

Thirteenth United Nations Congress on
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Statement by

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Your Excellency the President of the Congress,
Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to have this opportunity to speak
at the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention
and Criminal Justice on behalf of the Japanese Delegation.

Mr. President,

First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt
congratulations to Your Excellency on the election to the
Presidency of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress. I am
confident, Mr. President, that Your Excellency's leadership will

lead us to the fruitful success of this Congress. Further, I would like to deliver the highest tribute to His Highness Sheikh Tamim, and the Government and People of the State of Qatar for their devoted efforts in preparing for this Congress. I also extend my appreciation to the members of the Secretariat for their preparations.

Mr. President,

Japan welcomes the overall theme of this Congress, which is to "Integrate crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda". Safe and peaceful society is essential in achieving the "sustainable development goals" of the United Nations, and the role of efficient crime prevention and criminal justice is critically important to develop such society. In ensuring efficient crime prevention and criminal justice, Japan stresses the importance of a culture of lawfulness, which supports the rule of law. It is essential to permeate the rule of law throughout society so that everyone can live safely and businesses

can operate without obstacles. In achieving such a society, it is important for citizens to trust and respect the law; this is what we mean by a culture of lawfulness. In Japan, citizens' participation in criminal justice can be regarded as a reflection of our culture of lawfulness. The following are some examples.

The first example is the *Saiban-in* system, which was introduced in May 2009. In the *Saiban-in* system, professional judges and *Saiban-in*, who are lay judges selected from ordinary citizens, compose a panel and try certain serious criminal cases. While it has been only about five years since this system was introduced, it functions well and it is well received by the public. Thus the system has been taking root in society. One reason for this success would be that Japanese citizens have fostered a culture of lawfulness through education and social life and, thus, are capable of fulfilling their duties. At the same time, the public attention to crime prevention and criminal justice has increased because more and more citizens have directly participated in criminal trials and enriched their understandings

through their *Saiban-in* experience; thus more trust and respect for the law can be expected from the public.

The volunteer probation officer system is another important example of public participation in criminal justice. Volunteer probation officers are private citizens who, in collaboration with government officials, support the rehabilitation of offenders in the community; they are in charge of supervision and assistance for those who are on probation. As well as volunteer probation officers, many other organizations and citizens give proper guidance and assistance to offenders, and support their reintegration into the local community. These earnest activities of citizens led to the establishment of a society in which a variety of local citizens work together to support rehabilitation of offenders. Our culture of lawfulness in Japanese society supports such a system.

Japan will continue to foster broader public participation in criminal justice and further promote the rule of law.

Mr. President,

Acts of terrorism by extremist groups against innocent citizens occur in various parts of the world, and Japanese nationals are among the victims. Moreover, the "borderlessness of crime" has continued to grow including organized crime and corruption, let alone cybercrime. Japan will never condone such crimes. We will make necessary legislation and strictly enforce the law. At the same time, we will actively contribute to the discussions in the international community to combat such crimes, and proactively expand technical assistance to other countries, including through international organizations.

As part of such efforts, Japan signed a joint action plan with the UNODC to establish a strategic cooperative relationship and has been strengthening cooperation. Moreover, Japan dispatches officials as experts to Asian countries to support legal and judicial development. Japan also manages UNAFEI, the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, under an agreement with

the United Nations, and it holds various international training courses and seminars for criminal justice practitioners from all over the world.

In addition, Japan will actively provide assistance in strengthening counter-terrorism measures such as investigation and prosecution capacity and developing legal systems, as well as in creating societies resilient to terrorism and other crimes.

Japan received heartwarming support from various countries after the tragic earthquake disaster in 2011. Our country was reminded of the importance of mutual help and support among countries, and we intend to further strengthen our support to foreign countries.

Mr. President,

Japan hosted the Kyoto Congress in 1970, which contributed to the advancement of criminal justice throughout the world. In 2020, which is the 50th anniversary of the Kyoto Congress, and in which the second summer Olympic Games will

be held in Japan, we would like to host the Congress again.

I would like to extend in advance my heartfelt respect for the efforts which Qatar and other countries have made for the success of this Congress. The road from Qatar to Japan is promising, and it brightens my spirits.

The criminal justice system in each country has cultural, historical and social backgrounds that must be respected regardless of differences. At the same time, with the internationalization of crime, it is truly important for countries to closely cooperate beyond their differences in order to combat crime effectively.

Japan has developed a culture with progressiveness and originality by proactively adopting foreign cultures and merging them with its traditions. We hope to contribute further to the cooperative efforts of the international community by sharing our experiences.

Japan will actively participate in the discussions of the

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice based on the success of the Qatar Congress; we seek the prevalence of a culture of lawfulness and establishment of the rule of law throughout the world, while respecting various approaches based on our different systems and cultures. It would be an honor for Japan to host the next Congress, which would be the culmination of our five-year effort since this very Congress. We sincerely hope to and look forward to welcoming you to Japan in 2020.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.