



**STATEMENT OF H.E. THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE OF PORTUGAL**  
**14th UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON CRIME PREVENTION AND  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Madam President, Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is a great honour to address such highly qualified multilateral forum, under the aegis of crime prevention and criminal justice.

Allow me to congratulate H.E. Minister Yoko Kamikawa on the election as President of the Congress and express my gratitude to the Government of Japan for the efforts made to organise this event, fifty-one years after the 4<sup>th</sup> Congress that also took place in Kyoto in 1970.

Let me also express my tribute to the UNODC for the work carried out in the preparation of the Congress.

Madam President,

I would like to start by emphasizing that Portugal fully aligns itself with the European Union statement.

The Congress is an important opportunity to share experiences and good practices, envisaging criminal policy reforms, to develop synergies for preventing and fighting crime and promoting criminal justice.



Cooperation is the only way to respond to organized crime, terrorism and its financing, corruption or cybercrime, and others such as sexual abuse of children online, and violence against women and children.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the involvement of organized criminal groups in the counterfeiting of medicines, medical products and equipments. Counterfeiting constitutes a serious risk to public health and safety, a violation of human rights, increasing illegal work, illegal immigration and trafficking in persons.

Recently we have seen a resurgence of racism, xenophobia and hate speech, fuelled by fake news and disinformation.

These are matters of high priority for Portugal during the current presidency of the Council of the European Union.

It is crucial to deepen international cooperation, in particular to fight crimes taking advantage of the cyber-space, with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Madam President,

The approach to the criminal phenomena would not be completed without mentioning the need to protect integrity and independence of criminal justice systems, to promote a justice turned to the defence of victims' rights, to strengthen the role of education and public awareness and the commitment to the rule of law.



I would also like to highlight that a criminal justice system grounded on human rights must ensure that prison conditions adhere to minimum standards, like the ones of Nelson Mandela Rules and Bangkok Rules.

It is also our role to ensure that access to justice and due process is a right granted to everyone, and that respect for human dignity is ensured, and in consonance, death penalty is abolished in every jurisdiction.

To conclude, Madam President,

The achievement of crime prevention and criminal justice purposes depends on common efforts of Member States based on mutual trust and respect, with the contributions of the civil society, academia and all different stakeholders.

I'm sure that the outcome of this Congress, as reflected in the Kyoto political Declaration, will effectively contribute to achieve these purposes.

On behalf of my Government I reaffirm the commitment towards Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law, with the broader goal of attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you, Madam President.