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CRIME TRENDS AND CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGIES

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CONTENTS

<u>Chapter</u>		<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION		1 - 6	3
I.	CRIME TRENDS	7 - 53	5
A.	THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRIME TREND MEASUREMENTS	7 - 33	5
	1. The analysis of crime trends	7 - 10	5
	2. Data collection	11 - 17	6
	3. Existing alternative data sources	18 - 19	8
	4. New techniques for data collection	20 - 25	9
	5. Data analysis and dissemination	26 - 30	11
	6. Forecasting and prediction	31 - 33	12
B.	THE CURRENT SITUATION	34 - 55	13
	1. Background	34 - 37	13
	2. Regional summary	38 - 55	15
II.	CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGIES	56 - 83	21
	INTRODUCTION	56 - 57	21
A.	CRIME PREVENTION PLANNING: THEORY AND CURRENT PRACTICE	58 - 81	21
	1. Intersectoral planning	58 - 67	21
	2. Specific techniques of crime prevention	68 - 78	24
	3. Evaluation of impact of crime prevention strategies	79 - 81	28
B.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	82 - 83	30

INTRODUCTION

1. There has been a growing awareness among Member States of all regions of the degree to which the crime problem impedes progress towards the attainment of an acceptable quality of life for all people. The growing importance of criminality and its impact on society have repeatedly been acknowledged by the United Nations Congresses on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The Fourth Congress emphasized the fact that the problem of criminality was becoming more, not less, serious. ^{1/} The Fifth Congress emphasized that criminality exists in all countries and that in many of them, it has a pernicious effect, thereby impeding efforts to achieve more wholesome social and economic development. ^{2/} Furthermore, the Fifth Congress stressed that, in view of the new forms and dimensions of criminality, a strengthening of national and international action for its prevention and containment was required.

2. The inclusion of this topic was strongly recommended by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its fourth session. ^{2/} The Committee suggested that the topic should not only emphasize international co-operation in this field, but should also deal comprehensively with the formulation of strategies and policies at the national level. The Economic and Social Council ^{3/} subsequently added the item "New perspectives in crime prevention and criminal justice and development: the role of international co-operation". Some issues which would have been discussed under this heading are now more appropriately considered under the new agenda item.

3. At all the preparatory meetings for the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, the same high priority was accorded to this topic. Crime has continued to become a matter of growing concern in many countries, and ever increasing public resources are being used to control criminality. Research and planning, as well as the day-to-day operations of the criminal justice agencies, have become more sophisticated and intricate. There are economic and social reasons for ensuring that efforts in crime prevention are both as efficient and as effective as possible.

4. Crime prevention as a distinct area of concern has developed with the change in the perception of criminality. Crime is no longer regarded as a problem affecting only a small proportion of society, but a factor which affects all persons. As a result, the rehabilitation of the convicted offender has become but

^{1/} Reports of the Fourth and Fifth United Nations Congresses on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Kyoto, Japan, 1970 and Geneva, Switzerland, 1975, respectively (United Nations publications, Sales Nos. E.71.IV.8 and E.76.IV.2).

^{2/} Report of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control on its fourth session, held at New York, from 21 June to 2 July 1976 (E/CN.5/536).

^{3/} A/35/3/Add.36 [Pt.I], p. 10.

one of several factors to be considered in the general context of crime prevention. At the same time, the science of planning in all sectors has developed and the effect of each sector on the others has become more appreciated, and, thus, intersectoral policy planning has come to be recognized as a necessity. The main components required for any policy planning are: (a) a statement of the present position; (b) a description of the desired objective; (c) a specific statement of the steps necessary to achieve this goal (the strategy); (d) a retrospective component which allows for the evaluation of what has already been attempted. 4/

5. All these operations require information. A data base is essential. Under ideal conditions, such a base would consist of a complete set of reliable and valid quantitative records, that is, the statistics covering all relevant planning decisions and processes. In general, however, such complete sets of data regarding crime and criminal justice operations are not available. 5/ If the provision of information in the future is to be improved, some of the main methodological difficulties, which have often been ignored, must be considered, including the need for frequent recourse to substitute sources of data.

6. Crime prevention planning, therefore, requires an information base which can illustrate the changes taking place over time, as well as in respect of different crime types. The traditional view of crime statistics as giving a picture of reality at a particular point in time is now widely discredited. 6/ The new focus on trends both avoids some of these scientific and technical problems and also provides the flexibility needed for use in crime prevention planning. It allows also for a more distinct emphasis on the various types of offences or offenders as distinguished from criminality in general. In brief, crime trends and crime prevention strategies can be studied profitably when the two are regarded as intrinsically interwoven.

4/ For further details, see also W. Clifford Planning Crime Prevention (Lexington, Mass., Lexington Books, 1976).

5/ See further, M. Wolfgang, "Working Group on New Methods of Compiling Criminal Statistics", Council of Europe, European Committee on Crime Problems. For detailed discussion and demonstration of the difficulties involved in the official compilation of statistics, see also the Annual Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, especially the appendices. United States Department of Justice, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, Washington, D.C.

6/ See also C. F. Welford, "Crime and the dimensions of nations", International Journal of Criminology and Penology, vol. 2, No. 1.

I. CRIME TRENDS

A. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRIME TREND MEASUREMENTS

1. The analysis of crime trends

7. Internationally, at both regional and global levels, the measurement and recording of crime trends will provide insight into changes which may subsequently occur elsewhere. If indicators of criminal activity are linked with other social and economic indicators of the quality of life, positive and negative, a more complete understanding of the complex and changing nature of crime is possible. Trend analysis is reliable only when the measurement is applied consistently to the same characteristic. Changes in the legal definition of "crime", and changes in the procedure for reporting, recording and processing crime can both generate errors. False and misleading trends can be created also by taking as the period for analysis a period which covers only a part of the over-all change in pattern. For instance, a phenomenon may be cyclical in its nature and appearance. If only that period when the phenomenon is becoming increasingly frequent is examined and the other part of the cycle when it is waning is ignored, the result will be a trend of continuous growth, with no evidence that this will cease.

8. Definitions and operating procedures, as well as patterns of actual criminal behaviour, may change quite abruptly. The best defence against the errors this can induce is to use a short time frame. The second kind of error, mistaking a short-term or temporary trend change as being valid over a much longer period, then becomes more likely. For instance, the sudden introduction of a hard "crack-down" on certain crime types is likely to result in a temporary, but maybe only temporary, reduction in the level of that crime. Thus, any method for recording criminality should be able to detect and react to changes in definition as well as changes in actual "reality". Trends are made up of many variables which are interwoven with each other, and may be changing in opposite ways. If the measurement is then taken only on the composite of all variables, the different changes may distort the result in one direction or the other. Therefore, the trend which is being analysed must be the one which is important for the particular question in that context. An example will demonstrate this. Most criminologists agree that the age distribution of the population is important, because most crime, proportionately, is committed by the 15 to 24-year-old age group. Therefore, the fact that this age group is going to become a smaller (as in Western Europe) or larger (as in most Latin American countries) proportion of the population should significantly affect any predictions of future trends in these regions.

9. If care is taken with regard to technical details, however, there is no doubt that trend analysis will be an individual tool in both the planning and administration of justice, as well as in the research necessary for the evaluation and improvement of this sector. The obligation of the United Nations to continue to investigate further was made clear from the replies received from Governments to the questionnaire on which the World Crime Survey is based.

10. If a data-gathering system capable of rigorous international comparison is to be constructed, this will necessitate considerable changes in and additions to most present systems. For crime trends are most informative when measured relative to various other socio/economic indicators which are also in time-series form. ^{7/} Differences in the crime and criminal justice classification systems in different countries will continue to pose difficulties, which will have to be overcome in order to create a specific frame of reference for the exchange of experience between countries. Such exchanges have usually turned out most fruitful when they are focussed on clearly demarcated topics. The construction of a data base adequate for internal use and comparative analysis requires some discussion. ^{8/}

2. Data collection

11. Data can be collected by administrators and managers, by researchers and by planners. It is likely that each of these groups will have a different set of priorities in mind when deciding to collect the data. Thus, the choice of objectives would govern the collection of data, subject to the constraints of available resources. ^{9/} Data collected for no overtly specified purpose, or for a purpose other than that for which it was used, may have no utility, or lead to improper conclusions. For instance, data could be interpreted rightly or wrongly by administrators and management to guide or defend policy; by researchers to aid or oppose management; or for scientific enquiry; or by those campaigning for an issue. In short, data are collected either to guide decisions, or to advance scientific knowledge. It is necessary, therefore, to specify in advance what these decisions or scientific problems are.

12. The types of data should be distinguished. First, there are data on the activities of the criminal justice system, usually prepared by the separate constituent agencies. Most traditional "official" criminal statistics come into this category. The number of arrests is as an indicator of police activities: only inferentially is it an indicator of the amount of crime, although obviously there is a close link between the two. The second category consists of data on criminal behaviour. This area, which includes self-report and victim studies, is still in

^{7/} For a wide range of social indicators, see Social Indicators: Preliminary Guidelines and Illustrative Series (Statistical Papers, Series M. No. 63, 1978) (United Nations publication, Sales No. ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/63 [78.XVII.8]). Studies in the Integration of Social Statistics: Technical Report (Studies in Methods, Series F: No. 24, 1978) (United Nations publication, Sales No. ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/24 [78.XVII.4]). Improving Social Statistics in Developing Countries: Conceptual Framework and Methods (Studies in Methods, Series F. No. 25, 1979) (United Nations publication, Sales No. ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/25 [79.XVII.12]).

^{8/} See the United Nations Statistical Series, op. cit., 8; also D. Glazer, Routinizing Evaluation (Rockville, Md., National Institute of Mental Health, 1975).

^{9/} On the difficulty of value-free research see William J. Chambliss and Robert B. Seidman, Law, Order and Power (Reading, Penn., Addison-Wesley, 1971).

an early stage of development. Thirdly, there are public perceptions of and beliefs about criminality, which may be quite different from what is actually recorded. 10/

13. The next question is "who will collect the data?" The priorities of those requesting the collection will determine the exact nature of what is requested. There may be a genuine difference of need between the various interested groups, but this difference can be minimized by prior consultations. The needs of the various user groups then can probably be met by a slight extension of or alteration to the data collection process. For instance, parole officials may need to count caseloads to revise their allocation of cases, whereas those researching the effectiveness of parole might be able to use those same data, if some measure of "outcome" is added. The needs of administration and management are largely met by accurate statistics of the activities of the criminal justice agencies, at least in the short term. If priorities change, the type of data needed to assess the potential value of the changes, or to evaluate the effect, will be different from that required for monitoring existing policies.

14. Many developing countries have built up national developmental statistical offices which have set high standards of data collection in many sectors. However, the criminal justice sector is rarely included in these. The responsibility for this probably lies with both the statistical offices and the criminal justice authorities. It is a question of which should be examined at the highest government level so that a much inferior criminal justice information system should not be allowed to emerge in the shadow of a national system of statistics in other fields. Rather, crime and criminal justice statistics should be incorporated into a national statistics at the same standard of rigour.

15. In some countries, a policy of not disclosing or restricting the dissemination of criminal justice data is adopted. In that situation, it is not possible to monitor the changes in the dimensions of criminality nor the progress of individuals as they are processed by the successive agencies of criminal justice. The lack of necessary comprehensive information systems could seriously hamper successful crime prevention planning and impede a general understanding of criminality. Without a data base or with limitations of its use, the operations of the criminal justice system may be seriously impeded.

16. Many countries are turning to multiple measures of crime and crime prevention rather than continue to seek any one "true" measure of criminality. While there is concern about the "dark figure" (unreported and undetected crime), data in this area are usually regarded now as different in nature from data obtained from more traditional sources. It does seem that present measures are too dependent upon

10/ See Richard L. Hensel and Robert A. Silverman, eds., Perception in Criminology (New York, Columbia University Press, 1975). See also R. Newman Graeme, Perceptions of Deviance (Rome, United Nations Social Defence Research Institute, 1979).

definitions of events, especially in terms of the official response to them. 11/ Perhaps only when new kinds of measures have been discovered and tested can the effectiveness of current or future crime prevention systems ultimately be tested.

17. The appropriate sources of data and the factors most important to record, have long been a source of difficulty. Traditional sources of data are agreed to be inadequate as a source of information on criminal activity, 12/ even though, when thoroughly and properly recorded, they are a great help in management. Therefore, the question of alternative sources has to be examined. These can be placed into two broad categories: (a) sources of available and usable existing data which may be stored in places other than the traditional archives, or (b) new sources of new data, produced for the purpose. The first has the advantage of being much cheaper and, therefore, attractive to all countries. But raw data may have to be produced to overcome the known and recognized weaknesses of data gathered by traditional methods in the criminal justice system. Extrapolation, trend analysis and forecasting over long time spans can be hazardous and unreliable. The differences in both crime classification and recording techniques between countries and cultures seem so deeply embedded that, at the international level, traditional approaches seem inherently limited. However, comparative criminal justice statistics are different in purpose and in type. Their function is more to guide and illuminate international exchanges of experience and the development of scientific knowledge rather than immediate management decisions.

3. Existing alternative data sources

18. Data exist in the records of agencies and organizations outside the criminal justice sector, such as health authorities, education authorities, the private security industry and insurance companies which might well be related to crime. Some attempts have been made in a few countries at exploring the interrelationship between a few of these variables, for instance, truancy and delinquency, the receipt of dead persons at hospitals and murder; but mostly the utilization of any such correlations remains unexplored. Some Western European studies suggest that traffic offences are well recorded and that traffic offences and offenders correlate positively with other, more traditional offences. But the records of traffic offences are not often held, or referred to, by the criminal justice sector. Such alternative measures of criminal behaviour are known as "proxy variables". They might well serve as useful indicators of the quality of life as it is affected by crime. Whenever an agency or an organization has some kind of regulatory function in society, some of its data could be relevant to crime analysis. There are many such regulatory agencies in both developed and developing countries. The data from them are especially important in assessing the growth of economic crime.

11/ See further David Greenberg, Mathematical Criminology (New Brunswick, N.J., Rutgers University Press, 1979).

12/ See for details, R. A. Carr-Hill and N. H. Stern, Crime, the Police and Criminal Statistics (London, Academic Press, 1979).

19. If data from the various planning and other supervisory agencies were known to be available to criminal justice agencies and their research branches, this in itself might form a deterrent to the commission of certain crimes. The Congress may wish to consider the way in which the monitoring function of national criminal justice systems can be amplified by reliance on data from agencies outside the criminal justice sector. Obviously, there are serious problems of confidentiality involved. Another problem often may be not one of inadequate regulations, but of the inadequate enforcement of these regulations through gaps in the reporting and monitoring procedures.

4. New techniques for data collection

20. The main problem with respect to the collection of new data is cost. Given the financial resources, the expertise is probably obtainable. Methodological testing is often expensive, but necessary, for any new technique. Very few research and development designs are completely right the first time. Experience, so far, has suggested that there is no feasible alternative to testing. There is a marked difference between techniques for generating and techniques for recording data. With the development of microprocessors and minicomputers, cheap, transferable technology could be available for many of the management functions of criminal justice agencies, although installation and training costs may make them not yet affordable.

21. The most widely known research method for exploring the extent of criminality has been that of victim surveys. ^{13/} They have now become an acceptable part of criminological study. The original methodological problems, such as the time period over which a respondent's memory is reliable, the tendency of respondents to lie or to use alternative definitions of what is a crime, etc. have largely been worked out. ^{14/}

22. The value of such studies for policy-making can be questioned. How can criminal justice practice be improved as a result of the knowledge which is acquired by these exercises? If official concern is with the quality of life in general and not just with the crimes which are recorded, there may be implications for such resource allocation questions as policing patterns. Evidence is growing that economic development affects the process of victimization, especially the criminal exploitation of young women. The potential for a subsequent criminal career makes this a serious social problem. Also, given that the product of the exercise was agreed to be scientifically valuable, does it represent a good return for the resources put into it? Clearly, this is an argument about cost as much as value and, therefore, about the degree to which the original extensive and expensive techniques should be employed or made less costly.

^{13/} For the history of this aspect of criminology, see I. Drapkin and Emilio Viano, Victimology (Lexington, Massachusetts, Lexington Books, 1974).

^{14/} For a methodological overview, see Richard F. Sparks, Hazel Genn and David Dodd, Surveying Victims (London, Wiley, 1977).

23. The other technique which has been utilized quite widely is that of the self-report study. In this, a sample of citizens is asked, under conditions of anonymity, to report what criminal acts they have committed during a given reporting period. The answers tend to be disconcertingly high in number even if the number of serious offences is usually quite low. The immediate practical value of this technique, except in the long term as a result of a better scientific understanding of the phenomenon of crime as a whole, is also still open to question. Likewise, it is not known to what extent such findings are applicable cross-culturally. The results do constitute a useful check on the official figures which may be used for trend analyses. Certainly these two techniques shed light on the well-known problem of the "dark figure" of criminality. The Congress may wish to discuss in detail the appropriateness and value of these techniques in the development of criminal justice data, especially in developing countries which are still building their statistical systems and so have the opportunity to introduce more constructive approaches without first having to dismantle established and entrenched systems.

24. The "draft figure" is an indicator of some kind of information decriminalization, but the policy implications of the discovery of hidden criminality are complex. If a high level of hidden criminality exists, and law enforcement agencies receive more resources and/or become more efficient in bringing hidden criminality to official attention, there will be a sudden large additional load thrown on the courts, prisons and aftercare authorities for which these agencies may not be prepared. 15/

25. Unrecorded criminality brought to light by research can be interpreted in different ways. It might have been attributed to public tolerance of relatively trivial nuisances. It might have been the result of public distrust of the police or a belief in their lack of effectiveness. To discover the extent of hidden criminality is a matter for research: to explain it is a question specific to the culture or community in question. In those communities where customary law prevails or co-exists alongside formal systems, the dark figure might best be measured by the cases known to the customary authorities. This is possible because in such areas it is usual for a victim to complain in some way which is socially measurable. On the other hand, in urban areas, the complaints of the victim might never be heard, because of the relative anonymity of the city. Trans-urban statistical comparisons are in some ways more reliable than transnational ones, for the dark figure may well be much higher for cities. The difficulties of theory and research method in respect of the dark figure, however, do not remove the responsibility from criminal justice systems for constructing as accurate an information basis as possible. This should include those proxy variables which are considered valuable and appropriate.

15/ This assumes a model of a limited, circulating criminal population. See further, A. Blumstein, J. Cohen and D. Nagin, eds., Deterrence and Incapacitation: Estimating the Effects of Criminal Sanctions on Crime Rates (Washington, D.C., The National Academy of Sciences, 1978). As for an alternative model, see David F. Greenberg, "The dynamics of oscillatory punishment processes", Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, vol. 60, No. 4.

5. Data analysis and dissemination

26. The construction of the data base, therefore, will require a compromise among those who may wish to use it. Management requires essential bookkeeping information, to monitor the operation of the agencies for which it is responsible, including the activities of the agency and the current status of those in its charge, as suspected or convicted criminals. The impact of the new information technology, which has been revolutionized in terms of reduction of cost, ease of use and simplicity of installation, cannot be over-emphasized. There is now much less reason why an agency should not know where everyone for whom it is responsible is, has been and is destined possibly to be and the reasons for these dispositions. As recently as the Fifth United Nations Congress in 1975, this statement could not have been made. Computers were large, complex, expensive machines, of which the use could not have been justified in many operations of the criminal justice process. This has changed dramatically and agency bookkeeping could very soon become continuously current, reliable and clear at a trivial cost. If the quality of justice depends partly upon the accuracy, completeness and accessibility of this bookkeeping information available, a major advance has become possible in the very recent past.

27. The exact nature of information collected and stored is decided by the requirements of the users. The more removed from everyday operations the users are, the more aggregated they will wish the information to be. Thus, there is, as yet, no agreed assessment of the extent to which local officials, including prison wardens, local police commanders and government administrators, and central government management officials and research and scientific workers can use a common data base. The agreement of all concerned on a common data base and collection model is a prerequisite to progress.

28. The question of the dissemination of data is an appropriate subject for the Congress. The tradition of secrecy concerning criminal justice data has been mentioned. An individual has a right to have his privacy, even with respect to a criminal record, respected. However, in aggregate, and with identifiers removed, criminal justice data are rarely considered sensitive. The transfer of information from one agency to another raises problems in individual cases, because of the right to privacy. But inefficiency, for which the suspect/prisoner eventually pays in personal inconvenience, is created by each agency using a differently based data set. This is the more so if data are crudely and clumsily recorded and if the agency is not willing to pass it on to the subsequent agency responsible for dealing with the individual. It is impossible to monitor the progress of individuals through the various statistics of the criminal justice system without some comprehensive information system. Again, the information revolution has completely altered the practical and feasible limits.

29. It should be one objective of the development of such data bases to assume the measurement of effectiveness across the criminal justice system. Some measures of police performance, ^{16/} such as clearance rates, have been in use for a long time

^{16/} See, for instance, W. Gay, Improving Police Productivity (Washington, D.C., Enforcement Assistance Administration, 1977).

in some countries. But the data have been scattered and recorded in such different ways that studies were possible on only a local basis but broader research topics involving police activity have been raised recently, ^{17/} including questions relating to the accountability and professional standing in both their own eyes and in those of the public. If such research is to develop further, the raw data to enable this must be built into the system from the start. The same is true for measures of efficiency of the courts, for instance, on time awaiting trial, the proportion of cases disposed other than by trial, the reasons for this, etc. Measurements concerning recidivism and other indicators of the effectiveness of penal sanctions would also be required. Data on all these activities of the criminal justice system would be a great aid in monitoring both crime trends and the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies, as well as the more efficient and rational management of the system itself.

30. The general move towards the construction of an index of interrelated socio-economic indicators which provide a more comprehensive measure of the quality of life is becoming recognized. One dimension which could be added to this is a record of "social harms", that is, negative indicators. Such surveys, which need not be any more expensive than other forms of social data gathering, would include the public fear of crime, the effect which the perceived level of crime has on the life style of the people and the public perception of the criminal justice system. ^{18/} These data, like those obtained from victim surveys, need not and will not be directly comparable with data gathered internally to and by the criminal justice system. The idea that some kind of combination of the two will reveal a "true" picture of criminality is probably misleading. But data generated externally to the system would have a quite different use from data generated internally; their function would be to provide information relating to a different set of decisions.

6. Forecasting and prediction

31. There may be less expensive approaches to investigating possible future crime trends. Such projects, combined with some quantitative monitoring of what does actually occur, would make possible scientific testing of hypotheses about crime and crime prevention. These studies would take the form of predictions on the part of various experts in the field, drawn from different disciplines and working as a group. These experts would be drawn from criminal justice practice, the scientific community and government administration. Such a method might also be a way of introducing senior officials and planners from other sectors to the problems of crime control, and stimulate concern and involvement. Rather than using a sophisticated methodology on an extended statistical time-series, for which the data may not be available, these methods are based on the forecasters' knowledge of a country's present demographic, economic, social and cultural situation; on their understanding of its problems, resources and traditions; and on the examples

^{17/} R. V. G. Clarke and J. M. Hough, The Effectiveness of Policing (Farnborough, England, Gower, 1980). This contains a full bibliography of recent development in the police field.

^{18/} Richard L. Hensel and Robert A. Silverman, op. cit.

provided by the history of their country and by the experience in other countries with similar conditions. Criminological forecasting could, therefore, gain from the findings of comparative criminology, anthropology, history, economics and the other social sciences.

32. These techniques of forecasting can be no more than outlined here. But some examples can be given which will illustrate alternative approaches to forecasting for policy development which are particularly useful in the absence of hard data. There is, first of all, what has been called "the art of conjecture". ^{19/} This process entails one expert describing a variety of possible future states and stating the rationale for those alternatives. A more complex version of this operation is scenario writing. An alternative set of futures is composed in combination by one or several criminologists working with some of the leading demographic and economic theoreticians and practitioners of the particular country in question. In a short time and at low cost, material of significant value in the development of criminal policy could be produced, whatever the current state of the data-collecting system of the criminal justice system of that country.

33. The "Delphi" ^{20/} and "Cross Impact" ^{21/} techniques are refinements of these methods. The Delphi approach is based on the assumptions that (a) educated guesses can provide valid information about the future, (b) the central tendency of such guesses is more valid than a dissenting opinion, (c) guesses by experts are more valid than guesses by non-experts, and (d) group dynamics affect the processing of guessing. Cross-impact analysis was designed as a development of Delphi. Its main feature is that it builds in a consideration of the way in which the various factors under consideration may affect each other in the future. In this approach, the idea that potential future events take place independently is rejected, while the possible interrelationships between these events is considered critical.

B. THE CURRENT SITUATION

1. Background

34. The preceding discussion of theoretical considerations has been made necessary by the reaction to the Discussion Guide ^{22/} at the various meetings. The following brief summary by region is intended to provide some factual material for

^{19/} B. P. Beckwith, The Next Five Hundred Years (Hicksville, Exposition Press, 1967).

^{20/} O. Helmes, Social Technology (New York, Basic Books, 1966).

^{21/} O. Helmes, "Problems in Futures Research-Delphi and Causal Cross-Impact Analysis", Futures, vol. 9, No. 1.

^{22/} "Discussion guide for regional preparatory meetings for the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders", 8 June 1977 (A/CONF.87/RM.1).

consideration by the Congress. In most cases, the explanations for given developments are remarkably comparable and have as their underlying common theme the social changes apparently induced by economic growth. If the pattern of economic growth within a country, or in the world at large, changes, perhaps the pattern and level of criminality might change also. The exact nature of the relationship, or even whether it can be scientifically demonstrated, is not yet known. Such changes should be carefully monitored if understanding of criminality is to be increased and if the ability of Governments to plan for the containment of crime is to develop.

35. An overview of the most remarkable similarities, therefore, precedes the review by regions. The data given with respect to each region should be considered along with the universal tendencies noted in the opening paragraphs. Generalizations about regions as a whole are difficult, and most of the following statements should be understood as applying to some, but not all, of the countries in a given region. Three types of crime are reported to be on the increase in most countries. First, offences involving violence of an organized, premeditated kind, committed usually either for substantial material gain or from a political motivation. Nearly all developing countries and the countries of Western Europe and North America report this phenomenon with particular emphasis. Secondly, there follow offences against property both state and individually owned. The evidence seems to support the hypothesis that the more there is to steal and damage, and less the individual is personally affected, the more prevalent is this type of crime. It seems to be an increasing problem in many urban areas. The third category is made up of contemporary versions of white-collar crime, including fraud, embezzlement, corruption, smuggling, black-market operations and crimes involving computer abuse. Again, thus may be a direct result of greater amounts of wealth, especially if it is distributed inequitably among the population. ^{23/} The rates of increase vary between countries, as would be expected; but the evidence that increased criminality is a function of a combination of social change and economic opportunity is very strong.

36. A possible interaction between social change and economic opportunity on the one hand and changes in the patterns of crime on the other is supported by data reported in the World Crime Survey and other recent studies of the phenomenon of female criminality. ^{24/} Thus, with increasing opportunities to advance in the world - and especially the economic sphere - which heretofore had been open only to men, women have also been exposed to the temptations to commit criminal acts which previously had been virtually the sole domain of men. This phenomenon has been reported for nearly all parts of the world which experienced the entrance of women into the economic mainstream, although in the case of some countries, it is not the quantity but only the quality of female crime which is changing.

^{23/} Secretariat working paper on the agenda item entitled "New perspectives in crime prevention and criminal justice and development: the role of international co-operation" and reports of the regional preparatory meetings.

^{24/} Freda Adler, The Incidence of Female Criminality in the Contemporary World (New York, New York University Press, 1980).

37. Details of the general crime situation up to the end of 1975 are to be found in the World Crime Survey. ^{25/} The main points are summarized here. The over-all recorded crime rate is lower for developing than for developed countries. In terms of offences, however, the difference was much more remarkable in two respects. In the developing countries as a whole, there was a much higher proportion of crimes against the person relative to crime against property. In contrast, in the developed countries there is a much higher rate of offences than offenders, which suggests that there are many offenders committing multiple or repeated offences. Most of the predictions made by the authorities responding to questionnaires upon which that report was based have been borne out. The United Nations will undertake a new quantitative survey in 1981 which is to cover the quinquennium 1976-1980.

2. Regional summary

38. For the African region, except for Mediterranean Northern Africa, there is a dearth of statistical data. Most of the information available for Africa south of the Sahara is descriptive. The shortage of data is made more difficult by the fact that the data which are available often come from different agencies in different countries. The statistics of the police force of one country may or may not be comparable with the statistics of the police force of another. But the comparison of police statistics from one country with the prison statistics of another provides no useful information. Technical assistance and skilled resources are desperately needed for this region.

39. With the emphasis on the confidentiality of data in some countries, a wide overview is very difficult to obtain in Africa as in the World over. One explanation of the apparent excessive caution regarding data is that there is constant pressure on the authorities to act in the face of what is perceived to be an increasing crime wave. Coupled with a rapid change of pattern of criminality, this demands more resources than the criminal justice agencies have at their disposal and gives the largely false impression that the authorities are not doing anything in response to the new threat. Thus, resources for rapid publication of data are even more scarce here than elsewhere.

40. In connexion with the introductory remarks concerning property offences involving violence, the counterproductive effect of new legislation in some areas may be noted. In order to reduce the incidence of armed robbery in one country, the Government introduced a law making the penalty for this offence death by firing squad. Rather than act as a deterrent, the result has been that armed robbery has become an organized operation, carried out by gangs, because these are determined not to be arrested; on account of the severe penalties, they murder - rather than have witnesses. They also aim only for valuable targets, so that the gain is worth the risk. The number of victims killed or injured and the amount of property or

^{25/} See the report of the Secretary-General on Crime Prevention and Control (A/32/199) of September 1977. Note that, owing to the bias in the sample of countries replying reported in para. 4 of the report, these points have to be regarded as tentative.

money involved, therefore, have both risen, although the over-all incidence of separate events may have fallen. Organized operations may now have become an established pattern. It has resulted also in an increase of attempts to corrupt or intimidate, or even kill, the law enforcement officials involved.

41. The main adverse effects, especially in terms of increased social alienation, of the increase in white-collar crime on society at large have been a marked increase in inflationary trends and in the social value attached to material goods. The explanations for this fall into two categories. The first refers to theories of cultural disharmony - the importation of foreign styles and values, especially through the media, which are not comparable to the basic traditions of the culture. The second consists of varieties of the often discussed effects of rapid socio-economic change in general, even though the rare research in this respect is inconclusive. The first approach emphasizes such factors as the traditional role of the giving and receiving of hospitality in pre-financial African society, which has made the transition to bribery and corruption both more easy and less remarked. The traditional display of wealth by the rich has additionally been an object of emulation by the poor. The second set of explanations refer to the serious and growing unemployment and underemployment; the drift to the towns and the consequent weakening of informal social controls; and the discrepancy between expectations aroused in many young people and the actual opportunities available to them to achieve these expectations. This is, as in most developing countries and regions, accentuated by the increasing proportion of the population which is passing through the most crime-prone age range. Crimes of opportunity, such as the transnational theft and illegal sale of motor vehicles or illegal currency transactions, become increasingly attractive. The coincidence in time of rapid economic growth and very high levels of inflation has increased both the rewards (and therefore willingness to take risks) and the level of financial gain considered adequate. All of these changes lead to a vicious upward spiral of cost and crime.

42. The comments on the size and cultural heterogeneity of the African region apply also to the region of Asia and the Pacific. There are the usual problems of a lack of quantitative data, but in this respect, there is a great deal of difference between countries within the region. No information at all is available for some countries in the region. With these qualifications, therefore, the following general comments can be made.

43. First, theft constitutes the major single category of crime. It is widely believed that the most serious problem, both in terms of the total value involved and the rate of increase, is with respect to economic and white-collar crime. Most of this goes either undetected or not successfully prosecuted in the courts and is linked closely with the new technology accompanying economic development. ^{26/} One

^{26/} See the working paper on the agenda item 8, entitled "New perspectives in crime prevention and criminal justice and development: the role of international co-operation", op. cit.

form of such criminality particularly prevalent in the region is food adulteration. The problem arises from complex regulations which are difficult to enforce and, therefore, easy to circumvent. There are many adverse social effects from the growth of such types of crime. Most seriously, the concept of social justice is seen to be violated; moreover, the observed discrepancy and inefficiency in law enforcement leads to the criminal justice system being held in lower public esteem. There is evidence within the region, as elsewhere, that the lower the public opinion of the police, the higher the dark figure of unreported crime.

44. If theft is primarily an urban phenomenon, robbery is primarily a rural one. This is partly due to tradition. Country bandits, often acting in small groups such as the dacoits of India, have existed throughout history; and the discrepancy of wealth is less concealed in the countryside. The great number of weapons, especially small firearms, which have come into illegal private possession as a result of the several large wars fought in the region in recent decades, has exacerbated the problem severely. Violence, as elsewhere, in fact, is becoming more organized.

45. Some violence appears to be connected with the use of or trading in drugs, and several countries report considerable success in specific campaigns against the use and trade in drugs. Indeed, some countries report an actual decrease in the level of violence over all and usually link this with the control of drugs.

46. The aggregate crime rate is reported as stable, with some fluctuations in about half the countries of the region and increasing significantly in the other half. The countries with stable rates usually attribute this to religion, especially in the Islamic countries, or strong informal social controls. Most notably the family and local community involvement are emphasized. A strong correlation is apparent between mobility and criminality. Terrorism for either political or ransom purposes, persists as a consistent feature in some countries. From the information available, however, it does not correlate clearly with other types of crime. Juvenile delinquency is also reported to be increasing in the circumstances where this would be predicted, namely, a changing age structure and high levels of unemployment and underemployment. The tentative nature of many of these observations can be overcome only by the development of a better data base, primarily through improved reporting and recording techniques.

47. The region of Western Europe, including North America and Australia and New Zealand, differs from most other regions, as is well known, in two major respects. First, it is made up primarily of industrialized, economically developed countries. There is also a mass of statistical data available, although attempts are consistently being made to improve the quality of it. A descriptive, generalized summary parallel to that for other regions is given here. The European regional meeting laid great emphasis on the desirability of developing alternative sources of information, such as victims' surveys and self-report studies.

48. The most notable feature in the region is that the rate of increase, over all, seems to be slowing down; even so, the total offence rate has more or less doubled since 1964. There are countries which deviate from this greatly. This trend may be artificial, deriving from changes in the construction of the data base. The

smaller and more homogeneous countries, which have been marked traditionally by a lower crime rate, have shown a more marked increase than the larger ones. To some degree, the difference between the countries has diminished, but it is still substantial. The explanations given for the continued increase are the change in the age structure and new opportunities and motivation for crime. A higher percentage of the population has entered the high crime risk age range, while the influence of informal social controls has declined; informal controls, for a variety of social psychological reasons, are thought to be as important as formal controls. Opportunities for economic and white-collar crime have particularly increased. The level of traditional street crime is expected to flatten out, or even decline, when the proportion of the population in the high risk band decreases, as it will over the next 15 or so years. On the other hand, the growth of economic crime is expected to continue as both business practices and official regulations become more complex and the latter, therefore, more difficult to enforce.

49. In those Eastern European socialist countries for which statistical data have been submitted, the most interesting pattern to be observed is that of the consistency of crime types within the countries. There is some difference between several of the countries with respect to rates of specific crime types. For instance, homicide rates vary between countries but within each country, over time the proportion of the total crime figure made up by that offence has changed very little. The rates of recidivism show the same characteristics. In general, the crime rates are lower than in Western Europe; only the proportions of the total made up by each crime category are comparable. The two areas of concern are crimes against property, especially state property and crime attributed to abuse of alcohol. ^{27/} Some evidence of organized economic crime, in the form of what are known as "affairs", connected with new technology and development, has been detected.

50. For the Latin American region, there is a dearth of statistical data which, while not as severe as in the African region, still renders most of the new evidence on crime patterns and trends subjective and impressionistic. Parallel also to the African and Asia and Pacific regions is the fact that, as a result of sheer geographical size and cultural complexity, this region is difficult to describe in aggregate terms. Thus, the following remarks can be regarded only as a very general summary. Not all points will apply to all countries within the region.

51. Most of the newer types of crime are more difficult to detect by traditional methods. On the other hand, better reporting and recording techniques would produce an apparent increase in the crime level which is not necessarily a "genuine" increase. The available figures suggest that an increase in the crime

^{27/} A. Adamski, "Notes on the relationship between the use of alcohol and criminality in the light of statistical data", Pánstwo i Prawo, vol. 4 (1978).

rate has accompanied economic development. Whether this is merely a coincidence or a genuine cause and effect relationship is unresolved and requires further research and study. 28/

52. The growth of economic crime parallels that in Africa. The details differed, owing to different complexities in the economic control structure. The precise forms taken by corruption, fraud and other forms of non-violent financial crime are, therefore, different. The complexity of the laws combined with a weak system of actual enforcement and implementation are important reasons why this phenomenon has grown so quickly. Powerful multinational trading organizations provide an example. These indulge in bribery and have the effect of squeezing out local small businesses, reducing the local industrial base and thus the capacity of the local community to be independent. Such activities could ultimately lead to higher unemployment. Small-scale corruption can be seen as the development of the centuries old and probably world-wide tradition of petty swindles among traders. In a modern society, there is much more money about and an enormously greater variety of transactions. Thus, traditional dishonesty can become much more serious in its effect.

53. Other new types of crime which could be curbed through expert help and guidance include crimes against the environment, including pollution of various sorts, kidnapping, especially for ransom and the theft of art treasures and other parts of the cultural heritage of a country. The particular types of violence most prevalent in Latin America have been extensively studied. 29/ The recent tendency toward greater organization of this violence echoes the same phenomenon in other regions. The growing use of violence by the police, especially against the poor and the unemployed "underclass" who had migrated from the countryside to shanty towns is a cause for concern. Again, a well-intentioned law, concerning the distribution of land, sometimes had an opposite effect from that intended. For it has led to the creation of a new class of peasants who are nominally richer, but who are much less secure in their land tenure and so tend to drift to the towns. This is a possible explanation for the observed increase in criminality in small-sized and medium-sized towns. Until recently, such an increase has been found only in the large conurbations. Violence by the police, of course, is bad in itself and also criminogenic in that it leads to the creation of a class of highly resentful, aggressive poor young men who are ready recruits for more organized criminal activities; in short, toward a more violent society in general.

54. The growth of smuggling and trafficking has been mentioned as nearly universal and on which an exchange of experiences by countries is thought to be potentially

28/ Again, for details see the working paper on agenda item 8 entitled "New perspectives in crime prevention and criminal justice and development: the role of international co-operation", op. cit.

29/ J. Rico "La violence en Amérique Latine", Annales Internationales de Criminologie, vol. 16, No. 2, and F. Ferracuti and N. Wolfgang The Subculture of Violence (London, Tavistock, 1967).

of great value. Likewise, increasing drug use, particularly by young people who see little opportunity to develop their lives, has been experienced by many countries. There is general agreement that juvenile delinquency is increasing, even allowing for the changing age-distribution of the population.

55. In sum, it may be said from the data available that social and economic changes have highlighted the growing inequality of the distribution of wealth. The data suggests that the ratio is now roughly half of all crimes being crimes against property and the bulk of the remainder being various forms of crimes against the person. However, this will vary a great deal from country to country within the region, as will the "dark figure" of unreported criminality, and seems to be moving in the direction of more crimes against property.

II. CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION

56. The term "crime prevention strategies" is used in this context to refer to a set of programmes which are intended to prevent socially undesirable events and patterns of behaviour from occurring. The military connotation of the word "strategy" implies that these programmes will be planned, co-ordinated and evaluated in respect of factors and measures of performance which have been stipulated beforehand.

57. Crime prevention is a concept which has a long history. However, the formal, rational planning of crime prevention is still an emerging science. Attempts to develop more detailed and precise strategies have led to the introduction of intersectoral planning and the perceived need for a conceptual framework 30/ for this process. The form which this has taken so far has differed between Member States, primarily as a function of different socio-economic circumstances and underlying theoretical assumptions. 31/ Countries with centrally planned economies tend to approach the problem at the national level; countries with mixed economies at the local or regional level. This does not necessarily entail a great difference in ultimate outcome, although that is possible. The science is still too young to predict long-term but it is probable that all Member States will be able to profit from the experiences of others. Indeed, such mutual learning is probably most important while the approach is in its formative stages, as many problems remain to be solved, both conceptual and operational. "Crime prevention strategies" is perhaps best considered as a theoretical framework into which new thinking can be inserted. In terms of practical application in some countries, it is in its preliminary stage of development; in others, it even is barely yet appreciated.

A. CRIME PREVENTION PLANNING: THEORY AND CURRENT PRACTICE

1. Intersectoral Planning

58. Detailed and accurate knowledge of crime trends provides information of direct value for policy formulation, especially in the establishment of priorities for crime prevention. Information is needed not only about the number of crimes which occur, but also about the relative degree of seriousness with which they are regarded by the public. A scale of desirability of prevention could be constructed, and this would allow for controlled experiment in crime prevention

30/ See also P. P. Osepov, ed., Complex Investigations into the System of Influencing Criminality (Leningrad, University of Leningrad Press, 1978).

31/ J. Bafia, Problem of Criminology/Dialectics of a Criminogenic Situation (Warsaw, Law Publishers, 1978). Tosca Hernandez, La Ideologización del Delito y de la Pena (Caracas, Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1977).

strategies. There is, however, another quite different factor which has to be taken into account, namely feasibility of prevention. It is probably much easier to cut down the amount of shoplifting than the number of murders. There is a trade-off between the possible and the desirable and this lies at the core of all decisions with regard to crime prevention strategies.

59. Similarly, trade-offs occur between crime prevention planning at the national level, as part of the general development planning and crime prevention projects at the local level. Choices of planning levels should not be presented as if they were mutually exclusive. In fact, they should be considered as complementary, and indeed part of the same process, but approached from different ends, the one working down from general principles to implementation and the other building up from local experiences of successful approaches toward national policy. Both policies are based on mutually influencing sectoral and intersectoral planning.

60. The term "sector" is used in an orthodox sense. It encompasses all the formal agencies and bodies which contribute to the same sphere of endeavour within society, thus health, education and agriculture are separate sectors, and the criminal justice sector, composed of the police, the courts, the prison system and the after-care and probation services is another. If crime prevention planning is considered at the intersectoral level, it is viewed as a phenomenon which is the concern of several socio-economic sectors, each from its own perspective, rather than as the exclusive concern of one, namely the criminal justice sector.

61. One of the most significant sources of failure in crime prevention attempts is the narrow approach which views crime as the problem of the criminal justice sector solely and expects only that sector to find solutions to the problem. Successful examples of intersectoral collaboration in crime prevention, however, are still quite rare. Examples can be found in work safety regulations and in pollution control. Thus, the problem which is now faced is to recognize the necessity of an intersectoral approach.

62. It has been the complaint of the advocates of intersectoral criminal justice planning that planners and senior administrators working in the other social sectors have been unwilling to take note of the importance of the implications of their sectoral activities in potentially changing the level of criminal activity. There is a need to discuss the steps which can be taken in respect of this specific problem. To what extent, and by what means, should the criminal justice sector draw attention to its work and problems and call attention to a possible input into other planning bodies? How can other sectors be sensitized accordingly?

63. Most of the activities which crime prevention planners would urge upon other public sectoral planners are activities which are social "goods" in their own right, such as better and more universal educational provisions or better support services for families under stress. The planners in these fields might benefit from being reminded of the possible adverse consequences, in respect specifically of criminality, which may result from failures in their own sectors. Planners in other sectors normally are not willing to make significant changes in their plans or objectives simply to accommodate crime prevention planners.

64. If multiple objectives or a hierarchy of subobjectives are created by policy formulation, problems arise for planners. Clear planning depends upon clear goal statement. The introduction of conflicting objectives is likely to raise the uncertainty level and, therefore, perhaps the psychological resistance, of planners in other social sectors. This does not mean that educative and sensitizing tasks should not be undertaken, but that certain difficulties and impediments can be foreseen. It is easier to provide clear definitions and specific descriptions of achievement indicators, whenever joint action can be agreed upon. One example from the social sphere, where successful efforts at joint action by some Governments have been reported, is that of racial discrimination. The mutual involvement and collaboration of the criminal justice, education and welfare sectors have done much to alleviate some of the worse aspects of this in some countries.

65. Another dimension of intersectoral planning is presented by the experience of some of the European socialist countries, whose strategies and practices, although differing in detail from country to country, have much in common. First, they are outlined at the conceptual level by a national body. They are then implemented at the local level and may result in the creation of groups of concerned citizens to assist and collaborate with local law enforcement officials in discouraging criminal activity both at places of work and in residential areas.

66. The German Democratic Republic emphasizes workers' collective action programmes competing for the title of "model area of order and safety". 32/ In Yugoslavia, economic crime, in particular, is guarded against "by social committees of workers self-management for control". Such committees can scrutinize the activities of both management and employees and may call in legal assistance; a social office of accounting works closely with it. 33/ In Poland, "commissions of individual prophylactic" were established in 1977, consisting of 10 to 15 members from different professions and sectors, including law enforcement, and these were primarily concerned to help potential recidivists. 34/

67. These experiences might suggest that criminal justice planners should address themselves in their quest for intersectoral approaches to both the central national

32/ G. Lehman and H. Kaiser, Crime Prevention as a Community Task in the German Democratic Republic, Fifth Criminological Congress of Socialist Countries, 1978, Zakopane, Poland.

33/ D. Davidović, "The system of self-protection in Yugoslavia" in B. Holyst ed., Prevention of Criminality in the Light of the Seminars of the VIIIth International Congress of Criminology, Lisbon, 1978, 1979, Warsaw, Poland.

34/ J. Malec, "Ways of social reaction against criminality beyond criminal process in the context of the current situation and the etiology of criminality in Poland", Fifth Criminological Congress of Socialist Countries, 1978, Zakopane, Poland.

developmental planning committee and to any regional branches which it may have. In all countries, developed and developing, planning is, in effect, taking place all the time, and in accordance with the culture and structure of each country, it is a matter for the authorities to decide exactly where in the structure the impact of such an educative initiative would be greatest. The evidence so far suggests that the onus for initiatives lies with the crime prevention authorities. It is they who will have to go out and arouse the interest of other governmental policy-makers and of the general public. It is only in crisis situations, such as after a particularly heinous crime or chain of crimes, that either the public or other officials will come to them.

2. Specific techniques of crime prevention

68. Two other specific approaches deserve individual attention because they, too, represent a practical approach. These are prevention through environmental design and the possible development of crime impact studies. The first has already begun to be implemented, the second is still at the conceptual stage. Crime impact studies would take as their model the environmental impact studies which have been made before large development projects have been undertaken during the last few years. The objective of these is to predict the likely consequences to the environment of implementing a particular project. It should be noted, however, that the value of such an impact study depends not only on the rigour with which it is carried out, but also on the scope of the definition given to the term, "environment". For instance, in the case of the oil pipeline laid across Alaska, the term "environment" has been interpreted in a rather restricted sense as referring to the immediately surrounding physical environment. A crime impact study would have examined the social environment affected and in that context would have considered possible remedies for criminal patterns of behaviour. Such an approach has three specific advantages. First, it presents the potential crime problem to most professional planners in a way which is more familiar to them and makes it more likely to arouse their interest. Secondly, by making predictions about criminal behaviour and recommendations on pro-active measures to guard against it, it makes possible a hypothesis-testing experiment. The results will add to criminological as well as developmental knowledge. Thirdly, it helps in actual everyday life to avoid some of the most stressful and unpleasant side-effects of development.

69. Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) has received widespread attention in North America, where it began, ^{35/} but the idea itself has also spread elsewhere. This approach assumes that if a specific combination of circumstances increases the likelihood of certain types of crime being committed, then a change in the circumstances, that is, the environment, could well produce a measurable

^{35/} C. Ray Jeffrey, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (Beverly Hills, Calif., Sage Publications, 1971).

decrease in the incidence of those crime types. ^{36/} Mostly, it has been applied to architecture and city planning, where it has become well known through the concept of defensible space. ^{37/} The idea of defensible space is that of personal responsibility for one's own and other's safety, both as regards person and property. It is suggested that people have more commitment to an area of residence and also less fear in being in that place, if they feel that they can observe it and identify with it more closely, and that other potential or actual friends and allies can do likewise. The prime objective is to remove or reduce the sense of isolation and anonymity which many people feel in modern conurbations. The programmes of CPTED seek to replace alienation as far as possible with a feeling of personal scale and personal involvement.

70. Later work has concentrated upon the physical design of environments which allow maximum supervision of children, with the specific intent of providing the family with psychological support through the physical layout of the environment where most time is spent. Considerable success has been reported and the approach is continuing to be developed. ^{38/} So far, this approach has been practiced on a restricted scale, normally a residential block or even a single building. But its extension to whole areas and zones is under development. One very valuable body of knowledge is being accumulated through "inventories mistakes". Such inventories list those lay-out factors which have been found consistently to be associated with an abnormally high crime level for neighbourhoods of the type in question.

71. The development of crime prevention planning at the community level, with the criminal justice sector having a central role, is one of the most noticeable changes in many countries over the last few years. The recent surge of interest in local planning for crime prevention has arisen, probably because several different trends in criminological thought have come together at the same time. First, the growth of interest and sophistication in planning, mentioned above, highlighted the need for clearly defined goals. These are easily achieved with respect to specific crime types in a precisely demarcated environment. Secondly, officials in many countries have become more concerned about the apparently widening gap between the police and the community they serve. Along with this, it has been recognized that there is no good measure of what crimes it is most important to prevent from the point of view of the public. Thus, there has been a growing tendency to identify and to concentrate upon those crimes of which the prevention appears most feasible. Now that criminality is no longer exclusively attributed to individual

^{36/} P. A. Stanley, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design: A Review (Ottawa, Office of the Solicitor General of Canada, 1977). This provides an overview of the published material up to that date.

^{37/} O. Newman, Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design (New York, MacMillan and Company, 1972).

^{38/} O. Newman, Communities of Interest (New York, Doubleday, 1980).

pathology or disposition, more credence is given to theories of opportunity. 39/ Most people would not murder even if an easy opportunity arose, but a regrettably high proportion of apparently well-adjusted white collar workers will indulge in financial misappropriation if the opportunity arises and if the chances of detection are considered very low.

72. The growing emphasis on specified types of crime as the appropriate focus for preventive efforts led to a greater focus on the local level. This has encouraged techniques such as target-hardening, preventive police patrolling and other forms of direct deterrence. Community policing has become established practice in some countries. 40/ Local police are becoming more integrated with the public they serve at an informal level, sometimes as appropriate members of local planning bodies. The possibility of their being included at a regional and perhaps ultimately national level, could easily be foreseen. Several other improvements in law enforcement practice, which were called for at the regional meetings, seem to be developing along these lines. The constructive use of the media as an aid to crime control, already a feature of many centrally planned countries, is a subject of study in several countries. 41/

73. An example of successful intersectoral co-operation at the local level is reported from the United Kingdom. In a large city, there was a steady increase of automobile thefts which took up a disconcerting amount of police time and effort. When the geographical location of the thefts and of the recovery of the stolen vehicles was plotted in detail, it was seen that most of the thefts occurred near the city centre, while most of the recoveries were in or near the suburbs occupied by poorer socio-economic groups with a large population of young adults. When the time of offence was examined, it was found that the offences took place mostly in the late evening on weekends. The local bus routes and schedules were then examined, and it was found that there was no provision for young adults who could not afford a car to return home after an evening at one of the places of entertainment in the city centre. The provision of a few extra buses markedly cut the incidence of offences, thus also freeing many police hours. This example shows that a solution to the problem of thefts was possible only when the various public sectors, police, transport and city planning, co-operated at a local level, using detailed local data. 42/

39/ See, for further reference, P. Mayhew, "Crime as opportunity", London, Home Office Research Study, No. 34 (1976). F. W. M. Van Straelen, "Prevention and technology", The Cranfield Papers on Crime Prevention (London, Peel Press, 1978).

40/ For example, see J. C. Alderson, Policing Freedom (London, McDonald and Evans, 1979).

41/ For example, see "Ways of social reaction against criminality beyond the criminal process", Hungarian paper, Fifth Criminological Congress of Socialist Countries, 1978, Zakopane, Poland.

42/ Study still in progress, not yet published.

74. The relationship between the police and the private sector has also been highlighted by this approach in a way which may be important for the future. The insurance industry is important in crime prevention both as a possible source of data on crime trends external to the system and secondly, by its unofficial links to police operations in a variety of complex ways. In many countries, a very strong private security industry is emerging. This has implications for the police and for the future control of crime, in that it can reduce opportunities; but also, it can be a source of access for professional criminals who manage to join the staff without being discovered or who may corrupt existing staff members through bribery. Thus, there arises a serious problem of monitoring by public agencies and accountability to the public.

75. It is suggested, therefore, that the main difference between the two approaches sectoral and intersectoral is not that they are in any way competitive or exclusive of each other, but that the point of initiative is different. Each one has certain advantages, and it may be that each is most appropriate for different types of crime. For instance, most increases in "traditional" crime types tend to be specific to a particular locality, and a problem-solving approach at that level, using local data generated for that purpose may be most appropriate. However, when a crime type threatens to become a serious problem over a whole region or country, action at the national level is probably more appropriate. This could well be the case in regard to the new forms of economic crime in particular. The various techniques of embezzlement and fraud which are emerging with economic development and the new technologies which accompany this are not equally restricted to a time or place. There is, perhaps, a useful analogy with some of the recent developments in management and planning theory. For some time, theoreticians have been looking for ways to measure the relative significance and importance of decisions. In this connexion, the most promising indicator developed so far has been the measure of how long the decisions take to implement and how many people are directly and indirectly affected by it. In the same way, it might be possible to divide crime into different categories, including the number of potential victims and the length of time it could go on occurring. Clearly, this is not a simple correlation with "seriousness" of offence or "culpability" of offender, but it might provide a criterion for discriminating between those offence types which require central planning for their effective control and prevention and those where local planning may be adequate and most appropriate.

76. Such a joint approach may facilitate progress on another question which was raised at the preparatory meetings: the relative costs and benefits of long-term planning perspectives against those of short-term problem solving. Long-range approaches may not provide adequate attention to immediate problems, which themselves have the potential to frustrate the longer-term planning. However, to ignore the long-term is to invite the historical failure of crime prevention in most countries to repeat itself. One theme which might unite the short-term and long-term approaches is the consideration of the participation of the public. This was stressed as highly desirable in principle at many of the preparatory meetings. There is no doubt that any practical steps in this regard and the formulation of policy will have to be taken at the national level in a specific cultural context.

77. Examples of public participation in crime prevention at the local level come from several countries in the Asian and Pacific region. Citizens' group patrols, especially at night, are formally organized at the village level in the Republic of Korea 43/ Bangladesh 44/ and Malaysia. 45/ These groups are made accountable to a village council of elders, a village multipurpose co-operative society or some equivalent. They are officially recognized and given direction by the central Government. Japan reports the large-scale use of volunteer organizations in the rehabilitation of offenders and with other aspects of crime prevention. 46/

78. Whatever the level or levels at which crime prevention strategies are planned, two questions need to be considered in the provision of guidance to Governments. First, the serious problem of cross-cultural transferability. If the conceptualization is too general, the usual result seems to be the expression of good aspirations, but little on how these should be implemented. If the exchange of views refers to specific techniques, strategies and approaches of any one society, its potential for transfer into another cultural setting is in question. Secondly, the role of research and evaluation of the effects and effectiveness of those crime prevention strategies, especially in countries with very limited resource, is central since no method which has not been demonstrated effective in one setting should be considered for replication elsewhere.

3. The evaluation of impact of crime prevention strategies

79. Previous congresses 47/ have discussed at some length the role of research from which a few general principles have emerged, which are so important that they form the starting-point of any such discussion. First, rigorous evaluation

43/ United Nations Asia and Far East Institute (UNAFEI), Report for 1976, and Resource Material Series No. 13 (March 1977), Fuchu, Tokyo.

44/ UNAFEI, op. cit., and Kibra, ABHG (1976) Police Administration in Bangladesh.

45/ UNAFEI Resource Material Series, No. 12 (October 1976), Fuchu, Tokyo.

46/ "Crime prevention and control - the challenge of the last quarter of the century", submitted by the Government of Japan to the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

47/ Third United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Stockholm, 1965, topic A. Fourth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Kyoto, Japan, 1970, topic D. Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, agenda item 9.

requires that the evaluation component in any plan or programme be built in from the start. In the past, evaluation has been limited to post-event assessments. The recent tendency to incorporate research considerations from the beginning constitute a definite advance, and the interregional meeting of experts specifically recommended that the importance of this be examined and emphasized by the Congress. This requires a clear and specific statement of goals and achievement indicators, both at various intervening stages and for the ultimate objective. There is a difference between the effectiveness of a strategy, that is, the extent to which it achieves its stated goals, and its effects, that is, what changes, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen. Any evaluation must accompany the effectiveness and the effects of the strategy, including as a separate and mandatory component its potential long-term impact. The evaluation should also include the present social and financial costs even if the long-term effects are expected to be good; and alternatively should include the immediate pay-offs, if the long-term effects could be adverse. Such a comprehensive approach to evaluation requires interdisciplinary work in many respects, extending to the dissemination of the results. The identification and analysis of unexpected side-effects and potential outcomes in the distant future is a major task of such evaluation, and requires the kind of forecasting techniques mentioned in section I, B above.

80. Some of the main obstacles to evaluation should be mentioned here. The first is the defensiveness to which criminal justice agencies seem prone in many countries. Many police officers, prison officers and other criminal justice functionaries see themselves as being looked down upon by both the general public and the academic and research community, who are perceived as a threat, intent primarily on causing trouble or telling them, the serving officers, how to do their job. They, therefore, close ranks against all potential outside interference; and the withholding of information, by either holding on to existing data or forbidding access to any part of the system, becomes a powerful tool. Sometimes agencies or units in some kind of trouble might turn to research workers for help. Such occasions place considerable strain and responsibility on researchers, who might feel their own integrity compromised. Actually, they may be positive experiences, inasmuch as they entail exposure to the "heat" of real-life situations, thus improving the understanding of the researcher for their field and increasing their credibility with the line staff; this affords an opportunity to build bridges between the research community and the world of practical operations. Ultimately, then, research personnel might be in a position to act as a link between legislators and implementors. In this respect, the in-house position for evaluation research has the advantage, but there are other advantages favouring externally-based research. The assessment of the research work and evaluation results by the operating staff is an important component of the process. Finally, administrators might consider even methodologically sound evaluation results as irrelevant to their situation and choose to define them as not central to the decisions confronting them. Evaluation studies by external groups might well, and quite often do, put the ethical assumptions which underlie the objectives in a different order of priorities.

81. The results of published evaluation research in the sphere of criminal justice are not very encouraging, as is well known by now. Scientists are still disputing

whether this is due to bad evaluation methodologies or to ineffective programmes, but that dispute can be bypassed here. Certainly the need to tighten methodologies has been one factor behind the move towards more narrow-scope, more precisely defined prevention programmes. While it is true that one-dimensional evaluation in the area of social policy is becoming outdated, methodologies for rigorous multidimensional evaluation, including the effects of anti-crime measures at any level, are still rather crude and fairly costly. Therefore, emphasis has turned towards such problems as the displacement phenomenon: if a crime is "prevented" in one place, does it, or a compensating one, occur at another time or place? Such studies can be handled by the methods available and will throw a certain, if limited, further light on the crime phenomenon as a whole. These studies, of course, also provide some immediate policy guidance. The findings currently available may be summarized very briefly as follows:

(a) Primary prevention (opportunity reduction etc.) works better than secondary prevention (the treatment and rehabilitation of offenders);

(b) No scientifically validated statements on the effects of tertiary prevention (broad-scope, multidimension, intersectoral policies) can be made as yet; rigorous evaluation of them is not possible. But the accumulation of evidence and opinion is overwhelmingly to the effect that these policies are worth while in their own right and should be further developed.

B. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

82. From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that the availability of information on crime trends and the development of crime prevention strategies are closely interrelated. Both issues are of concern to national planners and policy-makers in all facets of the administration of justice. However, the lack of requisite data is all too apparent and hampers progress in this field. The formulation and refinement of crime prevention strategies, especially in a cross-cultural perspective, require reliable data bases and improved methodologies for the collection and analysis of crime statistics and indicators, as well as estimates of future trends.

83. If the United Nations is to promote international co-operation in this field and enhance the exchange of national experiences, "this means strengthening the capacity to gather, analyse and disseminate information in the form which is most useful to Member States", so as to establish a system "for the effective collection, analysis and dissemination of reliable and internationally comparable data, in order to facilitate the task of identifying those crime prevention policies that are effective". 48/ In this connexion, the Congress may want to

48/ "Methods and ways likely to be most effective in preventing crime and improving the treatment of offenders" (E/CN.5/536) annex IV, paras. 17c and 32, as endorsed by General Assembly resolution 32/58.

provide guidance for the future work of the Organization in this respect, as well as to make recommendations for improving the research and planning capacity of Member States, with the United Nations assistance required, taking into account the following priority issues:

- (a) Development, in co-operation with the United Nations Statistical Office, of guidelines, manuals, pilot projects and other action research approaches and techniques to permit the establishment of more adequate data bases for the policies and programmes adopted; 49/
- (b) Increasing the capacity of Governments to forecast crime trends with a view to helping countries to anticipate and plan for possible developments in this regard;
- (c) Conducting in-depth studies of the relation of such development processes as urbanization, industrialization, population growth, migration, and other demographic trends, rate of social change etc., to possible increases in criminality, with a view to counteracting them; 50/
- (d) Formulation of guidelines and recommendations to permit the more effective integration of crime prevention policies and elements in national planning efforts;
- (e) Preparation of recommendations on ways of rationalizing the operation of criminal justice systems in terms of a cost/benefit approach, with due regard to the observance of fundamental human rights;
- (f) The carrying out, with the co-operation of the United Nations Social Defence Research Institute and the regional crime prevention institutes, of case studies and demonstration schemes in the areas mentioned above, with a view to disseminating successful experiences in this regard and helping to overcome possible problems and obstacles;
- (g) Facilitating the exchange of experience and expertise among all countries, whether developing or developed, in this area, with special emphasis on maximizing approaches drawn from local practice and traditions;
- (h) Strengthening regional co-operation in research and training in the areas mentioned above;

49/ The development of such a manual for the Latin American region has been initiated by the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which has recently convened an expert group to advise on its preparation.

50/ In this respect, see the Secretariat Working Paper on agenda item 8, "New perspectives on crime prevention and criminal justice and development: the role of international co-operation", op. cit.

(i) Provision, at the request of Governments and with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme, of the necessary technical advisory services for the development of better data bases and more effective crime prevention policies in the context of their socio-economic development and development plans;

(j) The carrying out of world crime situation surveys at regular intervals, to meet the pervasive need for comparative statistical and other information on crime trends and crime prevention strategies so as to provide Member States with policy options. Such information could also be taken into account for the preparation of the reports on the world social situation.

This archiving project is a collaborative effort between United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and American Society of Criminology, Division of International Criminology. Any comments or questions should be directed to Cindy J. Smith at CJSmithphd@comcast.net or Emil Wandzilak at emil.wandzilak@unodc.org.