



# Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice



Kyoto, Japan, 20–27 April 2020

Distr.: General  
12 February 2020

Original: English

Item 1 of the provisional agenda\*  
**Opening of the Congress**

## **The rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals**

### **Report of the Executive Director**

#### *Summary*

The present document was prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution [73/185](#), entitled “The rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals”. Member States, regularly express their views, including on specific topics related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and other bodies serviced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), including under the general debate. The present document takes stock of those discussions, in particular on conference room paper E/CN.15/2019/CRP.4 submitted at the twenty-eighth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, in 2019, which contains information on the voluntary national reviews, including the main messages relevant to Sustainable Development Goal 16, as shared by Member States pursuant to Assembly resolution [73/183](#). In addition, the present document contains views on the contribution that the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, considering its main theme, could make to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It also elaborates on the important role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as the main policymaking body of the United Nations on crime prevention and criminal justice and reflects on the role of UNODC in advancing Goal 16 and on the interconnected nature of the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

\* [A/CONF.234/1](#).



## I. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: from Doha to Kyoto and beyond

1. The Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice took place in Doha, at the same time as Member States were finalizing the drafting of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1). In 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, Member States reiterated the importance of promoting peaceful, corruption-free and inclusive societies for sustainable development, with a focus on a people-centred approach that provides access to justice for all and builds effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, and they acknowledged the strong interrelation between the rule of law and sustainable development and their mutually reinforcing nature. This interconnectedness was also recognized in Sustainable Development 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).

2. Three key principles guide the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. These principles must be duly considered when implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and related targets linked to the rule of law. First, the principle of “leaving no one behind” means that those who are most vulnerable must be at the centre of the efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Within the context of crime prevention and criminal justice, this can take on different dimensions. There is an evident strong link between social vulnerabilities and crime, which can be explained by distinctive gender-, age- and income-specific patterns in certain types of crimes and offences. Second, the 2030 Agenda presents an indivisible and integrated approach to sustainable development, and its Goals are complementary and intertwined. Crime prevention, criminal justice and other aspects of the rule of law are not addressed under Goal 16 only and can be found or are alluded to under other Goals. For example, target 5.2 relates to violence against women and target 8.7 to trafficking in persons. Third, a whole-of-society approach is key to advancing the rule of law agenda. Thus, the 2030 Agenda presents an opportunity for considering wider stakeholder engagement to promoting the rule of law, moving away from the traditional view that the achievement of the Goals is a task pertaining exclusively to law enforcement, criminal justice systems or State entities.

3. In view of the Goals related to crime prevention, criminal justice and other aspects of the rule of law, an additional cross-cutting element can be considered that has particular relevance to a whole-of-society approach, namely, empowerment. The traditional criminal justice approach focuses on the dichotomy between protection and punishment or, rather, victims and perpetrators. Yet, given that the achievement of the 2030 Agenda is highly dependent on a whole-of-society approach, it is particularly important to consider the establishment of new partnerships and reaching out to the general public, with a special emphasis on young people, thereby empowering societies to take action to implement the Goals and targets discussed in the present document. By reaching out to the general public and empowering it to promote peaceful and just societies with strong institutions, the efforts to attain these Goals and targets gain momentum, making them all the more achievable.

4. Governments play a central role in the efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda; however, the achievement of the Goals and related targets cannot be their sole responsibility. As highlighted in the most recent report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Goals,<sup>1</sup> notwithstanding major achievements, the evaluation of progress in the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.19.I.6).

implementation of Goal 16 and related Goals suggests that efforts to date fall short in terms of what is expected by 2030.

5. As stated above, the achievement of the 2030 Agenda hinges on a whole-of-society approach. This implies the involvement of various stakeholders, such as civil society organizations, the private sector, local governments, children and young people, academia and communities, that collaborate to ensure a concerted approach to the advancement of the rule of law in its complex and multifaceted aspects, and consequently, to the accomplishment of Goal 16.

6. In addition to focusing on the contribution that the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice could make to advancing crime prevention and criminal justice in the context of the 2030 Agenda, the report highlights two important facts, namely, the unequivocal role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as the principal policymaking body of the United Nations in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice and the rule of law, and the role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as the leading entity of the United Nations in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice and as the custodian entity of many targets of Goal 16.

## **II. Role of the Fourteenth Congress in advancing the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice in the context of the 2030 Agenda**

7. For the past 65 years, the United Nations congress on crime prevention and criminal justice has been a forum for a wide range of stakeholders to discuss, share and identify common solutions to global problems. The Congress first convened in 1955 and proved its important role in shaping the global crime prevention and criminal justice agenda and addressing in a timely manner the most pressing challenges faced by the international community.

8. The congresses have been seminal in the advancement of the crime prevention agenda at the international level. The Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment was approved at the Fifth Congress, held in Geneva in 1975, and several model treaties in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice were approved at the Eighth Congress, held in Havana in 1990.<sup>2</sup> More recently, the previous two congresses have contributed not only to framing the policy programme of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, but also to adding key issues to its programme of work. They provided a framework for the advancement of discussions on cybercrime through the Salvador Declaration on Comprehensive Strategies for Global Challenges: Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Systems and Their Development in a Changing World of 2010 and focused on education, crime prevention and enhancing the efficiency of the criminal justice system through the Doha Declaration.

9. The Fourteenth Congress will be held five years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Doha Declaration, with the Declaration contributing to framing the rule of law agenda in the 2030 Agenda. The Congress presents an opportunity for evaluating progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals related to peace, justice and institutions and defining the role of the Congress in enabling their implementation. The Congress should assume a proactive role in empowering societies to contribute directly to the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda. While the Thirteenth Congress was instrumental in mainstreaming peace, justice and strong institutions as integral parts of and prerequisites for sustainable development, the Fourteenth Congress should reinforce these global commitments and pave the way

<sup>2</sup> The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-Custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules), the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary and the Model Agreement on the Transfer of Foreign Prisoners.

for concrete action towards realizing the 2030 Agenda and, specifically, Goal 16 and related Goals.

10. The Fourteenth Congress is the first forum of its kind to take place after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. As such, and in accordance with the agreed thematic focus, the Congress will strive to deliver practical recommendations on how to channel the international community's efforts to advance crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law. In the light of the ongoing discussions on the draft Kyoto declaration, it is clear that such practical recommendations, based on multi-stakeholder approaches and strengthened national, regional and international cooperation, will be a keystone in the international community's crime prevention and criminal justice road map for the period from 2020 to 2025.

11. In this context, it is worth underlining the importance of implementing the outcome of the Congress through the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building. The work undertaken by UNODC in close cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, including other United Nations entities, international and regional organizations, practitioners, academia and young people, in particular through the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, can serve as a framework and function as a catalyst for continued action. Member States might also consider how they can further enhance the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in advancing the implementation of the declaration to be adopted in Kyoto by increasing its capacity to act as an interactive forum among policymakers, practitioners and all relevant stakeholders for sharing experiences, lessons learned and good practices in translating policy directives into meaningful action at the national, regional and international levels. In this regard, it is worth considering the information contained and recommendations made in the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the implementation of the Doha Declaration (A/CONF.234/12).

### **III. Role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in advancing the 2030 Agenda**

12. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice is the principal policymaking body of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice and one of the two governing bodies of UNODC. The Commission plays a vital role in the attainment of the Goals and acts as the preparatory body for the Congress. In addition, the declarations adopted by the Congress are transmitted through the Commission and the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly. The activities, discussions and decisions taken by the Commission directly translate into tangible results related to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

13. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Member States have regularly expressed their views on, inter alia, specific topics related to the Goals, in the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and other bodies serviced by UNODC, including during the general debate. Moreover, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice has oriented its policymaking efforts towards contributing to the realization of the Goals while recognizing the interconnected nature of the Goals and targets, thus supporting the efforts to achieve global sustainable development. More information can be found on the dedicated web page of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.<sup>3</sup>

14. The agenda of regular sessions of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice includes a standing item entitled "Contributions by the Commission to the work of the Economic and Social Council, in line with General Assembly resolution 68/1, including follow-up to and review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which offers an opportunity for discussing views on the best way to contribute, within the mandate of the

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<sup>3</sup> See [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/SDG/commissions-2030.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/SDG/commissions-2030.html).

Commission, to the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda and to support the review of its implementation.

15. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice also provides substantive input at the annual high-level political forum on sustainable development, held under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, where it reports on its contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

16. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice has also continuously strengthened horizontal cooperation with other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, namely, its sister commission the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, through the organization of joint events and participation in related meetings that contribute to the attainment of the Goals.

17. Advancing the implementation of the 2030 agenda has also been the overarching theme during special events jointly held by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the occasion of visits to Vienna by the President of the General Assembly, most recently in August 2019.

18. Special attention has been given to mainstreaming a gender perspective in the work of the Commissions, with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs joining efforts to promote gender-inclusive language in their work, including through the “Let’s talk gender” meetings held by the Secretariat.<sup>4</sup>

19. An analysis of the substantive resolutions negotiated within the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice since 2016 illustrates its contribution to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, as shown below:

(a) In 2016, the Commission demonstrated its policymaking commitment to sustainable development by negotiating, inter alia, resolution 25/3, on strengthening crime prevention in support of sustainable development, including sustainable tourism, in direct agreement with: the efforts to be undertaken by UNODC under its specific mandate; Goal 16 (with its focus on peace, justice and strong institutions) and, more specifically, the manner in which tourism works as an enabler to promote tolerance and understanding of other cultures in situations of both peace and conflict; and target 8.9 (By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products);

(b) During its twenty-sixth session, held in 2017, the Commission reiterated the previous commitment to advancing the rule of law by adopting resolution 26/3, on mainstreaming a gender perspective into crime prevention and criminal justice policies and programmes and into efforts to prevent and combat transnational organized crime, which focused on ensuring a stronger stand and orienting the policies and programmatic work of UNODC towards the achievement of Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) through the recognition that women and girls played a crucial role in the achievement of peace and security, respect for human rights and the promotion of more inclusive societies;

(c) Examples of more recent resolutions include the draft resolution on education for justice and the rule of law in the context of sustainable development, adopted by the General Assembly in 2019 as resolution 74/172, which directly relates to Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), and the draft resolution on enhancing transparency in the judicial process, adopted the same year by the Economic and Social Council as resolution 2019/22.

<sup>4</sup> See [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/SDG/commissions-2030\\_implementation-of-sdg-5.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/SDG/commissions-2030_implementation-of-sdg-5.html).

20. It is also worth highlighting General Assembly resolution [73/183](#) of 17 December 2018, on enhancing the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which had been negotiated by the Commission at its twenty-seventh session, in May 2018. The resolution strengthens the contribution of the Commission to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The resolution strengthens the contribution of the CCPCJ to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In that resolution, the Assembly encouraged Member States to consider including information on the implementation of Goal 16, also in relation to the work of the Commission, in their voluntary national reviews for consideration by the high-level political forum on sustainable development during its meeting held in 2019 and to sharing relevant information contained in those voluntary national reviews with the Commission during its twenty-eighth session.

21. With a view to implementing General Assembly resolution [73/183](#), the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice discussed at its twenty-eighth session, in May 2019, a conference room paper (E/CN.15/2019/CRP.4) containing: (a) information on the voluntary national reviews, including the main messages relevant to Goal 16, that had been submitted by Member States pursuant to that resolution; and (b) a compilation of those main messages of the reviews of 2016, 2017 and 2018 that were publicly available and contained a reference to the implementation of Goal 16.

22. In its resolution [73/183](#), the General Assembly also invited Member States and other stakeholders to provide the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, through its secretariat, with views on how the Commission could contribute to the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular Goal 16. To that end, another conference room paper was submitted at the twenty-eighth session (E/CN.15/2019/CRP.1), which contained contributions received from Member States and United Nations entities. The conference room paper included: (a) an overview of suggestions made on how the Commission could contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular Goal 16; and (b) information on action taken towards meeting the targets of Goal 16.

23. Furthermore, a series of brown-bag lunches were organized before the twenty-eighth session with a view to facilitating the discussion on the targets and indicators of Goal 16 relevant to the work of the Commission.<sup>5</sup> The topics discussed included crime prevention, violence against women and girls, victims of homicide, human trafficking, violence against children, the rule of law, access to justice, organized crime, arms trafficking, corruption and terrorism. In the framework of the brown-bag lunch series, participants had the opportunity to receive information on the work of UNODC in the respective areas and to discuss ways in which that work supported the implementation of Goal 16.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> In particular targets 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere), 16.2 (End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children), 16.3 (Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all), 16.4 (By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime), 16.5 (Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms) and 16.A (Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime).

<sup>6</sup> See United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Twenty-eighth session: 20 to 24 May 2019, "Brown-bag lunches on SDG16 implementation". Available at [www.unodc.org/](http://www.unodc.org/).

## **IV. Role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and specifically Goal 16**

24. With the mandate to make the world safer from drugs and crime, UNODC is committed to supporting Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which brings together various elements into a comprehensive and forward-looking framework and explicitly recognizes the interrelationship between sustainable development and the fight against drugs and crime, including corruption and terrorism. The 2030 Agenda does not replace or supersede the core mandates of UNODC, but helps the Office to pinpoint and communicate what it does in the larger context of national and global priorities on sustainable development. UNODC therefore provides Member States with meaningful support for meeting the Goals.

### **A. Sustainable Development Goal 16 in focus**

25. The 2030 Agenda brings together various cross-cutting elements (peace, respect for the rule of law, human rights, gender equality and development) into a comprehensive and progressive framework. While explicitly recognizing the interrelationship between sustainable development, safety, justice and transparency, it also acknowledges the interconnectedness between Goal 16 and other Goals.

26. The 2030 Agenda reflects a shift in the global thinking of the international community by acknowledging the importance of cross-cutting issues, such as the rule of law and fair, effective and humane justice systems, as enablers for development in countries of all income levels. Concerted, holistic and inclusive efforts supported by multi-stakeholder and multisectoral partnerships are needed to promote coherent and integrated global, regional and national policies in the areas of crime prevention and criminal justice in the global development agenda.

27. Given the aforementioned cross-cutting nature of the 2030 Agenda, it is important when supporting its implementation to bear in mind the solid connection, complementarity and mutually reinforcing nature of the rule of law, security and sustainable development. Such interconnection increasingly requires greater coordination and cooperation among various stakeholders, such as Governments, national agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, as well as among United Nations entities.

28. As mentioned above, the advancement of the 2030 Agenda depends on various factors, such as the creation of a coherent policymaking framework, the development and consolidation of mechanisms that promote human rights, the development of inclusive and participatory frameworks for key stakeholders, the fostering of public-private partnerships and the involvement of data generators to address gaps in knowledge and ensure the collection of inclusive data and proper data disaggregation.

29. Goal 16 is divided into three main pillars: peace, justice and institutions. The focus on those pillars reflects the efforts undertaken worldwide in the areas of crime prevention and criminal justice and is aimed at further consolidating global action to achieve the targets under Goal 16 and those under related Goals.

30. With regard to the pillar of peace, it is important to note that initiatives to meet Goal 16 focus on a variety of population groups in fragile and conflict-affected societies with a view to aiding in building and maintaining peace processes. To that end, UNODC, in partnership with other United Nations entities and relevant stakeholders, seeks to create inclusive programmes and projects for reducing violence and promoting peace at the national, regional and international levels. The UNODC human impact series accessible on the UNODC website<sup>7</sup> presents concrete examples

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<sup>7</sup> Available at [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/sustainable-development-goals/unodc-human-impact-series.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/sustainable-development-goals/unodc-human-impact-series.html).

of such programmes and projects. The website also contains a regularly updated overview of UNODC tools and publications relevant to the Goals.<sup>8</sup>

31. Peace should be broadly construed as individuals feeling safe from violence and harm in their communities, and not merely as the absence of violence in an objective sense, or indeed, the absence of war. This definition of peace highlights the importance of crime prevention and access to effective and humane criminal justice systems.

32. It is evident that strong institutions are vital to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and, indisputably, to preventing crime and ensuring justice. In order to have strong institutions, Member States need to create inclusive governance structures, which ensure responsive and participatory governance mechanisms to uphold the rule of law. Technology has become an important tool in building institutional capacity. In addition, the voices of traditionally marginalized groups, such as young people and women, are increasingly given a seat at the table in order to create more institutions that reflect and address the needs of all.

33. Strengthening the accountability of the criminal justice system is a prerequisite to promote peace, justice and strong institutions for sustainable development. In support of this, for example, under its Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration and as a result of a nearly two-year-long preparatory process during which approximately 4,000 judges were consulted, UNODC launched in 2018 the Global Judicial Integrity Network as a platform to provide assistance to judiciaries in strengthening judicial integrity and preventing corruption in the justice system. The Network contributes to the achievement of Goal 16, as effective, accountable and impartial judiciaries are key to respect for the rule of law and to justice.

34. New information and communications technology and traditional and social media all have an important role to play in the promotion of the rule of law by raising awareness of issues related to the rule of law and crime prevention and criminal justice. Notwithstanding the nature of technological developments as a double-edged sword, such advancements may provide a wide array of stakeholders, including Governments, the public, young people and civil society, with the opportunity to foster transparency and public trust.

## **B. Sustainable Development Goal 16 within the wider spectrum of all relevant Goals of the 2030 Agenda**

35. The present section contains additional information on other Goals of the 2030 Agenda that are related to Goal 16 and on tools and resources developed and work undertaken by UNODC towards their implementation. This information complements that provided in section A above.

### **1. Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere)**

36. The connection between Goal 1 and Goal 16 lies in the advancement of the rule of law through the promotion of inclusive growth and the consequent eradication of poverty and hunger. Both poverty and hunger disturb the social fabric and are aggravated by manifestations of inequality, discrimination and lack of security in societies (see [A/68/202](#) and [A/68/202/Corr.1](#)). To combat poverty in its different dimensions, it is necessary to ensure that communities have a solid institutional structure based on the rule of law.

37. The alleviation of poverty also relates to Goal 16, and more specifically target 16.3, with regard to, for example, access to legal aid. In societies where poverty prevails, the efficiency of the criminal justice system is seriously compromised in at least two dimensions: first, individuals face difficulties in getting access to legal aid

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<sup>8</sup> Available at [www.unodc.org/documents/SDGs/UNODC\\_Tools\\_and\\_Publications\\_Relevant\\_to\\_SDGs\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/SDGs/UNODC_Tools_and_Publications_Relevant_to_SDGs_FINAL.pdf).



if it is not provided free of charge; second, high levels of poverty increase vulnerability to bribery and may therefore compromise the integrity of criminal justice system professionals.

38. The prevention of manifestations of violence is at the core of Goal 16, and although violence occurs in poor and rich countries alike, it is exacerbated by manifestations of poverty within the communities and has an impact on millions of people around the world, including the most vulnerable, such as women and children.

## 2. Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages)

39. A holistic approach to Goal 3 is needed to ensure that its targets are fulfilled in their different dimensions, from child and maternal health to the specific targeting of several diseases, which makes the linkage between Goal 3 and Goal 16 evident. This linkage lies in the nature of institutional policies on crime prevention, which indirectly address the well-being of individuals, namely policies related to employment, education, health, housing and urban planning, poverty, social marginalization and exclusion (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/13).

40. With a view to ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being, UNODC supports a balanced public health-oriented approach to the world drug problem, with a view to ending discrimination against people who use drugs and strengthening access to comprehensive, evidence-based services for the prevention of drug use and the treatment of substance use disorders. Together with the World Health Organization and the International Narcotics Control Board, UNODC supports Member States in the implementation of the three international drug control conventions,<sup>9</sup> which constitute, with other relevant instruments, the keystone of the international drug control system, with the ultimate goal of ensuring the health and welfare of humankind. With Sustainable Development Goal 3, Member States recognized the connection between substance use, health and development, committing themselves to strengthening drug prevention and treatment.

41. Institutional policies in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice affect the well-being of individuals, in particular those who use drugs and those imprisoned, directly and in multiple ways, for example, by guaranteeing health-care treatment for imprisoned mothers and their children or determining access to health care for individuals who use drugs or imprisoned individuals who suffer from specific diseases, such as diabetes, or live with HIV. By targeting those specific issues, crime prevention and criminal justice measures addressing the reduction of maternal and child mortality, access to universal reproductive health care, access to essential medicines and the prevention of drug abuse will directly contribute to the achievement of Goal 3.

42. The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) define specific requirements to be implemented by prison administrations to ensure that prisoners have access to the same standard of care as the rest of the population, without discrimination. UNODC assists countries in building and reforming their prison systems<sup>10</sup> and in implementing non-custodial sanctions and measures in compliance with human rights principles and United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice.

43. In this regard, UNODC carries out crucial work in promoting justice for children by:

(a) Providing technical assistance in the form of needs assessments in the area of child justice reform, and legal assistance and legal advisory services to review legislative and regulatory frameworks, identify gaps and recommend action to comply

<sup>9</sup> The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1954 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

<sup>10</sup> For more information on assistance provided by UNODC in the area of prison reform, see [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/criminaljusticereform.html#prisonreform](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/criminaljusticereform.html#prisonreform).

with the requirements of the international legal framework in the area of justice for children;

(b) Conducting research and analysis on children in contact with the law, as a basis for the development of prison reform strategies and policies;

(c) Developing national and local professional capacities and skills relevant to child justice reform.<sup>11</sup>

### **3. Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all)**

44. Children and young people play a key role in implementing the 2030 Agenda. The delivery of quality education is an element crucial to the achievement of all Goals. Goal 4 bears a specific connection to Goal 16 in what relates to the promotion of peace, justice and strong institutions and, consequently, the prevention of crime and reinforcement of the rule of law. The provision of quality education on topics related to the rule of law will act as a key enabler of Goal 16 by empowering children and young people to be agents of positive change in their communities.

45. Institutional capacity also plays a vital role in promoting quality education. The specific targets under Goal 16 that address the development of accountable institutions, the enforcement of policies of non-discrimination, the reduction of corruption and the strengthened participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance bear direct linkages to the achievement of Goal 4 by guaranteeing that children from all backgrounds, including those from developing countries, are literate and have access to primary and secondary education for free. Accountable institutions, in turn, will contribute to the achievement of Goal 4 by providing adequate education facilities, enhancing the capacity of teachers, ensuring access to technical and tertiary education for all and eliminating gender disparities at all levels of education. Many children first encounter public institutions when they start school, which in turn plays an important role in the development of the values and skills that underpin a culture of respect, non-violence and fairness. As such, school plays a vital role in equipping the new generation of change-makers with the knowledge needed to understand the concepts of justice, democracy, human rights and the rule of law with a view to strengthening their respect for public institutions.

46. In this regard, UNODC has been spearheading efforts to promote education on the rule of law through its Education for Justice initiative.<sup>12</sup> The initiative seeks to prevent crime and promote a culture of lawfulness through activities designed for primary, secondary and tertiary education. These activities help educators to teach the next generations how to better understand and address problems that can undermine the rule of law and to encourage students to become actively engaged in their communities and future professions in that regard.

### **4. Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls)**

47. Gender equality and the promotion of peace, justice and strong institutions are closely related. Empowering women and girls around the world and providing them with equal opportunities require the elimination of the root causes of discrimination, the strengthening of protection, support and redress mechanisms for women who are victims of domestic violence, the enhancement of women's participation in decision-making and public life, universal access to reproductive health-care services and guaranteeing that women have equal rights to economic resources, among others.

48. These targets under Goal 5 may only be achieved through an integrated approach with Goal 16 which, in turn, promotes the prevention of violence and addresses crimes affecting women and girls. At the institutional level, change is also required through the establishment of targeted policies addressing non-discrimination, inclusive

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<sup>11</sup> For more information on assistance provided by UNODC in the area of justice for children, see [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/childrensvictimswomensissues.html#children](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/childrensvictimswomensissues.html#children).

<sup>12</sup> See [www.unodc.org/e4j/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/e4j/index.html).

decision-making and capacity-building to prevent violence, combat terrorism and crime and promote the rule of law.

49. The Doha Declaration specifically refers to the global commitment by Member States to endeavouring to mainstream a gender perspective into their criminal justice systems.

50. Violence against women and girls generates high and widespread costs in the areas of justice, health, social services, education, business and employment, as it hinders inclusiveness and equality and the full implementation of Goal 5. UNODC supports Member States in achieving gender parity and eliminating violence against women and, consequently, in reaching the targets of Goal 5, by providing technical assistance to facilitate access to justice for women and girls, support the development of legislation and policies that protect their rights and prevent, as well as respond, to violence against women and girls,<sup>13</sup> and develop institutional and professional capacities relevant to respect for the rule of law.

51. Furthermore, UNODC monitors violence against women by collecting data from Member States<sup>14</sup> and assisting them with the conduct of surveys on that issue. These can provide important information for addressing violence against women, including their intentional killing.

## **5. Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all)**

52. Corruption has a profound negative effect on economic growth. It also hampers national, regional and international efforts to implement specific measures to develop accountable institutions, as advanced under Goal 16. The reduction of corruption that derives from the effective development of accountable institutions will, in turn, benefit and contribute to the achievement of many of the targets under Goal 8, namely the promotion of inclusive and sustained economic growth. Reference is to be made in this regard to the technical assistance provided by UNODC, upon request, to prevent and address corruption.<sup>15</sup>

53. Regrettably, human trafficking still affects individuals worldwide, of whom many are women and children.<sup>16</sup> The fact that human trafficking may result in forced labour evidences once again the close connection between Goals 8 and 16. Effective crime prevention and criminal justice strategies must be implemented to guarantee that individual citizens, in particular those most vulnerable, such as women and children, are protected from violence, discrimination, forced labour and child labour.<sup>17</sup>

54. The enhancement of inclusive decision-making processes at all levels as aimed for under target 16.7 is directly connected to the protection of labour rights. The capacity of national institutions to provide both individuals and communities, “without leaving no one behind”, with access to instruments, frameworks and remedies that support and foster decent employment, fair remuneration and non-discrimination at the workplace rests on the responsiveness and transparency of decision-making processes at all levels. Participatory and inclusive processes aid in reducing inequalities and reinforce the resilience of institutions and societies to

<sup>13</sup> For more information on assistance provided by UNODC in addressing violence against women and girls, see [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/childrensvictimswomensissues.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/childrensvictimswomensissues.html).

<sup>14</sup> See UNODC, *Global Study on Homicide 2019: Gender-related Killing of Women and Girls* (Vienna, 2019), booklet 5.

<sup>15</sup> For more information on the work of UNODC against corruption and economic crime, see [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/).

<sup>16</sup> For more information on the work of UNODC against trafficking of persons, see [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/).

<sup>17</sup> See in this regard, as part of the UNODC human impact series, the story on “Communities and local authorities in Senegal work together to end child begging”. Available at [www.unodc.org/](http://www.unodc.org/).

socioeconomic crises, as they increase the agility of institutional mechanisms and their capability to uphold and expand labour rights.

#### **6. Goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries)**

55. Equality and non-discrimination are at the core of international human rights standards. Reiterating this notion, the 2030 Agenda further sets specific targets to reduce inequalities within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status, and by ensuring equal opportunity and reducing inequalities of outcome, among others. These two targets are associated with targets 16.3, aimed at ensuring equal access to justice for all, and 16.B, aimed at the promotion and enforcement of non-discriminatory laws and policies.

56. Concerted efforts to meet these targets are indispensable. The persisting inequalities among and within Member States impede economic growth, widen the income gap, leave large parts of the populations disenfranchised and alienated and inevitably contribute to the propagation of crime, thus seizing opportunities from those most vulnerable.

57. Organized crime takes advantage of weak institutions and vast regional disparities to engage in human trafficking, the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in firearms and counterfeit goods. All these exacerbate discrimination, insecurity and inequality in societies, greatly prejudicing their ability to achieve higher levels of regional and international cohesion and their ability to achieve prosperity, welfare and overall economic sustainability.

58. Comprehensive measures are needed to eliminate inequalities and discrimination and bridge the gap between developing and developed countries. These measures need to be implemented in conjunction with crime prevention and criminal justice strategies that increase institutional preparedness to address, prevent and suppress discrimination and inequality adequately.

#### **7. Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable)**

59. The increasing and unprecedented urban growth witnessed in recent decades (see [E/2017/66](#)) demand concerted approaches to crime prevention and criminal justice policies in urban settings to enable the sustainable development of cities. The principle of “leaving no one behind” requires that such policies take into consideration the poor and most vulnerable in society, which can be achieved by meeting target 16.7, which is aimed at ensuring participatory decision-making at all levels.

60. The Doha Declaration specifically considers the emergence of new forms of crime and acknowledges the links between urban crime and organized crime in specific regions that may hamper social inclusion and employment opportunities, in particular for adolescents and young adults.

61. In support of this, UNODC contributes to making the 2030 Agenda relevant to urban policymakers and planners at the local level. In this regard, its work on urban safety and good governance<sup>18</sup> is aimed at making urban environments safe, inclusive and resilient by addressing the root causes of violence, crime and insecurity. Such an approach ensures that crime prevention and measures for community safety are tailored to take into account the interface between global crime threats and local vulnerabilities.

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<sup>18</sup> See [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/urban-safety/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/urban-safety/index.html).

**8. Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) and Goal 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss)**

62. The international community recognizes the utmost urgency of responding to climate change. Coordinated actions proposed under several international framework agreements, such as the Paris Agreement, require strong measures by national, regional and international institutions to protect the environment, preserve the terrestrial and marine ecosystems and ensure the responsible and sustainable exploitation of natural resources.

63. At the same time, various forms of criminal acts, including maritime crime (maritime pollution, illegal fishing and the overexploitation of maritime resources), wildlife crime (poaching and trafficking in protected and endangered species), illicit forest exploitation and the unsanctioned or irresponsible exploitation of natural resources, such as minerals, petroleum and gas, pose a significant threat and profoundly undermine international efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change.

64. Empowering national and international bodies dealing with crime prevention and criminal justice to combat environmental crime and related offences is thus necessary to ensure comprehensive and coordinated responses to those threats, while respect for the rule of law becomes a prerequisite to build such capacity.

65. Through its Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime, UNODC continues to lead the work on enhancing national legislative frameworks, law enforcement, prosecutorial and judicial capacity, fostering international cooperation, developing innovative solutions in forensics and conducting research on global wildlife crime. Through this global work, UNODC supports the implementation of Goal 15, in particular target 15.7.

66. UNODC also works to counter illegal logging and timber trafficking by strengthening national law enforcement, prosecutorial and judicial capacity, enhancing anti-corruption measures, strengthening legislation and international cooperation and supporting timber identification methods, among others.

67. Clandestine laboratories processing and manufacturing plant-based and synthetic drugs require significant quantities of precursors and other chemicals, many of which are hazardous to human health and potentially damaging to the environment. These chemicals are often disposed of in urban sewage systems, urban areas or, in the case of plant-based drugs processed in rural areas, the natural environment, including rivers and forests. Taking into account the protection of the environment in relation to drug cultivation and eradication supports the implementation of Goal 15.

68. Furthermore, the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”, held in 2016, makes specific reference to the cultivation and eradication of illicit substances and its impact on the environment, with Member States committing to ensuring that measures to prevent the illicit cultivation of and to eradicate plants containing narcotic and psychotropic substances take due account of the protection of the environment. UNODC supports Member States in addressing existing gaps and drug-related socioeconomic challenges through the implementation of long-term, comprehensive and sustainable development-oriented and balanced drug control policies and viable economic alternatives, in particular alternative development, in areas and populations affected by or vulnerable to the illicit cultivation of drug crops, with a view to its prevention, reduction and elimination.

**9. Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development)**

69. The achievement of peace and justice and the consolidation of strong institutions lie at the core of Goal 16. The complex nature of those tasks dictates the need for

coordinated action at the national, regional and international levels. This includes forming a shared understanding and fostering long-lasting partnerships, as well as enabling a broader participation of stakeholders in efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Isolated action would likely fall short of the potential achievements of Member States in addressing transnational challenges to peace, justice and institutional integrity, such as organized crime, corruption and money-laundering.

70. UNODC collaborates with non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, such as academia, thus promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships at the international level and achieving a sustainable impact at the national level, to improve policy coherence and, consequently, the effectiveness of national, regional and international efforts to advance the implementation of its mandate.

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