

Linking Crime Prevention to Enablers, Markets, Drivers

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Abstract: Linking crime prevention and control to its enablers, illicit markets, and structural drivers is crucial to the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration. Eliminating criminal contexts, rather than only criminals, in developing crime control approaches requires closer attention to information gathering, and better understanding the local context and drivers of crime. Civil society can be useful in marshalling crime prevention experience to forge effective strategies by governments.

Statement:

Governments have a strong interest in controlling crime by apprehending criminals. This is a laudable effort because **enforcement** gives meaning to the rule of law in practice.

But laws consist only of words until prosecutions occur. Experience has shown that apprehended criminals are soon replaced by others.

Governments must address underlying conditions and criminal contexts, so crimes do not repeat themselves --- with new criminals replacing the old. This circle can be broken when we address the criminal context, and make better use of civil society in doing so.

This is a 3-step process:

Step 1 – The social and economic conditions that generate new generations of crime-prone individuals must be better understood for crime prevention to be effective. The public knows we cannot “arrest” our way out of the crime problem. The crime prevention context must include attention to the presence of enablers, illicit markets, and structural drivers.

Step 2 – Different kinds of crimes have different context. In organized crime, for example, the contexts include the relationships between victims and offenders, and their enablers, for **different** kinds of illicit activity, the **hotspots** where these incidents occur, and the social and economic underpinnings that place these actors at **high risk**.

Step 3 – The information and support of civil society must be used to map the landscape of high-risk people and the conditions that promote crime. Academia, NGOs, faith-based groups, and other civil society members possess accumulated knowledge and experience with all sectors of society.

This information includes analyses and evaluations of various approaches to crime prevention and control. These must be incorporated more systematically into efforts for training, technical assistance, strategy, and reform.

In sum, criminal contexts, enablers, and structural drivers must be assessed more strategically, making better use of civil society resources, to produce lasting crime prevention results.

Thank you.