

Draft Script: UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Mr. Secretary-General,

My dear friend and colleague, Executive Director Ghada Waly,¹

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

It is an honour to address the **14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice** on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme.

For the UN family, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a range of **new and unexpected challenges for our work in this sphere**.

For instance, Executive Director Waly has pointed out that, "falsified COVID-19 vaccines will soon be a **lethal reality** and governments need to be prepared to counter this threat."²

More broadly, the pandemic is exposing the **inequalities** and **vulnerabilities** of huge populations.³

It is also **disturbing social cohesion**.

It highlights the need for **continued investment in development at this challenging moment**.

This is vital to foster **stable state institutions** -- the solid foundations needed to create the opportunities that people need more than ever.

In this respect, UNDP's work in support of effective criminal justice and crime prevention is focused on tailored assistance to national authorities in several key areas -- including the **rule of law, human rights**, and the **2030 Agenda**.

¹ Ghada Fathi Waly is the Director-General/ Executive Director of UNODC

² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/10/1075182>

³ E.g. When it comes to the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine -- the UN Secretary-General said in February that 10 nations had administered 75 per cent of the doses. <https://www.france24.com/en/americas/20210217-un-calls-for-urgent-global-vaccination-plan-voices-alarm-over>

Several key instruments will help us to realise our aims.

UNDP would welcome the adoption of the **Kyoto Declaration** -- it offers concrete measures to reduce crime and make life safer for people across the globe.

The United Nations **itself** can do more.

The **Doha Declaration** articulated the need for the UN to better **integrate** its efforts on crime prevention and criminal justice.

To this end, UNDP has been scaling-up its cooperation in the justice sector with our UN partners -- including UNODC and UN Women -- under the **UN Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law umbrella**.⁴

Through this platform, UNDP and our GFP partners have provided key support to war crimes trials in the **Democratic Republic of Congo**. That includes enhancing witness protection as well as assistance to defence counsels and investigators.

In **Liberia**, we worked with national authorities to help prevent the spread of the virus to densely populated detention facilities by leveraging the GFP mechanism.

Through our own **Global Programme**, UNDP has provided tailored support to Governments throughout the pandemic.

That included our work with the European Union to establish an electronic case management and e-filing system for courts in **Fiji**.⁵ It is enabling people to access justice in a more efficient and timely manner.

UNDP is also responding to the **global spike in gender-based violence**.

In **Montenegro**, for instance, UNDP developed the "Be Safe" mobile app. Amongst a range of features, it provides a direct link to professional teams who can provide rapid support to victims of domestic violence.⁶

Indeed, the pandemic has acutely demonstrated how **innovation and technology can enhance our collective efforts to support fair and accountable justice and security systems**.

⁴ GFP

⁵ <https://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/new-digital-innovation-in-fijis-courts.html>

⁶ <https://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/blog/2020/domestic-violence-app-montenegro-covid19.html>

New breakthroughs can also help to enhance **human security**: to secure freedom from fear as well as freedom from want.

To this end, UNDP is committed to **pool vital resources and know-how** with **all of our partners to support crime prevention and fair criminal justice systems -- and to protect human rights and strengthen the rule of law.**

Ultimately, we are helping to ensure that **access to justice, human rights and human security are not a luxury for the few -- but a right for all.**

Finally, please allow me to express my deep gratitude to the **Government of Japan** for hosting this congress under these challenging circumstances.

At UNDP, we deeply appreciate the leadership by **Japan** in the rule of law sphere -- especially the dedicated efforts being made by the Ministry of Justice to effect **positive global change.**

I wish you all a very successful congress and thank you for the opportunity to join you by means of this message.

END