

**Remarks of the UNODC Executive Director
Closing of the 30th session of the Commission on
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
21 May 2021**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Congratulations on the conclusion of the 30th session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

I thank the Chair, Ambassador Cortese, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, Ambassador Hikiyama, and the extended Bureau, for their work in moving the intergovernmental process forward at this session of the Commission.

I commend the Commission for moving ahead with important pledges for joint action to address pressing global problems.

Through the seven resolutions which you adopted, you have charted paths for addressing some of the world's most heinous crimes – crimes that have been on the rise since the start of the COVID pandemic. You have also sent a strong message to victims of such crimes that they are not alone.

As tragic events continue to unfold in the Mediterranean, and as countries prepare to reappraise the Global Plan of Action against trafficking in persons this year, you have reaffirmed your commitment to preventing and combating migrant smuggling and human trafficking.

As the world experiences biodiversity loss at an unprecedented scale and pace, with dramatic consequences for our very future on this planet, you have come together to strengthen international cooperation against crimes affecting the environment.

By addressing these difficult topics and finding common ground, you have made strides to operationalize the Kyoto Declaration adopted at the 14th Crime Congress.

The new resolution on reducing reoffending also traces its roots back to Kyoto.

Prisons are like crossroads, where individuals can either go further down a path of crime, violence and radicalization, or, when given the right opportunities, gain the knowledge and skills needed to reclaim their place in society.

This is why I welcome your commitment to providing treatment, education and rehabilitation opportunities to prisoners, and to empowering communities to facilitate the reintegration of offenders.

I am also pleased to note that this session strengthened the focus on youth crime prevention through sport, and on advancing criminal justice system reform.

At a time when COVID has disrupted justice processes while leaving our world poorer, more unequal and more vulnerable to crime, it is indeed urgent to build the resilience of our systems and of our societies.

In this regard, the resolution you adopted this week on COVID and criminal justice is both timely and relevant to all our work.

The commitments made here at the 30th session leave us well-placed to face future threats and shape a fairer post-pandemic world, provided they are followed by decisive action.

UNODC stands ready to support you on all these fronts, and I am grateful for the trust you continue to place in our Office.

Guided by our new strategic frameworks, including the UNODC Strategy for 2021-2025, the Strategic Vision for Africa, and the Strategic Vision for Latin America to be launched this summer, a stronger, more effective UNODC will provide the integrated support which you need, to address today's and tomorrow's challenges.

For this essential mission, we count on your financial support, so that our delivery can continue to match your expectations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we struggle to put the COVID crisis behind us, and as we size up the obstacles that lie ahead, it can be difficult to remain optimistic.

Yet I am full of hope.

I see more than ever the importance of multilateralism during these troubled times, and the importance of UNODC's role in supporting it.

I am very proud that throughout the past year, our Office has managed to bring the international community together to move forward on an intense normative agenda, while keeping all our stakeholders safe.

UNODC has been at the forefront in the use of hybrid platforms, setting standards and developing guidance based on the experience of the Crime Congress, to benefit the broader UN system.

We are continuing to support the busy global cooperation agenda and are working towards the first-ever General Assembly Special Session against Corruption in June, an important milestone in this landmark year for anti-corruption action.

We are also continuing to provide world-class research to inform the work of policymakers.

I will take this opportunity to mention that our 2021 World Drug Report will be presented at a CND Special Event on 25 June, at which I hope you will join us.

The current period of crisis recovery presents many opportunities for us to work together on making the world safer from drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism.

I thank you all once again for your commitment to shared solutions. I also thank UNOV/UNODC staff for going above and beyond to support the international community, for the benefit of the people who need us most. Thank you.