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**Commission on Crime Prevention  
and Criminal Justice****Thirty-second session**

Vienna, 22–26 May 2023

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*

**Follow-up to the Fourteenth United Nations  
Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal  
Justice and preparations for the Fifteenth United  
Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and  
Criminal Justice****Chair's summary on the thematic discussions of the  
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice  
on the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration  
(5–7 December 2022)**

1. This document contains a Chair's summary on the thematic discussions held during the second intersessional meeting of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) at its thirty-first session from 5 to 7 December 2022. The thematic discussions were chaired by H.E. Ambassador Takeshi Hikihara (Japan), Chair of the CCPCJ at its thirty-first session. The summary by the Chair is not subject to negotiation.

**I. Background**

2. On 7 March 2021, the Congress adopted by consensus the **Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, calling (in paragraph 96) upon the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to adopt the appropriate policy and operational measures for the follow-up to the declaration and to identify innovative ways to make use of information on progress made in the implementation of the Declaration, and inviting the Commission to engage with other relevant stakeholders, including the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, in order to strengthen global partnership in advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

3. In resolution [A/RES/76/181](#), the General Assembly endorsed the Kyoto Declaration and requested, inter alia, that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice hold intersessional thematic discussions to effectively follow up on the Kyoto Declaration through the sharing of information, good practices and lessons

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\* [E/CN.15/2023/1](#).



learned. In resolution [A/RES/77/231](#), the General Assembly requested the Commission to continue implementing the appropriate policy and operational measures for the follow-up to the Kyoto Declaration, including through the holding of intersessional thematic discussions to facilitate the sharing of information, good practices and lessons learned among Member States and relevant stakeholders.

4. During the summer of 2021, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice adopted a **multi-year workplan** for the above-mentioned thematic discussions. The workplan follows the four pillars of the Kyoto Declaration, with one pillar discussed each year. The first round of Thematic Discussions was held from 10 to 12 November 2021, focusing on Pillar I: Advancing Crime Prevention.<sup>1</sup> The second round of Thematic Discussions was held from 5 to 7 December 2022 with a focus on **Pillar II: Advancing Criminal Justice Systems**.

5. In 2022, the CCPCJ Thematic Discussions addressed the following topics contained in the Kyoto Declaration under Pillar II, Advancing Criminal Justice Systems, which were clustered in three thematic sessions:

- Thematic session 1: Safeguarding victims' rights and protecting witnesses and reporting persons; Improving criminal investigation processes;
- Thematic session 2: Improving prison conditions; Reducing reoffending through rehabilitation and reintegration;
- Thematic session 3: Mainstreaming a gender perspective into criminal justice systems; Addressing the vulnerabilities of children and youth in contact with the criminal justice system.

6. The 2022 CCPCJ Thematic Discussions were held in English and in a hybrid format, with both in-person participation in Vienna and online participation. The discussions were also livestreamed to ensure that all interested stakeholders could follow. The meeting brought together experts and policymakers from more than 110 Member States, United Nations entities, intergovernmental and international organizations as well as civil society organizations from around the world. Altogether, more than 700 persons attended in person or online, and 2,741 livestream pageviews were recorded.

7. Each of the thematic sessions started with two introductory presentations by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), followed by panel presentations, an interactive debate with the panellists, and interventions from the floor. The panels included experts from Member States nominated through the Regional Groups, from the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network (PNI) and civil society. Further expert presentations were made by United Nations entities, international and regional organizations. Following past practice, civil society panellists and civil society speakers from the floor were nominated by the Vienna Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

8. **Government panellists**, nominated by their respective regional groups, came from Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Czechia, Japan, Pakistan, Panama, Slovenia, South Africa, and the United States of America. Additional presentations were made by experts from Austria and Thailand. **Representatives** of the Basel Institute on Governance, the Conference of Ministers of Justice of the Ibero-American Countries, the Council of Europe (COE), the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI), the Human Rights Committee (HRC), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD-OAS), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Sociological Association, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the Special Representative

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<sup>1</sup> The Chair's Summary of the 2021 CCPCJ Thematic Discussions on the Implementation of the Kyoto Declaration, with symbol E/CN.15/2022/CRP.1, can be found [here](#).

of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children (SRSG-VAC), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Penal Reform International (PRI), the SADC Parliamentary Forum, the Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (SPT), the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-WOMEN), Victim Support EU, and the World Health Organization (WHO) made presentations in their respective field of expertise. **Observers** from non-governmental organizations, including from Belgium, Cameroon, Germany, Ghana, Mexico, Pakistan, Nigeria, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States also made statements.

9. In preparation for the 2022 CCPCJ Thematic Discussions, a **background note**<sup>2</sup> was prepared by the Secretariat and shared with Permanent Missions and relevant stakeholders to provide information on the topics and to facilitate a substantive dialogue.

10. In line with the Commission's efforts to share information, good practices and lessons learned, statements and presentations made during the meeting were published on the Commission's dedicated Kyoto Declaration follow-up website.<sup>3</sup>

## II. Chair's summary of the deliberations

### (a) Opening session

11. In the opening session of the intersessional meeting, H.E. Lachezara Stoeva, President of the Economic and Social Council, underlined that the Commission's follow-up process to the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration made a central contribution to the midterm review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, to take place at the SDG Summit planned for September 2023.

12. UNODC Executive Director Ms. Ghada Waly welcomed the Thematic Discussions as an opportunity for Member States to come together with United Nations partners, international organizations, civil society, and academia, to translate the commitments of the Kyoto Declaration into concrete measures. She underlined that "criminal justice institutions must find ways to break patterns of discrimination, and to ensure that justice is attainable for all."

13. H.E. Ambassador Mathu Joyini, Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-seventh session, stressed the strong history of collaboration between both Commissions. She underlined that the commitment contained in the Kyoto Declaration "to achieve gender equality and remove impediments to the advancement of women in law enforcement and other criminal justice institutions" linked to the full, effective, and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

14. H.E. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Chair of the Commission for Social Development at its sixty-first session, welcomed the opportunity to further collaborate with the CCPCJ. She highlighted the role of productive and decent employment as a proven pathway to reduce inequality and prevent crime and conflict

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ\\_Sessions/CCPCJ\\_31/Thematic\\_Discussions/Background\\_Note\\_CCPCJ\\_Thematic\\_Discussions\\_2022.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_31/Thematic_Discussions/Background_Note_CCPCJ_Thematic_Discussions_2022.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/31\\_Session\\_2022/thematic-sessions-kyoto.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/31_Session_2022/thematic-sessions-kyoto.html).

and underlined the role of sport in preventing violence and crime, especially among youth.

15. Ms. Heeyeon Cho had served as the Chair of the Second Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness, held on 3 and 4 December 2022 in Japan on the theme “The role of youth in achieving a diverse and inclusive society”. She informed the Commission about the recommendations stemming from the Youth Forum on “Building a Society Free from Online Defamation and Cyberbullying”, and “Youth Involvement in and Disengagement from Organized Crime: The Role of Youth in Preventing Organized Crime”. The recommendations made by the Youth Forum were symbolically handed over to the Commission.

**(b) Safeguarding victims’ rights and protecting witnesses and reporting persons; Improving criminal investigation processes**

16. On 5 December 2022, the Commission discussed how to **safeguard victims’ rights, protect witnesses and reporting persons, and how to improve criminal investigation processes**.

17. The thematic session commenced with introductory presentations by UNODC, namely from a representative of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch and a representative of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section. The panel included experts from Czechia, Pakistan, Panama, the United States, the Basel Institute on Governance, and Victim Support EU. An expert from Austria also delivered a presentation, as well as experts from the IOM, OSCE, UNDP, WHO, the Special Rapporteur on Torture, the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons and the Chair of SPT.

18. The representative of the UNODC Research and Trend Analysis Branch presented **patterns and trends in victimization**, both for violent and non-violent crimes. He outlined the profile of victims and of perpetrators by gender (male/female) with regard to homicide, trafficking in persons and corruption. He highlighted as a key finding of victimization surveys the problem of **underreporting of crime**. The representative of the UNODC Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section presented trends, challenges, policy frameworks and good practices on victim and witness protection, and on improving criminal investigations. In particular, she stressed the **need to engage with victim/survivor organizations** and to provide **effective protection and assistance to victims**, also emphasizing the crucial role of witnesses for the effective functioning of criminal justice systems and the need for protection mechanisms. She underlined the effective results and higher human rights compliance yielded by **investigative interviewing methods** as compared to coercive interrogation techniques.

19. Many speakers underscored the importance of adopting **victim-centred approaches** to achieve effective and inclusive criminal justice systems. Key elements of this approach included listening to victims, respecting their human dignity, and implementing wide-encompassing protection measures that include social, legal, psychological, financial and practical support through an approach that is trauma-informed. Some speakers provided insights on their work regarding **specific types of victims**, such as victims of human trafficking and the principle of non-punishment; victims of torture and the importance of independent police oversight and effective investigations of torture cases; the identification and legal standing of victims of corruption, as well as international cooperation regarding their compensation; and the reporting and adequate services to victims of sexual violence and exploitation, including online.

20. It was highlighted that a respectful, acknowledging and kind first contact of law enforcement with victims was not only an important element of a victim-centred approach but also increased **victims’ readiness to provide information** in the course of the investigation. The problems of mandatory reporting of violence against children and the need for specific training for those who disclose violence were discussed. Also, it was highlighted that law enforcement personnel needed to be

trained how to approach victims of trafficking in persons and smuggled migrants who may not consider themselves as victims and provide them with adequate information on possible protection actors.

21. The use of the terms “**victim**” and “**survivor**” was discussed by several speakers, with “victim” being most common in a criminal justice setting, and “survivor” mostly used in interactions with victim/survivor organizations, who found the term more empowering and denoting of agency.

22. Regarding **witness protection**, the risk assessment before the identification of adequate protection measures was discussed. Change of identity and relocation were regularly reserved for high-risk cases and as a matter of last resort. Tailoring witness protection programmes to the culture and diverse needs of countries was noted as a critical element. The challenges of witness protection in small communities were discussed. It was highlighted that witness protection should be implemented by specialized units that have a sufficient degree of **autonomy to guarantee confidentiality and effectiveness**. Further, the need for international cooperation in witness protection to allow for international relocation was highlighted.

23. On the topic of reporting persons, speakers discussed the **concept of “whistle-blower”** in domestic and international legislation and highlighted the wide range of protection measures foreseen in article 33 UNCAC. **Weak provisions to protect whistle-blowers were still considered a challenge**, and it was highlighted that the **negative perceptions** prevalent in society towards whistle-blowers could present an obstacle for persons to report. Speakers stressed the importance of improving public perceptions towards whistle-blowers, including by public information campaigns, as well as of designing and implementing protective measures against retaliation and to ensure the physical and workplace protection of whistle-blowers.

24. With regard to reporting of crime in general, it was considered important to **strengthen public trust in criminal justice systems**. This would include inclusive recruitment practices to increase demographic diversity in law enforcement, regular and quality training of staff in criminal justice institutions to better cater to the needs of victims, witnesses and reporting persons, and addressing impunity and corruption within criminal justice systems.

25. With regards to improving criminal justice investigation processes, speakers referred to the expert-led initiative to produce the **Mendez Principles on investigative interviewing** as an approach to enhance the quality of investigations, uphold human rights and avoid coercive measures in criminal investigations. Several speakers recognized the **factors that have an impact on testimony**, including trauma, and referred to measures that criminal justice actors can take to minimize the fear of contact with the criminal justice system – in the case of children, for instance, child-friendly police stations and the use of non-judicial attire in court proceedings. The practical challenges of interviewing existing in many countries were also highlighted, such as long-distance travel and the lack of financial and communication resources.

26. Many speakers presented **legal frameworks and practical tools** developed at the national and international level on safeguarding the rights of victims, witnesses and reporting persons and improving criminal investigations. At the same time, many speakers also noted that legislation alone would not solve existing problems and that effective **operationalization of laws and policies required actions around staffing, training, funding, and changing mindsets**.

27. **Multidisciplinary, multisectoral, and coordinated approaches** were mentioned by many speakers as a necessary condition to advance criminal justice systems, including cooperation between victim protection actors and law enforcement to increase mutual understanding about the respective roles, responsibilities and operational realities; and between criminal justice institutions and health, social, educational and other sectors which were considered critical in ensuring

comprehensive protection and support to victims and witnesses. The importance of **disaggregated data**, for example from victimization surveys, **for evidence-based protection policies** was also highlighted.

(c) **Improving prison conditions; Reducing reoffending through rehabilitation and reintegration**

28. On 6 December 2022, the Commission discussed how to **improve prison conditions and how to reduce reoffending through rehabilitation and reintegration**. Introductory presentations were delivered by a representative of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch and a representative of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section of UNODC. The expert panel included experts from South Africa, Japan, the United States, Brazil, UNAFEI, and Penal Reform International. An expert from Thailand also made a presentation, as well as experts from the HRC, the ICRC, the Council of Europe (PC-CP), the OSCE, DPO, UNDP, CTED, OAS-CICAD and UNOPS.

29. During the introductory presentations by UNODC, a representative from the Research and Trend Analysis Branch provided an overview of key **trends on the global prison population**, noting a faster rate of increase of female prisoners. She reconfirmed that despite regional variations, **prison overcrowding** remained a global challenge, while noting a lack of universal standards on the minimum space allocated per prisoner, which made comparisons difficult. Pilot initiatives relating to qualitative research on prisoner rehabilitation undertaken by UNODC were also presented. A representative from the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section presented **long-standing and persisting prison challenges**, including overincarceration, overcrowding, as well as systemic neglect and vulnerability to threats. He noted the importance of an all-of-society approach to improving prison conditions and reducing reoffending. In terms of emerging trends and threats, he drew the Commission's attention to the negative impact of unequal COVID-19 recovery, armed conflict as well as climate disruptions on prison management and the treatment of prisoners. The continued relevance and unique standing of the **applicable United Nations standards and norms** on crime prevention and criminal justice was reiterated, **including the Nelson Mandela Rules,<sup>4</sup> the Bangkok Rules<sup>5</sup> and the Tokyo Rules.<sup>6</sup>** Reference was also made to the United Nations Common Position on Incarceration (2021).

30. Most speakers identified **prison overcrowding** as one of the biggest obstacles to a secure, safe, humane and human rights-compliant penitentiary system and stressed the need to focus efforts on addressing the root causes of overcrowding rather than merely its symptoms. At the same time, many speakers acknowledged that concrete strategies to address prison overcrowding had been identified and promoted by UNODC and other relevant stakeholders for many years. A common theme emanating from the discussions was the **urgent need to reduce the scope of imprisonment**. Many speakers noted that deprivation of liberty should be used as a measure of last resort, that the use of **pre-trial detention** should be minimized, and that the use of non-custodial measures and community-based corrections was important, not only from the perspective of reducing the prisoner population, but also in ensuring **individualized and proportionate responses to crime** and thereby reducing reoffending. Many speakers made reference to the importance of **access to legal aid** and the potential of **restorative justice**. A strategy to reduce overcrowding should also include elements of **strengthening public and political buy-in by means**

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), General Assembly resolution 70/175, annex, Rule 3.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders, General Assembly resolution 65/229, adopted in March 2011.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures, General Assembly resolution 45/110, annex, adopted in December 1990.

**of tailored communication and outreach** to ensure evidence-based approaches, to engage civil society, and to promote sensitive reporting in the media.

31. Speakers also referred to the urgent need to **strengthen prison management and improve prison conditions**. Prison conditions were understood to encompass both the basic, material needs such as access to adequate space, food, drinking water, sanitation and health care, but also decent, secure, safe, humane and rehabilitative prison environments at large. The protection of prisoners against natural disasters and other challenges exacerbated by climate change was mentioned as an important emerging challenge. In this context, several speakers referred to the **duty of care** that States have towards persons in detention. The importance of ensuring that **prison planning and architecture** met the needs of prisoners was also emphasized, including by providing adequate infrastructure arrangements for different types of visits, for rehabilitative activities such as work, education or vocational training, and for specific types of populations, including elderly prisoners. Many speakers also highlighted the **plight of women offenders**, who have specific needs when in conflict with the law and especially when incarcerated, and the need to adopt a gender-responsive approach to offender management in line with the **Bangkok Rules**, including by considering the situation of children of incarcerated parents.

32. Prison officers were considered to play a crucial role in prison management and improving prison conditions. The importance of investing in **professionalization and an increased recognition of the challenging and multi-faceted work of prison staff** was underlined by many speakers. The increased use of **information technology** in prison settings in the post-pandemic era was also noted, as was the need to consider more carefully respective opportunities and risks. Information about **tailored management approaches for high-risk prisoners**, including recommendations and experiences from the ongoing United Nations joint initiative on the management of **violent extremist prisoners** and the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons, was also shared.

33. Many speakers underscored the importance of prioritizing rehabilitation and social reintegration of offenders. Critical to achieving this goal was understanding that the problem of reoffending could not be solved by the criminal justice system alone, and that breaking the cycle of reoffending required a **whole-of-government and society approach**. Speakers underlined that efforts to promote the rehabilitation and social reintegration of offenders, such as employment support, education, access to health and other essential social services, must be made both while in custody and in the community after release. It was underlined that such efforts must include **partnerships with organizations and individuals in the community**, including through public-private partnerships, community-based organizations and volunteers. The importance of **countering stigmatization and punitive public attitudes**, for instance through awareness-raising campaigns and effective use of the media, was also mentioned. A number of speakers referred to the **ongoing work to develop Model Strategies on Reducing Reoffending**.

34. Several cross-cutting issues were highlighted throughout the discussions, such as the need to consider and meet the **specific needs of offenders who are exceptionally vulnerable** when in contact with the criminal justice system, including through specialized programmes, and in this regard employing an **individualized approach** to criminal justice interventions based on adequate information on the background of the offender and circumstances of the offence was considered crucial. The importance of **technical assistance**, as well as the international exchange of experiences and promising practices was reiterated.

**(d) Mainstreaming a gender perspective into criminal justice systems; Addressing the vulnerabilities of children and youth in contact with the criminal justice system**

35. On 7 December 2022, the Commission discussed how to **mainstream a gender perspective into criminal justice systems and how to address the vulnerabilities**

**of children and youth in contact with the criminal justice system.** The topics were introduced by representatives of the UNODC Research and Trend Analysis Branch and the UNODC Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section. The expert panel included experts from South Africa, Slovenia, Canada, Colombia, HEUNI, and the International Sociological Association. Expert presentations were made by OHCHR, the SADC Parliamentary Forum, the Conference of Ministers of Justice of the Ibero-American Countries, the International Sociological Association, UN-WOMEN, UNDP, the SRSV-VAC, and UNICEF.

36. A representative from the Research and Trend Analysis Branch provided an overview of **trends on crime disaggregated by gender, and on the gender composition among judges, police and prison personnel**, with still low levels of women represented despite slow improvements. She referred to the new framework developed by UNODC and UN-Women to measure the gender-related killing of girls. A representative from the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section highlighted existing **gender discrimination in criminal justice systems**, exacerbated by COVID-19. With regards to children, understood as people below eighteen years of age as anchored in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, she stressed that preventing child involvement in crime and responding effectively required **addressing the root causes**, including understanding patterns of recruitment into organized criminal and armed groups, including those designated as terrorist groups, and providing child- and gender-sensitive services to help them recover from harm. Concerning **youth and child/juvenile justice**, she underlined the principle of proportionality, the importance to consider the developmental stages of maturity beyond 18, and the need to offer opportunities to reform and to focus on the social reintegration of children and youth in conflict with the law.

37. Several cross-cutting issues emerged from the discussions on all the topics covered during the third thematic session. One of them was the importance of a **coordinated, multi-sectoral and whole-of-society approach** towards ending gender-based discrimination and violence, violence against children and in the field of youth crime prevention, including but not limited to the criminal justice system. The importance of taking a **people-centred justice approach**, and of **awareness-raising** among communities, was also stressed. **Data collection**, in particular the importance of taking into account COVID-19 and its impact on criminal justice systems, was mentioned by many speakers. Concern was expressed regarding the **negative impact of COVID-19** on levels of gender-based violence against women, violence against children and the capacity of the criminal justice system to provide adequate responses.

*Mainstreaming a gender perspective in criminal justice systems*

38. Many speakers welcomed UNODC's efforts to collect and analyse data to identify **trends on gendered aspects regarding crime and criminal justice institutions**, including persistently high levels of gender-related killing of women by their intimate partners or family members; an increasing share of women convicted of trafficking in persons offences; the disproportionate increase in the female prison population in 2000–2020; the high number of women in pretrial detention, many of whom did not benefit from emergency releases at post-sentencing stage; as well as the low percentage of female personnel in the police and prison services around the world. Evidence on **cyber violence against women and girls** was flagged as an indicator of an emerging and growing concern in some regions.

39. Some speakers stressed the **importance of existing international legal instruments for mainstreaming a gender perspective** into the criminal justice system, including the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the General Comments of the CEDAW Committee on women's access to justice and gender-based violence against women, as well as the **Bangkok Rules and other United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice**, and called for enhanced efforts to raise awareness among criminal justice practitioners of these instruments. Tools such as the Essential



Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence developed by a group of United Nations entities were also mentioned.

40. Speakers underlined the importance of **addressing intersectional factors of discrimination that affect men and women in their diversity**, referring to the particular challenges facing specific groups of women in contact with the criminal justice system such as indigenous women, women with disabilities and women in rural areas, whether as victims, offenders or justice professionals.

41. Many speakers underlined the **need for gender-responsive non-custodial measures, access to legal aid and prison reform initiatives** in order to address the distinctive needs of women in conflict with the law or in prison, and to leave no one behind in promoting social reintegration. Concern was expressed over the fact that many women were in prison for administrative offences rather than crimes.

42. The importance of **dismantling gender-based stereotypes, bias and discrimination** in the broader society and also within criminal justice institutions was also highlighted. Some speakers stated that structural discrimination against women could be addressed through promoting more female role models, an adequate use of the media, and the set up or strengthening of support networks, including professional legal networks for career advancement.

43. Many speakers highlighted **efforts and progress made at the national level in mainstreaming gender in the criminal justice system**, including to enhance the equal representation of women staff in the police and the judiciary, to address gender bias and secondary victimization in the criminal justice system or to enhance responses to gender-based violence at the legislative and policy level. Good practices mentioned included **one-stop centres for gender-based violence**, the use of **technology to testify virtually**, thereby facilitating contact with the criminal justice system and preventing secondary victimization, legislative reforms to **protect the identity and record of complainants of sexual violence**, and ways to connect women to services and **ensure access to justice in rural areas**, including through increased access to technology and through mobile justice units.

*Addressing the vulnerabilities of children and youth in contact with the criminal justice system*

44. With regards to children, many speakers underlined the need to **move away from criminalization and punitive approaches**, including the detention of children, and to focus instead on understanding offending behaviour and recognizing when it results from a crime committed against them, for instance through recruitment and exploitation of children by criminal and armed groups, including terrorist groups. Speakers called for a focus on **community-based reintegration and rehabilitation and child-sensitive justice** including diversion, non-custodial measures and restorative justice.

45. The need for **specialized professionals** and justice institutions focusing on child-sensitive justice approaches was highlighted, including through recognizing the ongoing development of children and the resulting vulnerabilities with regards to criminal justice proceedings, from the investigation to the trial phase. It was considered key that all children in contact with the law, be it as offenders, witnesses or victims, benefit from **child-sensitive justice policies and treatment** and are guaranteed safeguards to avoid secondary victimization, trauma and violence. The **importance of prevention** of violence against children and child involvement in crime as well as their **participation in the responses** to these phenomena was stressed, with children and youth to be empowered to participate as agents of change in their own protection.

46. Speakers highlighted the existence of a **strong international legal framework for the protection of children** in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice in addition to United Nations norms and standards. This was not the case for youth, with notable **gaps identified, including in the United Nations youth agenda, and**

**the lack of an international instrument on youth.** It was noted that the **Summit of the Future** must ensure justice systems do not forget future generations. Several speakers noted that **youth was not a clear category**, and that young people have developmental vulnerabilities that must be taken into consideration when investigating suspected offenses and during adjudication beyond the age of 18. Some speakers underlined that, anchored in neuroscience and brain development, which explains that full brain maturity is not reached until the age of 25, several international instruments, OHCHR and the World Congress on Justice With Children recommended an extension of the category of youth up to 25. It was reiterated that the **Beijing Rules** on the administration of juvenile justice also called for an **extension of the principles to young adult offenders**. It was noted that key principles for criminal justice systems when considering young people included being safe, respectful, valued, inclusive, voluntary, transparent, informative, accountable, supportive and advocative.

47. Speakers noted that there is **ample possibility to change the course for a young person** who is at risk of engaging in crime or becoming a victim. It was noted that, while adolescence was the most likely point when rules would be broken, even without interventions this tended to decline in later years, and therefore sometimes it was better for criminal justice institutions not to intervene. The importance of providing **psychosocial support and employment opportunities for young people in conflict with the law was stressed** in connection to multisectoral approaches to prevention of youth involvement in crime. Good practices mentioned included **one-stop centres** – child houses ensuring child-sensitive treatment for child victims, witnesses and child alleged offenders, and **restorative juvenile/child justice**. Many speakers underlined the importance of political will to reform juvenile justice systems and apply restorative justice approaches.

### III. Way forward

48. As part of the Commission's efforts to enhance the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration, **the next thematic discussion is scheduled to be held during the 32nd session of the CCPCJ in 2023**. In line with the multi-year workplan, the Commission will focus on **Pillar III of the Kyoto Declaration, Promoting the Rule of Law**. This will include the topics of Access to justice and equal treatment before the law; Access to legal aid; National sentencing policies; Effective, accountable, impartial and inclusive institutions; Effective anti-corruption efforts; Social, educational and other measures.

49. Member States and interested stakeholders are encouraged to initiate timely preparations for the 2023 thematic sessions to facilitate the participation of relevant experts, with a view to sharing good practices and to discussing how to successfully implement pillar III of the Kyoto Declaration.