Your Excellencies, Ministers, friends of civil society:

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak during the High Level segment of this Congress. As many of you know the non-governmental organisations met yesterday and we agreed upon a civil society declaration which is being circulated and which I will now summarise.

First of all, we wish to express our appreciation for the arrangements made by the Qatar Government and to praise the Doha Declaration as a progressive document.

However, we desire that these deliberations and the resolution emanating from the Congress should place crime prevention efforts more centrally within the post 2015 Development Agenda. We stress that the UNODC mandate is actually relevant to almost all of the SDGs currently under consideration. At the same time, we would have liked to have seen a greater recognition of the other UN organisations - UNDP, UNESCO, the Offices of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Refugees,
UNICEF, UNFPA, UNEP, HABITAT, WHO, the World Bank, the UN regional commissions in creating prosperity, respect for the rule of law, inclusion, equity, migrants' rights, safer cities, mutual understanding, and open governance structures.

Specifically, we would like to see a greater recognition of NGOs and academia’s competence in the emerging forms of crime - trafficking in cultural property, cybercrime, wildlife and forest crimes. We still hope for greater acceptance of NGOs in the review mechanisms for UNCAC and UNTOC. We believe that potential contributions of NGOs could be utilized in programme development, UN studies, and monitoring of implementation and evaluating outcomes.

We strongly believe that more emphasis should be placed on the IMPLEMENTATION of the UN criminal justice resolutions and Congress Declarations, at the international and national levels. In our document, we propose very concrete suggestions how this might be done. We
envisage a stronger, more structure and more open approach in how the UNODC and civil society operate as partners.

We note the absence of a reference to the UN Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. We would wish a stronger endorsement of the revised Standard Minimum Rules negotiated in Capetown.

We call on Member States to abolish the death penalty completely but at minimum introduce a moratorium on execution in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolutions.

We ask that States ensure the proportionality of sentencing policies, particularly in relation to drug crimes and examine the use of alternatives to incarceration for minor offences and possible prejudicial patterns towards racial, ethnic, indigenous, or minority groups. We deplore the criminalisation of certain groups, such as the LGBT
community and certain status offences particularly affecting women and the poor.

The non-governmental organisations also plead for a greater understanding of structural discrimination and violence toward women, ethnic, religious minorities, migrants and refugees. There should be greater sympathy for people fleeing wars, dictatorships, the effects of climate change or extreme deprivation, who in desperation utilise the services of a smuggler. Specifically, we ask that states explore alternative arrangements to repatriation and offer services in languages that migrants and refugees can access including vocational training.

We encourage Member States to provide adequate legal protection for whistle blowers, human rights defenders and journalists. We cannot stress enough the importance of accessible competent legal aid services. We urge that Member States take advantage of the practical knowledge of civil society organisations and their connections to local
realities. Finally, we recommend that governmental agencies listen to the people they serve, the communities and minority groups, the women and girls, and especially youth. For it is in their observations about their worlds, that also the solutions will be found.

Thank you for your attention.