

Talking Points for Panelist Tom Burrows

- Great to be here; see friends/colleagues; also grateful for hybrid format so we can have broad participation. I wish to thank the Secretariat for its preparation for this meeting, as well WEOG for this invitation to speak.
- Today I plan to address 1) the police role in crime prevention and 2) some good practices for recidivism prevention.

Involvement in the Community/Community Policing

- The police play an important role in preventing crime. But to accomplish that we must look at the police as more than law enforcement agents. Policing the community is in large part a service to the community. The public safety mission of the police goes beyond making arrests and investigating crime.
- The police should have ongoing positive interactions with the community they serve and work to develop trust between them and the community. Residents of a community who trust the police, and see them as providing service beyond law enforcement, are more likely to report crime & cooperate with police. That is why we support the concept of community policing. Police who are close to their communities can identify groups, families, and individuals who are in crisis. They must be trained to defuse tense situations. They can make referrals, involving experts in mental health, educational issues, and addiction treatment, as well as social services that can address issues arising from poverty.
- To accomplish the goals of community policing, hiring and promotion of police officers should reflect these values. Policing is a profession that requires education, training, empathy for fellow human beings, problem-solving skills, and interpersonal skills. Police departments

also need to recruit minorities and women, reflecting the diversity of the communities they serve.

- One example of positive police involvement I would like to bring to your attention is the nationwide network of Police Athletic Leagues in the United States. The PAL started in NYC in 1914 and has grown to over 300 cities across the United States. The police organize sports programs and educational and cultural events, and mentor young kids from some of the poorest neighborhoods in the country. These programs succeed at developing mutual respect and relationships that otherwise might not exist.
- The federal government supports the PALs with financial support for contractors to perform the administrative tasks required to run the organizations, so that these police can spend time building relationships between police and young people in communities.

Recidivism

- A major component of crime prevention, of course, involves preventing youths and adults re-entering the criminal justice system. Successfully preventing recidivism requires a holistic and collaborative approach between the government, and civil society and communities. Preparing individuals to successfully integrate into their communities after first involvement in CJ should be a primary goal of criminal justice systems as they work to promote public safety.

Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration

- Incarceration is burdensome and expensive. Where safe, practical, and appropriate, alternatives to incarceration should be used to reduce costs and disruption to families, livelihoods, and communities.

- These alternatives may include substance abuse programs, psychiatric treatment, community service, probationary periods, supervised release after periods of incarceration, halfway houses, work release programs, home confinement, and curfews. Many of you recall our CCPCJ resolution in about 2015 on this very topic.

- Several practices that have shown promising results in the U.S. domestic context to reduce recidivism are:
 - Promoting family visitation during incarceration and family-centered intervention;
 - Promoting kinship care for children of incarcerated parents in need of guardianship who may otherwise be placed in the traditional foster care system;
 - Establishing skills training and job readiness programs;
 - Offering educational opportunities to help individuals gain employment when they return to the community;
 - Offering literacy programs to promote rehabilitation;
 - Promoting therapeutic communities during and after incarceration to reduce substance abuse recidivism and providing access to evidence-based substance abuse and mental health treatment in the community; and
 - Seeking to eliminate barriers to reentry after incarceration, including the lack of housing, transportation, and ability to secure employment; and
 - Using mentoring programs for juveniles, including, where appropriate, those offenders who have reformed and are interested in giving back to society, as mentors. Mentoring relationships, both as provided through programs and naturally occurring, have a well-established potential to contribute to reduced delinquent behavior and juvenile justice system involvement.

- These are some of our findings and experiences. Thank you for your attention during this discussion, and I look forward to hearing your experiences and views.