

## **UNFPA**

**Statement by Ms. Diene Keita  
UN Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director  
(Programme)**

14<sup>th</sup> United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice  
(Kyoto Congress)  
High-level segment

Kyoto, Japan, March 7-12, 2021

Excellencies,

Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Under Secretary-General Pramila Patten

Honorable ministers,

On behalf of UNFPA, we wish to congratulate United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the Government of Japan, in particular Minister of Justice, Ms. Yoko Kamikawa for her efforts for hosting this important Congress in Kyoto amidst the global pandemic.

In our fight of pandemic, rule of law, access to justice, and reducing violence and crime are even more relevant.

When the crisis strikes, it is women and girls who bear the burden, and COVID-19 is no exception.

The cases of gender based violence, harmful practices are on the rise under the lockdowns, poverty aggravating and inequality deepening. And we know that the numbers are under reported.

Legal and policy frameworks at all levels must promote and protect the human rights of women and girls when seeking to eliminate gender based violence.

Perpetrators must be held accountable and liable for their actions. Creating comprehensive legislation that criminalizes all forms of gender based violence, including harmful traditional practices is crucial to effectively preventing and responding to gender based violence.

Most of our country offices engage with member states in drafting laws and advocacy and policy to strengthen legislation. Training for prevention and response to gender based violence is crucial for law enforcement.

Data collection particularly on gender based violence, is of importance though it is hard to collect.

We need to know the data on violence against women to achieve no violence and for evidence-based policy and legislation making.

We therefore appreciate the Congress focusing on an “Integrated approaches to challenges facing the criminal justice system” with particular focus on gender based violence.

Finally, I am pleased to note the Youth Forum is held as part of the Congress. UNFPA has traditionally been working with young people as their potential will need to be fulfilled.

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I thank you and wish you a successful Congress.