

**Fourteenth United Nations Congress
on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Kyoto, Japan, 7–12 March 2021**

Agenda item 6(b)

**International cooperation and technical assistance
to prevent and address all forms of crime: new
and emerging forms of crime**

**Position paper on hate crimes and crimes motivated by bias and discrimination of
any kind, submitted by the delegation of the Republic of Armenia**

With a view of the discussions under agenda item 6 (b) of the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, entitled “International cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address all forms of crime: new and emerging forms of crime” the delegation of the Republic of Armenia would like to invite the attention of the distinguished delegates of the UN Member States to the following:

In the context of the informal consultations on the Kyoto Declaration the delegation of the Republic of Armenia has initiated the inclusion of a separate paragraph on the topic of hate crime in the Kyoto Declaration which was successfully achieved in close cooperation with the United Kingdom as the cosponsor of the paragraph.

Hate crimes and discrimination constitute an immediate threat to the fundamental human rights, and the negligence to properly counter them may lead to exclusion, stigmatisation and violence thus irreversibly and profoundly affecting the fabric of society. Therefore, there is an urgent need to effectively prevent and address grave human rights violations and serious breaches of international humanitarian law, patterned forms of discrimination, exclusion of groups based on their ethnic, racial, national or religious background, hate speech and incitement to violence, justification and denial of the past crimes.

Armenia strongly believes that in order to effectively address hate crimes targeting separate groups based on their ethnic, religious, cultural, and other identity and characteristics, as well as crimes directed against their cultural heritage, we first need to tackle the problem of hate speech and incitement to hatred as well as xenophobia motivated by bias and discrimination in public discourse, media and politics.

With the wide spread of information and communication technologies the problem of incitement to hatred based on racial and other stereotypes and hate speech in the social networks and media need further urgent attention and action with due regard to such fundamental rights as freedom of expression and speech.

It is with that understanding and against this background that the Republic of Armenia has been actively engaged in many international fora aimed at reflecting its principled position on prevention and combating hate crimes in all its manifestations, xenophobia, genocide and ending impunity for such heinous crimes, and has tirelessly worked on strengthening and, where needed enhancing or updating the relevant national and international mechanisms.

Armenia considers hate crimes and crimes based on identity characteristics to basically be the first step that may lead to serious crimes against humanity. It particularly underlines that impunity for the past crimes, their justification and denial pave way for resurgence of violence and new atrocities. Therefore, Armenia has undertaken targeted and consistent efforts to condemn and counter all acts of hate crimes.

This issue is of particular importance and relevance for the delegation of the Republic of Armenia as the Armenian nation throughout its history has been a victim of discrimination, persecution, hate crimes and genocide due to intolerance to its distinctive ethnic, religious and cultural identity and its different expressions.

For decades, Armenia and the Armenian nation have been the target of the state-designed and state-sponsored hate campaign which resulted in dehumanization of the Armenians and, subsequently, in horrendous crimes against their basic human rights and freedoms, including the right to live and the right to express their ethnic and cultural identity freely and without any oppression.

The large-scale and brutal use of force in violation of all norms of international law accompanied with war crimes committed against civilians and prisoners of war is now followed by active state-sponsored and state-promoted false narratives aimed to deny the civilisational presence of the Armenian people in its homeland. The cultural heritage of the Armenian nation created and preserved by generations throughout millennia came under the imminent threat of extinction and obliteration and many other crimes are happening due to the deep rooted hatred and bias fostered for many decades.

Armenia is glad that the Kyoto Declaration, which will be at the heart of international efforts in crime prevention and criminal justice for the coming five years and beyond has addressed the issue of the hate crime in the context of the criminal justice systems. Armenia firmly believes that this is an important step to enable the national criminal justice institutions to pay more attention to such pertinent crimes and continue to strengthen national response mechanisms and international efforts in that regard. We hope that it will help national authorities to create early warning and early action mechanisms and relevant strategies for situations, which may lead to hate crimes, ethnic violence and other grave crimes against humanity.

Armenia remains a committed and strong contributor to the international efforts in this regard.