800 free online resources.

37. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute has also led global efforts to educate postgraduate students and young professionals on rule of law issues directly. Since 2002, a wide number of postgraduate programmes, including academic curricula, have been designed and implemented. As a result, postgraduate students and young professionals from as many as 100 countries have been trained on various topics related to crime prevention, criminal justice, international criminal law, human rights and the rule of law. Through this educational offer, the Institute aims to equip the next generation of policymakers, lawyers, judicial personnel and law enforcement and civil servants, among others, with the knowledge, skills and values needed to become agents of change in preventing crime, reinforcing the rule of law and promoting development.

38. Since 2002, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute has offered a Master of Laws in Transnational Crime and Justice. The course will be taught in 2019–2020 for the thirteenth time. The academic knowledge and practical skills acquired by the Institute alumni have contributed to their professional careers and fostered their role as active actors in the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence based on respect for the rule of law and sound justice reforms.

39. In addition, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute is continuously working with various stakeholders to strengthen their capacity to use formal education and informal learning as a tool to prevent crime and violent extremism among young people. In the juvenile justice context, the effort is focused on supporting Member States in the design of alternative and diversion measures centred on the full personal and cognitive development of children in conflict with the law. Education has also been a critical pillar in the design of rehabilitation and reintegration policies for convicted young people.

40. Sports provide an important platform for developing life skills among young people at risk. Following the adoption of the Doha Declaration, in which the importance of youth participation is stressed and young people are recognized as important agents of change in crime prevention efforts, UNODC launched a global youth crime prevention initiative under the Doha Declaration Implementation Programme that uses sports as a tool for strengthening the resilience of young people at risk, including those in marginalized communities that are often difficult to reach. Through partnerships with Governments, sports organizations and civil society, UNODC promotes sport-based initiatives that strengthen the social and individual skills of young people and informs them about the risks associated with crime, violence and drug use (see A/CONF.234/12). The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute has also developed a methodology to promote the use of sport and cultural and artistic activities as critical tools to strengthen the resilience of young people to crime, for example by playing a positive role in preventing radicalization and violent extremism. The working paper prepared by the Secretariat on comprehensive strategies for crime prevention towards social and economic development (A/CONF.234/4) contains further information on crime prevention and skills training. Within the scope of the present workshop, participants may wish to consider education and skills, including through sports and physical education, as a means to further community resilience to crime.

41. There have also been significant developments, some of which predate the Doha Declaration. Examples from different regions and organizations are provided in the following paragraphs. With regard to human rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights currently implements the World Programme for Human Rights Education established by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/113 A. Now entering in its fourth phase, the Programme has encouraged Member States to focus on human rights education. Some issues within the human rights domain are related to crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law, as mentioned above. For that reason, the Office reports that in some countries, such as Argentina, ministries of justice have spearheaded efforts to develop human rights education in primary and secondary schools and fostered similar developments in higher education (see A/HRC/36/24). The Council of Europe, to cite another example, has developed a series of materials for primary and secondary education on democratic citizenship and human rights.⁹

42. In more general terms, rule of law education at the primary and secondary levels has been led by ministries of justice or the interior. The Ministry of Justice of Japan, for example, has led the development of specific educational tools for primary and secondary schools, focusing on the development of values that support, ultimately, a culture of lawfulness. The Office of the General Prosecutor in Uzbekistan and prosecution services in Nigeria have also worked closely with UNODC on engaging students at all educational levels (see also A/CONF.234/6, para. 50).

43. In a number of countries, education on rule of law issues has been spearheaded by law enforcement agencies or, more prominently, anti-corruption authorities, as a result of the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. While other entities may have worked on rule of law education, the Convention, in particular its article 13, provides an ideal platform for anti-corruption education.¹⁰ Countries such as Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Mauritius and Sri Lanka have invested significantly in youth education programmes to support the participation of society in the prevention of corruption (A/CONF.234/6, para. 50). Activities, such as fostering the creation of school clubs, youth-led initiatives and similar informal groupings, were identified as good practices. In Kenya, for example, the anti-corruption authority has supported the creation of integrity clubs in schools, an initiative which has also been developed in countries such as Nepal and Uzbekistan.

44. In addition, young people value the role of higher education institutions in providing spaces for evidence-based and informed discussions on crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law (see E/CN.15/2019/CRP.5). Universities are particularly important owing to the levels of cooperation that may often be established with Governments and law enforcement authorities to advance the rule of law agenda. Together with the university sphere, the holding of youth forums as spaces for debate and action have been particularly valuable. Participants in the regional preparatory meetings praised the organization of such forums in advance of the Thirteenth and the Fourteenth Congresses, recommending that they be expanded regionally and locally. Universities are ideal spaces for the organization of those forums, which are occasionally also organized at the secondary education level.

⁹ Council of Europe, Democracy, Sustainable Democratic Societies, “Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE)”. Available at www.coe.int/en/web/edc.

¹⁰ The establishment of public education programmes, including in schools and universities, as a preventive measure are called for in article 13, para. 1, of the Convention. Within the framework of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Prevention of Corruption discussed at its eighth intersessional meeting how States parties were implementing such programmes (see [CAC/COSP/WG.4/2017/4](http://www.unodc.org/documents/corruption/2017/4/CAC/COSP/WG.4/2017/4)). See also A/CONF.234/6, para. 48.

IV. Current challenges and the importance of partnerships

A. Challenges

45. Despite the aforementioned examples and the progress made, the incorporation of rule of law issues into teaching curricula has not yet advanced sufficiently. Research undertaken to identify good practices in teaching about rule of law issues indicates that the vast majority of education programmes addressing those issues take place in the form of extracurricular activities.

46. The survey conducted by UNDOC (see para. 17 above) also showed that young people perceived the education sector and the ministries of justice and the interior to be distant from each other. In addition, in some locations, young people may also be unaware of rule of law, criminal justice or security issues that affect not only them but also young people elsewhere. They identified the lack of specific content on rule of law issues as an area for further improvement in paving the road to more meaningful engagement at the national and international levels. Specific training of teachers is also seen as a challenge, and increased engagement with educators is necessary to ensure that they are equipped with the tools to address key issues in their communities.

47. Member States must also consider the issues that are most relevant to them. For example, terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism are often seen as more relevant in some regions than in others. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration the various contexts and how rule of law education needs to be adapted to domestic contexts so that populations may relate to that education.

48. Educating young people on rule of law issues also requires adequate spaces for them to become engaged as positive agents of change. Meaningful engagement is more than merely opening a space for young people to voice a concern. Governments must ensure that young people can create solutions for issues that affect them and work together in order to implement measures with a high degree of ownership.

49. Despite the progress made and such successful examples as those described above, the incorporation of crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues into education systems remains limited. In primary and secondary education, curricula are centrally controlled by Governments (ministries of education) at the national or subnational levels. This leads to another challenge, namely, the extent to which the topics in question can be incorporated into national curricular frameworks. Curricular reform is a complex process with technical and political ramifications. For secondary education in particular, the amount of content in local guidelines and against which students may be tested for university entry examinations does not lend itself to the inclusion of additional topics. Teachers and students tend to be overworked with curricula as they are, which shifts the study of the rule of law (and other topics) to the extracurricular domain. This challenge also imposes limitations on learning about the Sustainable Development Goals as a whole and affects the implementation of target 4.7.

50. Reaching young people in marginalized communities, including those who have dropped out of school or have limited access to education, forms a particular challenge in developing countries. In this regard, due attention must be given to specific contexts and the best means through which to reach out to them, for example, informal learning and sports-based activities.

51. Technology also has an effect on where young people spend the bulk of their free time, presenting both opportunities for and challenges to the promotion of rule of law education.¹¹ Social networks can enable the promotion of rule of law through

¹¹ This issue should not to be confused with the topic of Workshop 4 (Current crime trends, recent developments and emerging solutions, in particular new technologies as means for and tools against crime), which addresses the use of technology for illicit purposes. In the context of the present workshop, technology should be considered as catalytic to the participation of young

education and the building of social capital; however, it can also give rise to behaviours and create spaces that undermine the rule of law. Special attention is required to address technological developments in a way that leverages their benefits to promote the rule of law and protect human rights.

B. Importance of partnerships

52. Partnerships to educate on the rule of law and promote youth engagement are important to address many of the challenges discussed in the present document. Governments, therefore, must work with a range of actors if they wish to promote education on crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues and foster youth engagement to make societies resilient to crime.

53. The private sector has been increasingly supportive of the Sustainable Development Goals. This had led to new opportunities for investment and corporate social responsibility. However, private sector involvement in promoting the rule of law, especially education therein, is still in its infancy. Within the Education for Justice initiative, UNODC has worked with private entities, such as Facebook and Symantec, to promote hackathons on rule of law issues, and Internet Service Providers Austria, the Austrian association of Internet service providers, to disseminate educational materials on the prevention of cybercrime.

54. Civil society organizations also play a particularly important role in educating on the rule of law and promoting youth engagement. Some non-governmental organizations have focused on developing specific materials on such issues as corruption. For example, Integrity Action has developed methodologies for the creation of integrity clubs in schools. Others have put a stronger emphasis on promoting youth engagement, as the Accountability Lab, which seeks to promote youth-led initiatives to prevent corruption. Within the United Nations, the work of the Major Group for Children and Youth, one of the major groups established by the General Assembly, has been particularly important for providing spaces and opportunities to young people for becoming active in promoting the rule of law and influencing decision-making at the international level.

55. Not less important is academia. Partnering with academics and higher education institutions paves the way for the shaping of future professionals, including teachers – inasmuch as they are trained at the tertiary education level in their countries. Universities must not be seen as places for the development of advanced research and professional development only. In many instances, they also provide platforms for community outreach and local primary and secondary education programmes. The potential of universities as points of inspiration for rule of law education beyond tertiary education is therefore noteworthy.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

56. Five years into the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, progress towards achieving Goal 16 is still considered timid, as reflected in the statements made during the high-level political forum on sustainable development held in 2019. With 10 years left to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, further effort is needed to achieve Goal 16 and the related targets in other Goals. The involvement of young people is paramount to that achievement.

57. Furthermore, the involvement of young people can also significantly enhance social resilience to crime. Education, especially on rule of law issues, is therefore a prerequisite for fostering informed debates, creativity and partnerships in support of related national and international policies. It is recognized in the 2030 Agenda and the Doha Declaration that crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law

people and the development by them of innovative solutions to challenges related to crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues.

issues are not the sole responsibility of Governments and law enforcement authorities. A whole-of-society approach inherently requires the involvement of young people beyond the victimization-perpetration dichotomy, placing a focus on positive change and resilience.

58. Considering the outcomes of the regional preparatory meetings, as well as the developments highlighted in the present paper, the Fourteenth Congress may wish to consider the following recommendations, addressed to Member States:

(a) Support the use of formal and non-formal education and informal learning to advance education on crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues from an early age;

(b) Continue to strengthen education on crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues, integrating those issues into the education system at all levels as a cross-cutting measure to prevent crime and encourage the general public to promote the rule of law;

(c) Encourage the integration of cross-cutting issues, such as human rights, gender equality and the Sustainable Development Goals, into educational and youth engagement activities to promote the rule of law and to ensure that, in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda, no one is left behind;

(d) Leverage advancements in information technology for the benefit of education through the development of innovative educational resources and tools for children and young people that cater for different personal and contextual learning needs;

(e) Foster the use of technology and the involvement of young people therein as opportunities for education and engagement in promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels;

(f) Raise awareness among children and young people and promote among them a culture of lawfulness to enhance their perception of the rule of law and foster their active participation and engagement in finding innovative solutions to challenges related to the local, national and international contexts;

(g) Consider promoting youth forums or similar venues to: (i) allow young people to become familiarized with policymaking related to crime prevention, criminal justice and other aspects of the rule of law; and (ii) share good practices on youth-led initiatives to promote the rule of law;

(h) Consider establishing institutionalized procedures for young people to contribute to policymaking and implementation in the field of crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues at the national and international levels;

(i) Foster the development of youth-led solutions to local and international crime prevention and criminal justice issues, in support of national and international policies;

(j) Support UNODC in providing technical assistance to Member States, upon their request and including through the Education for Justice initiative, to foster meaningful youth engagement on crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule of law issues;

(k) Support the provision of technical assistance by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute to Member States, upon their request, including through its training and advanced education programme and its youth-centred activities in the field of prevention of violent extremism.