



Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Doha, 12-19 April 2015

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Successes and challenges in implementing comprehensive crime prevention and criminal justice policies and strategies to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and to support sustainable development

Note verbale dated 9 April 2015 from the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations (Vienna) addressed to the Secretariat of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations (Vienna) presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and has the honour to attach the statement and recommendations of the Doha Youth Forum.

The Permanent Mission of Qatar kindly requests that the statement and recommendations of the Doha Youth Forum, which will be presented at the opening of the Congress, be made available to the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to be held from 12 to 19 April 2015.

The Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations (Vienna) avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice the assurances of its highest consideration.

* A/CONF.222/1.



Annex to the note verbale dated 9 April 2015 from the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations (Vienna) addressed to the Secretariat of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Doha Youth Forum Statement*

Doha, 7-9 April 2015

We, the young people participating in the Doha Youth Forum on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held from 7 to 9 April 2015 in Doha, Qatar, have gathered to share our views and develop recommendations for action, and to support the vision of making the world safer from crime, drugs, corruption, violence and terrorism. We are proud to represent different countries, cultures, points of view and perspectives.

As young members of society, we aspire to rely on the criminal justice system to keep us safe and maintain order. We recognize that in order to achieve sustainable development, it is crucial that we collaborate and work with our governments, civil society and educational institutions to raise awareness about the rule of law and human rights, including those related to the criminal justice system. We recognize the need to take or strengthen measures, to alleviate the factors that make persons vulnerable to trafficking, violence, drug abuse, poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity. We seek through this statement and recommendations for action to support the reduction of crime, and strengthen trust and relations between the youth and the criminal justice system, thus contributing to stronger community cohesion.

We greatly appreciate and welcome the initiative of the Government of Qatar to convene, for the first time, a Youth Forum, prior to the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. In this regard, we encourage future host countries of the Congresses to convene similar youth forums to enable the voices of young people throughout the world to be heard, and to offer innovative and vital solutions to the crime prevention and criminal justice challenges of today and the future.

We call upon all stakeholders who have gathered in Doha at the Thirteenth Congress to consider our recommendations at the Congress and in other suitable forums, including at the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth, which will be convened on 29 May 2015 by the President of the General Assembly.

To address the challenges of crime prevention and criminal justice, and to ensure that our criminal justice systems are fair, just, transparent and accessible, in the post-2015 era, the Doha Youth Forum recommends the following:

* The present report has not been formally edited.

Recommendations

Global and regional youth forums

1. To strengthen the rule of law and support sustainable development, we encourage governments to convene international or regional youth forums on crime prevention and criminal justice.

These Youth Forums should be accessible to all young people around the world, and would serve as a platform that enables young people to constructively interact with government representatives and all stakeholders, providing an opportunity to review the international community's efforts in strengthening criminal justice institutions and access to justice for all.

2. We call for the establishment of an independent Global Youth Council that would consist of outstanding young people, with a view to discussing problems and challenges which are endemic to their communities and are to be taken into consideration when designing appropriate crime prevention and criminal justice responses, and collaborating to find solutions through project development.

The Global Youth Council would meet on a regular basis to discuss project proposals and prepare a report to be presented to an appropriate body of the United Nations for further consideration.

We recommend consideration be given to appointing youth ambassadors for each Member State who would collect and report on crime prevention and criminal justice projects, progress and current challenges.

Public awareness and education

3. Recognizing that social, technological and academic education is imperative in tackling issues related to crime prevention and criminal justice, we encourage the creation of a Global Awareness Campaign that aligns with United Nations' efforts to implement and promote a greater human rights culture and consciousness globally.

We recommend that the Campaign involve a wide range of stakeholders in the community, such as, but not limited to, family, schools, youth and religious institutions, and harness the power of media to achieve this end, including social media and mobile units and clinics.

4. We call upon governments to implement both formal and informal education programmes in primary and secondary schools, as well as in the community, in order to strengthen public awareness and knowledge of the judicial system.

We recommend a system of Public Legal Education (PLE), which would build public awareness of human rights and rights in the criminal justice system, and strengthen knowledge of the judicial system, including through mock courts and community educational programmes.

We recommend embedding legal awareness, including the challenges posed by trafficking in persons and other forms of crime, within the national curricula through Ministries of Education, introducing Law-Related Education (LRE) within primary and secondary schools, which refers to public legal education aimed at students under the age of 18.

5. We strongly support collaborative action geared towards strengthening governments' crime prevention and criminal justice initiatives, in partnership with civil society and international organizations. An example of such collaborative action with a specific focus and target can be the introduction of a Digital Information Programme (DIP) in the school curriculum at the primary and secondary levels.

We recommend that such a programme be used to raise awareness among all members of society regarding the use of modern technology in a digital environment, the rights and responsibilities of Internet and digital technology users, as well as protection from the criminal misuse of information technologies. The primary objectives of such a programme should be, among others, to ensure digital access for all, promote "digital literacy and communication", ensure safe and secure communication in the digital environment, promote safeguards for secure e-commerce, ensure the protection of human rights and in particular the right to privacy, and protect from the different manifestations and types of cybercrime.

Community action and reporting crime through technology

6. We call upon governments, with the support of the United Nations and the private sector, to take measures to strengthen the use of technology to facilitate the reporting of crime, particularly in cases where the victim is unable, for whatever reason, to speak to the appropriate authorities.

Such technology could include the following: (a) a mobile application that would be targeted at the general public (who have access to smartphones); (b) an SOS function for all mobile devices that could be implemented through a pre-existing "button" or code; and (c) locally and regionally managed centres and hotlines to provide crime-reporting information and assistance.

7. We further encourage governments to harness available technology to establish and further support community watch groups to disseminate information to the general public, deter criminal activity and operate as a neighbourhood resource and support network.

Prisons and reintegration of offenders

8. We call upon governments, in partnership with non-governmental organizations, to prioritize rehabilitation programmes inside and outside correctional institutions, available to all persons incarcerated, to improve the process of reintegration into society.

Such programmes would include consultations with physical and mental health professionals specialized in the rehabilitation of inmates, as well as skills training by specialists so that they return to society and are enabled to find employment without returning to criminal activity.

We encourage providing opportunities for public talks and other events where ex-convicts who have been fully rehabilitated talk to youth to discourage them from falling into criminal activity.

Economic development and employment opportunities

9. We call upon private sector entities, and encourage governments and the United Nations to join this call, to actively promote and provide opportunities for people living in vulnerable situations and crime-prone areas, particularly young people, to serve in internship or training programmes with a view to long-term, stable employment.

We recommend that such programmes be offered as incentives for underprivileged people to focus on activities productive to society as opposed to criminal in nature.

We further recommend that private sector entities dedicate a fixed percentage of intern and recruitment opportunities to this effort.

10. We further call upon private sector entities to sponsor a range of community-based activities — such as sporting events, the instalment of street lamps and the responsible disposal to organizations for the needy of unsold preserved food items — with a view to deterring and preventing criminal activity.

Human trafficking

11. We recommend that Member States, non-governmental organizations, private sector and other active stakeholders in the field of human trafficking adopt and promote comprehensive policies.

These policies should support measures aimed at preventing human trafficking and at providing assistance to victims of trafficking and protecting them from further re-victimization, taking into account their age, gender and special needs.

12. We strongly call for the establishment of joint initiatives that support the creation of research centres to promote awareness about the impact of and challenges posed by trafficking in persons, and to generate and share information and statistical data, national measures and disseminate knowledge on the best ways to prevent and combat it.

Identity theft

13. We recognize that the Internet and technology can provide opportunities, as well as pose challenges. To protect our identities, we call upon governments, social networking companies and all relevant stakeholders to take all measures necessary to prevent and punish identity theft.

These measures include enacting strict legislation to prevent and combat identity theft and to promote preventive measures to raise awareness and inform citizens of this crime and its consequences.

Social networking companies should develop such measures with a view to cooperating with national authorities to exercise effective monitoring for scams and other cybercrime-related practices.

Cybercrime and other emerging crimes

14. We recommend that governments encourage and promote public-private partnerships to address the challenges of cybercrime. We also strongly favour the active involvement of Internet service providers in the fight against cybercrime, especially through reporting suspicious behaviour to competent investigative authorities.

15. We recommend the adoption of regulations and normative standards to give social networking providers (e.g., Facebook and Google) the right to access, but not use or sell, the private information of users, such as date of birth, origin, e-mail and photos, among others.

16. We recommend the establishment of a research entity that would study the causes and effects of the progression of the digital environment on the livelihood of citizens.

17. We also recommend the repackaging of terms and conditions used online into less ambiguous and more accessible forms (such as short videos) in order to minimize the risk of exploitation.

Drug trafficking

18. We strongly support joint initiatives between countries on regional and international levels focusing on drug seizures and border control.

These initiatives should focus on strengthening cooperation between countries of origin and destination to prevent and combat drug trafficking and to improve the monitoring and search of shipping containers at key transit points and destination countries.