

14th UN Congress
on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Opening Statement
by the President of the Congress
Ms. KAMIKAWA Yoko
Minister of Justice, Japan

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

Allow me to thank you for the great honour you bestowed upon me to serve this Congress as its President.

I welcome all of you present here in Kyoto. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to each one of you for taking part in this important meeting both in-person and online.

It is also my pleasure to express my gratitude to the State of Qatar, as the Host

Country of the previous Congress, for the remarkable leadership and achievements over the last six years through its Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to His Excellency, Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Antonio Guterres, for taking part live from New York, as well as to Ms. Ghada Waly, Executive Director of the UNODC for serving as the Secretary-General of this Congress, and all members of the Secretariat for their excellent work to hold this Congress.

Excellencies,

This Congress was originally scheduled in April 2020.

Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic has claimed more than 2.5 million lives and brought great disruption.

It continues to threaten our wellbeing with new and more infectious variants.

Nevertheless, with a strong determination to hold this important quinquennial meeting, we have strived and succeeded in holding this Congress.

And today, we finally gather here, online and in-person, from across the globe.

At the opening of this crucial event, I have two points to share with all of you: the Congress in this COVID situation, and youth as torchbearers towards our future.

Excellencies,

Every five years since 1955, we have gathered and addressed common challenges with collective wisdom.

Today, our agenda is very clear: to carry the mantle of the Congress forward, towards enhanced resilience.

On the one hand, we are still struggling to save the lives of vulnerable people by renewing our solidarity. But, on the other hand, we have to look forward into the future towards our society in 2030 and onwards.

Over the next six days, we have to discuss policies and undertakings to build a society where the rule of law prevails and “no one will be left behind.”

I stand ready to tackle this problem head-on with you.

Excellencies,

The second is about the youth.

Youth are the custodians of our future. It is particularly true in these difficult times.

We need young people to share their creative ideas, and to play more active roles.

The Youth Forum for the Fourteenth Congress took place here last week. It is

my greatest pleasure to have the youth representatives here today to share their voices with us.

Youth are the main actors in 2030 and onwards.

Let us listen to their voices, and together, work towards achieving the global agenda -the SDGs.

I would like to conclude by wishing our fruitful discussions. Let us work together to make the world better.

Thank you very much.