





Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

Vienna, 10-17 April 2000

Distr.: General 15 December 1999

Original: English

Item 1 of the provisional agenda* Opening of the Congress

The state of crime and criminal justice worldwide

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 52/91 of 12 December 1997, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare an overview of the state of crime and criminal justice worldwide for presentation at the opening of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The present report contains a description of major crime trends and developments since the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held in Cairo from 29 April to 8 May 1995. In addition, it presents some criminal justice responses, both national and international, to those trends. Preliminary findings of the Sixth United Nations Survey on Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems are presented, as well as the Global Programme against Corruption, the Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings and the Global Study on Transnational Organized Crime.

A/CONF.187/1.

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction: new challenges and concerns	1-5	3
II.	Recent findings	6-26	3
	A. Overall crime rates	12-13	4
	B. Other trends	14-17	7
	C. Crime and political change	18-21	7
	D. Crime and stability	22-24	8
	E. Crime and technology	25-26	8
III.	Reducing and preventing crime	27-37	9
	Major concerns in crime prevention	28-37	9
IV.	Crime prevention: a national and global priority	38-39	11
V.	Conclusions: future international action	40	11
1.	European Union: average total recorded crimes 1990-1997		5
2.	Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: average total	• • • • • • •	J
	recorded crimes, 1990-1997		5
3.	Asia and the Pacific: average total recorded crimes 1990-1997		6
4.	Selected countries: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997		6
	III. IV. V. 1. 2.	II. Recent findings A. Overall crime rates B. Other trends C. Crime and political change D. Crime and stability E. Crime and technology III. Reducing and preventing crime Major concerns in crime prevention IV. Crime prevention: a national and global priority V. Conclusions: future international action 1. European Union: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997 2. Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997 3. Asia and the Pacific: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997	I. Introduction: new challenges and concerns II. Recent findings A. Overall crime rates B. Other trends C. Crime and political change D. Crime and stability E. Crime and technology III. Reducing and preventing crime Major concerns in crime prevention IV. Crime prevention: a national and global priority V. Conclusions: future international action 1. European Union: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997 2. Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997 3. Asia and the Pacific: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997

I. Introduction: new challenges and concerns

- 1. Perhaps no term has dominated recent international discourse as "globalization" has. Globalization has a tendency to be both praised for all social, economic and political triumphs and blamed for all negative effects. Significant research has been conducted on the issue, and definitions of globalization vary. The Human Development Report 1999, while not offering a definition per se, presents a concise description in saying that the free flow of money and trade is matched by the liberating power of the flow of ideas and information driven by new technologies. Regardless of the definition used, the world economy has entered a new phase of development that has the potential to benefit millions of people.
- International trade is bringing fresh investment to nations emerging from agriculture-based economies or those moving away from state planning. According to the World Trade Organization, exports of merchandise jumped by 36 per cent between 1993 and 1996. The total amount of private capital leaving the European Union, Japan and the United States of America is five times greater than it was less than a decade ago. There is also a significant amount of capital leaving developing countries. Globalization is pointed to as the cause of increased disparity between wealthy and poor countries. According to the Human Development Report 1999, the past decade has shown increasing concentration of income, resources and wealth among people, corporations and countries. For example, member States of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development account for 19 per cent of the world's population and 71 per cent of global trade in goods and services. Moreover, over the past three decades, the income gap between the wealthiest 20 per cent of the world's population and the poorest 20 per cent has more than doubled. Similarly, globalization has had an impact on criminality at the national and international levels.
- 3. While there is significant debate over the meaning of globalization (some academic journals, such as Global Governance, are devoted largely to its discussion), for the purposes of the present report, the term refers to the erosion of political borders and the opening up of economic markets previously closed or highly regulated by state intervention.
- 4. Globalization has led to an environment ripe for new and expanded forms of criminality. The changing structure of trade, finance, communications and information has

- helped to foster an environment in which criminality is not confined to national borders. It is operating increasingly across borders and, in many cases, is global in nature. Criminal organizations have adapted corporate-like structures to criminal activities, employing highly skilled persons and mechanisms to assist in generating and concealing profits. In addition, much like organizations in the legitimate economy, criminal organizations are able to adapt themselves to changes in the market by responding to public demand for goods and services.
- 5. Few governmental policy makers, criminal justice officials, economic development experts or scholars would dispute that the scope of crime is expanding and it is becoming more complex. The destabilizing effects of war, terrorism and the collapse of the old world order have combined with the vulnerabilities of failing or newly emerging economies to create fertile ground for illegal activities. Even booming economies are seeing increases in certain types of crime, particularly those involving high technology. The challenge is to understand both the extent of criminal expansion and to develop mechanisms to reduce and prevent it.

II. Recent findings

- 6. Since 1977, the Centre for International Crime Prevention of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention of the Secretariat has periodically conducted the United Nations surveys of crime trends and operations of criminal justice systems. The United Nations surveys, comprised of officially recorded data on police, prosecution, courts and prisons from 1970 to 1997, help to provide a picture of the changing trends. Over 40 Governments have submitted responses to the Sixth United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems, covering the period 1995-1997. Over 100 Governments are expected to submit their responses by the time the Sixth Survey is completed in mid-2000.²
- 7. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) has periodically conducted, with assistance from the Governments of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the International Crime Victim Survey, which provides additional information on crime worldwide. Individuals are interviewed about several main forms of victimization, including household property crime, personal crime, corruption and consumer fraud.

- In addition to the efforts cited above, the Centre for International Crime Prevention and UNICRI have joined forces to conduct the Global Studies on Transnational Organized Crime which involves the project "Assessing transnational organized crime groups: dangerousness and trends", and the project "World Organized Crime Report". The Centre for International Crime Prevention is taking the lead on the first project, aimed at developing a mechanism to determine the social and economic harm generated by organized criminal groups. The second project, conducted by UNICRI, is aimed at providing a better understanding of illicit markets and the economic, social and political factors behind them. In March 1999, the Centre for International Crime Prevention launched two other global initiatives, the Global Programme against Corruption and the Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings. Each initiative has as its core component the collection and analysis of data and other information.
- 9. Most Governments maintain a mechanism to record developments in criminal activity. However, as noted in the Global Report on Crime and Justice, "a country's open announcement in the international arena of the extent of its crime problem and its processing of offenders through the justice system is a major political event".3 The validity of data and the impression that it makes are often of great importance to Governments at the national and international levels. National statistics on crime are, therefore, often criticized for reflecting not trends in crime per se, but the activities of the agencies that record statistics on crime. As a result, official statistics on crime tend to under-report true crime figures, leaving gaps, particularly with regard to types of crime that are not conventional. In response to these concerns, many criminologists and government agencies have conducted self-report surveys and victimization surveys, claiming that these methods give a more accurate picture of criminal activity. Such methods, however, can be reductive. Household victimization surveys, for example, exclude information on corporate, white-collar, administrative and political crime.
- 10. While the debate continues as to the merits of the various methods, a consensus has emerged that conclusions on the state of crime should be based on a set of indicators that can supplement each other. For example, the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control,

- affiliated with the United Nations, recently published a report containing profiles of countries in Europe and North America. The report combines police figures with victim survey results, as well as other data sources such as those of the World Health Organization. What has become clear is that police statistics often reflect trends apparent in the victim survey results, such as increases and decreases in criminal activity.
- 11. To persons who make decisions on criminal justice policy, there is a wealth of data and other information available on national and international trends and patterns in criminality. Some of the major developments are highlighted below.

A. Overall crime rates

- 12. Preliminary data from the Sixth Survey, coupled with data from the Fifth United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Criminal Justice Operations, covering the period 1990-1994, reveal patterns in overall crime rates that are consistent with those reported in recent media coverage. For example, the total number of crimes reported to the police in the period 1990-1997 dropped or stayed approximately the same in member States of the European Union that submitted responses for both surveys (Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Spain and Sweden (see table 1)). The same was true for total recorded cases of a diverse group of crime types that included fraud, embezzlement, burglary, automobile theft, assault, intentional homicide, theft, robbery and rape.
- 13. In contrast, total recorded drug-related offences appear to have increased in the European Union. In countries in eastern Europe and member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine), total recorded crime appears to have increased during the 1990s. That is consistent with many media reports on the subject (see table 2). In Asia and the Pacific (Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Malaysia and Republic of Korea) there was an increase in total crimes recorded during the period 1990-1997 (see table 3). In all countries throughout the world, there appears to be an increase in total recorded time (see table 4).

Table 1

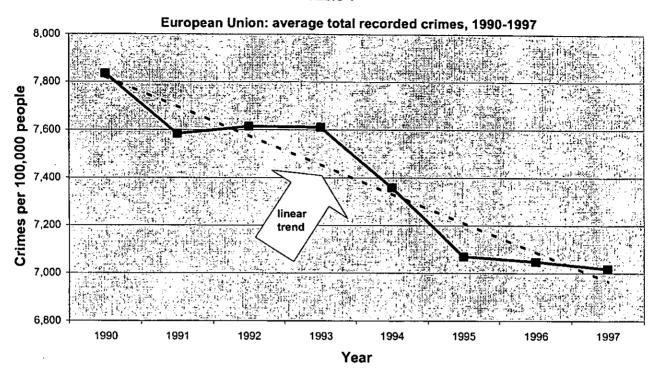


Table 2

Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997

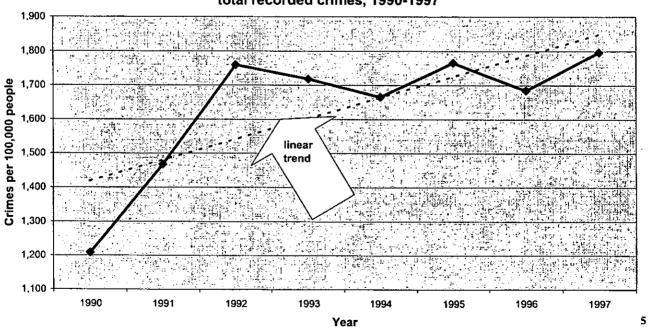


Table 3

Asia and the Pacific: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997

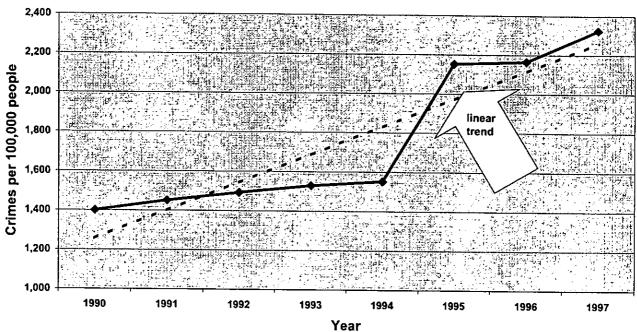
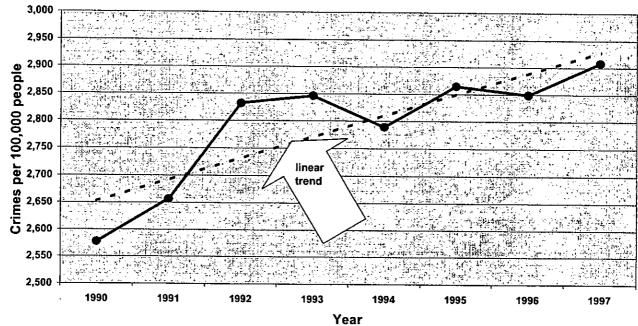


Table 4
Selected countries: average total recorded crimes, 1990-1997



B. Other trends

- 14. Various national reports indicate other interesting patterns. In New Zealand, for example, recorded crime dropped 2.5 per cent in 1998 compared with the figure for 1997. The National Commissioner of Police attributed the decrease to the increased commitment of police staff, additional frontline staff provided by the Government of New Zealand and efforts of the community and partner agencies.⁶ In Nigeria, the Inspector General of Police ordered his staff to develop new strategies to deal with the perceived upsurge in crime in the country. The increase was attributed to the ability of criminals and criminal groups to recognize and adapt to the traditional crime prevention techniques of police. That view has been echoed by the many criminal justice officials worldwide who acknowledge that criminals, particularly those organized into networks and syndicates, have an ability to modify their criminal activities according to market needs and demands. Nigerian criminal networks attempting to enter the illicit drug trafficking market in South Africa were met by unexpected competition from South African drug trafficking groups that had been feuding and competing with one another. South African law enforcement officials had not expected the cohesion shown by the local drug trafficking groups or their solidarity against the influx of Nigerian criminals.
- 15. Market forces have generated criminal activity where there was little or none some years ago. One example is the increased demand for certain illicit goods, such as narcotics. Information collected by the Illicit Crop Monitoring Programme and the various field offices of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), indicates that global opium production increased by as much as 50 per cent in 1999, with production levels nearly doubling in Afghanistan. Coca production estimates, however, appear to be more stable. There is evidence to suggest that these patterns may be driven by social likes and dislikes, or fads, just as many other licit markets are created, expanded and dissolved. "Crack" cocaine, for example, appears to be one of the "consumer products" that have fallen into disfavour or have gone out of fashion. Heroin use, on the other hand, seems to be experiencing an upswing. Varieties of heroin with a high purity level that can be snorted or smoked are experiencing expanded use among those who formerly considered intravenous injection to be taboo. These more socially acceptable methods of heroin consumption

- coupled with its recent glamorization in the fashion and pop culture industries are the likely cause of an increase in the illicit demand for and a supply of heroin.
- 16. There is growing concern over the "new" dangers associated with synthetic drugs. The World Drug Report indicates that the amount of seized synthetic drugs worldwide increased annually by 16 per cent in the period 1978-1993. Many popular synthetic drugs, such as sedatives and amphetamine-type stimulants, are produced from various licit precursors in clandestine laboratories in nearly all parts of the world. Therefore, while the illicit demand for the more "traditional" and "natural" drugs, such as heroin and cocaine, is restricted to reasonably well-defined regions, new illicit drugs are consumed by a much more widespread addict population.
- 17. Market forces are also playing a significant role in the illicit firearms trade. According to the United Nations International Study on Firearm Regulation, while nearly all countries employ some mechanism to regulate the possession, sale, use and production of and trade in firearms, the illegal market is growing. For example, in western Africa, over 2 million people—90 per cent of them civilians—have been killed by small arms since 1990. In Uganda, an AK-47 assault rifle on the black market sells for about the same price as a chicken. Nearly 40 per cent of the worldwide flow of small arms is attributed to illicit trafficking. Moreover, developing countries account for nearly 70 per cent of all illicit firearms purchases. Expanded political unrest and civil war are likely to have contributed to the trend.

C. Crime and political change

- 18. Crime trends can be affected by political instability, change and strife. The Russian Federation and South Africa are examples of countries that are experiencing significant social and political change. Such change presents opportunities for scholars and criminal justice officials to improve their understanding of criminal activity, particularly the activities of criminal syndicates.
- 19. There have been frequent daily reports of corruption in the Russian Federation. One report described the misuse of an International Monetary Fund loan of \$4.8 billion in 1998. The funds were designed to help stabilize the Russian economy and the rouble, which had been under pressure as a result of investors removing their funds. The extent of wrongdoing is being debated.

- 20. Trafficking in human beings is in the forefront of the Russian crime scene. The Russian Federation is being used as both a transit country and source country for illegally transporting persons into eastern and western Europe. As many as 500,000 women who are not nationals of a member State of the European Union are working in the sex industry in the European Union. According to police authorities in Germany, average monthly earnings of an illegal Russian migrant working as a prostitute in Germany amount to about \$7,500, of which \$7,000 is kept by the brothel owner and the rest is spent on housing, food and clothing. The prostitute is usually able to save no more than \$12 per month.9
- 21. In South Africa, the political changes of 1994 that brought an end to the era of apartheid also brought a degree of instability and a transitional police force. As a result of those developments, there has been a significant increase in car thefts in the country. Stolen cars are used as currency in South Africa and in neighbouring countries: they are often exchanged for narcotics, illicit weapons and other contraband. The number of reported carjackings increased from 13,011 in 1997 to 15,111 in 1998, representing an increase of 16.1 per cent. The increase in truck hijacking in the same period was even higher: 34.4 per cent. The hijacking of motor vehicles is often accompanied by violence. South Africa appears to be experiencing high rates of violence in general. Its rates for homicide, rape, robbery and violent theft are among the highest in the world. It is difficult to estimate the degree to which violent crimes of this kind are linked to organized criminal groups, but it is evident that South Africa is a country ripe for the expansion of organized crime. The country has a well-developed infrastructure: there are air, road and sea links to the rest of the world and its telecommunication facilities are on a par with those of most developed countries. South Africa is capable of being both a supplier (gold, diamonds, ivory, rhinoceros horn, abalone and motor vehicles), and a market (illegal drugs and firearms) for organized crime.

D. Crime and stability

22. Organized crime is not confined to countries with economies in transition or developed countries. The tentacles of organized crime have reached nearly all regions of the world. For example, the United Kingdom has experienced an increase in organized crime although it is a country with a long history of innovative law

- enforcement, strong research and policy development, and a professional judiciary. In a recent statement, the Director of the National Criminal Intelligence Service indicated that activities such as drug trafficking and credit card fraud were worth an estimated 50 billion pounds sterling. ¹⁰ It was reported that criminal groups were extremely flexible, constantly finding new gaps to exploit in the market. There were indications that political instability in the Balkan area, for example, was driving upward the numbers of asylum seekers in the United Kingdom. There was a concern that some may form criminal alliances to assist one another in illegally transporting individuals.
- 23. According to the "Situation Report on Organized Crime" published by the European Union in 1997, in the Netherlands there is a rather diverse group involved in trafficking in human beings. Persons from Brazil, Colombia, Nigeria, Turkey and countries in eastern Europe have been involved in such trafficking. There has been a focus on trafficking in women from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Yugoslavia, and its former constituent republics and the CIS member States for the purpose of prostitution in the Netherlands.
- 24. Organized criminal groups in eastern Europe, involved in trafficking in human beings, have expanded into other criminal activities, including drug trafficking and the smuggling of motor vehicles. Money-laundering also appears to be a problem area for law enforcement in the Netherlands: the Unusual Transactions Disclosure Office reported some 17,000 transactions in 1997. Colombian, Moroccan and Turkish criminal groups often send money from the Netherlands to their home countries via courier and the underground banking system.

E. Crime and technology

- 25. Governments have been struggling with how to regulate commerce on the Internet. The guidelines governing face-to-face market transactions are often not suited to electronic interaction. Similarly, law enforcement efforts and strategies that have proved successful in the real world are inadequate in the "virtual" world. For example, an Internet gambling company in New York has its computers placed in Antigua, where casino gambling is legal.
- 26. In addition to making more accessible "traditional" crimes, such as gambling, the Internet has produced new forms of crime. The Vice-President of the United States

has initiated an effort to curb "cyber-stalking" (using the Internet, e-mail or other electronic communication devices to stalk another person). Moreover, technological advances are used to enhance age-old crimes. A number of individuals have been defrauded through advance-fee schemes perpetrated by Nigerian nationals using the Internet and e-mail addresses. Other methods include using new graphics and printing technology to falsify documents such as passports and visas.

III. Reducing and preventing crime .

27. The collection of data and other information on crime trends, victimization, criminal justice systems, organized criminal groups and illicit market dynamics is essential to developing strategies aimed at reducing and preventing crime. The United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme is leading the international community with a wide-ranging strategy that brings together legal, preventive and operational components. Firstly, the year 2000 is expected to witness the completion and signing of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as three additional legal instruments: on trafficking in persons, especially women and children; on the smuggling of migrants; and on the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms. The Convention and its three protocols will provide a common legal framework for international cooperation aimed at fighting serious cross-border criminality. Secondly, the Centre for International Crime Prevention is assisting the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the elaboration of draft elements of responsible crime prevention.12 Finally, the Centre has started to expand its operational and field presence as Governments are looking more and more to the United Nations for assistance in addressing new and emerging kinds of crime.

Major concerns in crime prevention

28. Organized crime, corruption and trafficking in human beings are the major concerns of the international community in the field of crime prevention. The same issues are the focus of the global programmes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme.

- 29. In the last decade, organized criminal groups have taken advantage of new criminal markets. As a result, they have expanded their activities worldwide to pose a genuine threat to the international community. Criminal groups have established networks in their home countries, as well as abroad in an effort to carry out activities more effectively in both licit and illicit markets. They are now able to infiltrate financial, economic and political systems of countries all over the world. Sophisticated criminal techniques, including the use of highly skilled individuals such as lawyers and accountants, have left law enforcement personnel struggling to contain the new diversity of criminality. Moreover, criminal groups often resort to extreme violence and fear tactics in their efforts to break the will of citizens and law enforcement personnel.
- 30. The Global Studies on Transnational Organized Crime are developing mechanisms to better understand such concerns. The Centre for International Crime Prevention has launched a pilot survey, entitled "United Nations transnational organized crime assessment form", in a number of countries, including Australia, Barbados, Canada, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States. The pilot survey is an attempt to obtain data and other information on the activities of organized criminal groups.
- 31. Many countries share a common legal definition of what is considered to be an organized criminal group (for example, a group composed of three or more individuals, driven by the pursuit of profit, suspected of committing or having committed serious criminal offences and existing for a prolonged or indefinite period of time). In the pilot survey, the respondents were asked to provide their own definition of organized crime and its characteristics (according to their experience and the particular features assumed by organized criminal groups in their respective countries) and to test the survey on the most prominent organized criminal group based in the country in the last three years. "Most prominent" was defined as, inter alia, the group most frequently written about in the media and most often targeted by the police or prosecution. The effort is part of the ongoing work of the Centre for International Crime Prevention to better understand the phenomenon of organized crime with a view to assisting Governments in coordinating their crime prevention strategies. In addition, within the framework of the assessment project, a research study is expected to be carried out on Nigerian organized criminal groups active in member

States of the Economic Community of West African States, with particular emphasis on their links to France.

- 32. Corruption, including the issue of extortion, is recognized as a major problem capable of threatening social, economic and political development and undermining democracy and morality. In a recent poll of over 30,000 persons worldwide, levels of perceived corruption among politicians exceeded 75 per cent for all regions of the world, with South America and the Far East recording levels of 90 per cent.13 Moreover, empirical research of the International Monetary Fund indicates that corrupt countries achieve aggregate investment levels of almost 5 per cent less than ones not considered corrupt. With the growing globalization of markets, accompanied by the internationalization of illegal activities, corruption has gained an international dimension. Top priority is being accorded to the exchange of information and efforts to standardize strategies for countering corruption.
- As part of the Global Programme against Corruption initiative, three levels and types of corruption are being assessed and countries are being assisted in detecting, preventing and fighting corruption. The first type of corruption is corruption in public administration, relating mainly to citizens' perceptions of and experiences with government offices, local licensing authorities, police, customs and inspectors. The second type is business corruption, which refers to experiences of medium-sized businesses and retailers, including perceptions of business people; corruption of this type distorts market processes and relations and can foster monopolies and unfair competition. High-level corruption of financial, political and administrative centres of power represents the third type of corruption. It is most destructive and can create major disturbances in international economic and political relations. Within the framework of the Global Programme against Corruption, countries are being assisted in assessing the size and nature of the problems at hand and in setting priorities. In addition, countermeasures are being developed, including mechanisms to enhance the transparency and accountability of public procurement and international commercial transactions. Moreover, training is being provided to policy makers, judges, prosecutors, law enforcement personnel and financial sector authorities. The first projects were launched in Hungary and Lebanon.
- 34. The smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings have increased throughout the world in recent years. The smuggling of migrants disrupts established

- immigration policies of the countries of destination and often involves human rights abuses. The exploitative nature of the treatment of trafficking victims often amounts to a modern form of indentured servitude, with forced prostitution ranking highest among the means of exploitation. Smuggling and trafficking have become major sources of income for criminal organizations at the national and international levels.
- 35. Although there are many media reports on such problems and an increasing number of local case studies, an overall picture of the involvement of organized crime, in terms of its size, nature and development, remains elusive. The lack of such an overview hampers the design, adoption and funding of effective national and international strategies. The Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings is filling the void, providing for the collection and analysis of information on trafficking routes and assessing best practice in criminal justice responses to the problem. For example, a preliminary inventory was made of the literature on trends in trafficking in the Philippines. In addition, the Global Programme on Trafficking in Human Beings is promoting the creation of coalitions among law enforcement agencies, immigration authorities, victim assistance groups and human rights organizations. The first coalition project will begin in the Czech Republic.
- While significant attention has been given by the international community to the above-mentioned issues. there are other issues that have priority for national and international law enforcement officials and policy makers. The issues of urban crime, violence and security remain high on the political agenda in many countries. The workshop on community involvement in crime prevention, to be held within the framework of the Tenth Congress, will deal with some of those issues in more detail. Computer crime has surfaced as a major concern and, as such, will be dealt with in the Tenth Congress workshop on crimes related to the computer network. Moneylaundering and the exploitation of offshore banking centres have increased, as organized criminal groups have increased their efforts to make "legal" their illegal proceeds. The United Nations is making efforts to counter, those developments through its Global Programme against Money-Laundering and the United Nations Offshore Forum.
- 37. The recent upsurge of terrorist crime has led to the establishment, in the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, of a unit for the prevention of terrorism. The

unit will monitor and analyse trends in terrorism worldwide, identify best practices in combating terrorism and disseminate the lessons learned to States through technical cooperation projects. Every second year, beginning in 2001, the unit will publish a global survey on terrorism.

IV. Crime prevention: a national and global priority

- 38. The above overview of recent trends and concerns indicates the necessity of making the prevention of crime a national and global priority. Regarding crime prevention as a priority, however, is a fairly recent development. While the United Nations has had a crime prevention component for 50 years, it was only in 1992, when the first session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was held, that the issue was brought to the forefront of international policy development. The momentum and commitment evidenced by nearly all Governments in the development of the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime is an example of the priority given to preventing crime at the international level.
- 39. Global initiatives require national counterparts and strategies. National councils and agencies have been established in many countries for the sole purpose of coordinating crime prevention initiatives. Some have included specialized agencies designed to deal with new and emerging problems involving crime such as transnational organized crime. Those agencies must cooperate closely with countries that produce or trans-ship illicit goods.

V. Conclusions: future international action

40. The Tenth Congress will be convened on the threshold of a new century and at the end of a decade marked by significant political change and technological progress. It will present a unique opportunity to tap into the knowledge and experience of Governments, non-governmental organizations and individual experts to meet the challenge of crime. The Tenth Congress may serve as a springboard for norm-setting, more effective international cooperation, action-oriented studies, the analysis of strategies for fighting crime and technical

assistance activities of various kinds. The globalization of most contemporary problems has made international cooperation a pressing priority, particularly with regard to combating crime. A growing concern in recent times is transnational organized crime.

Notes

- United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 1999 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. v, 3, 11.
- More information about the United Nations surveys can be found on the United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network at http://www.uncjin.org under "Statistics" and "Surveys of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems".
- ³ Graeme Newman, ed., Global Report on Crime and Justice (New York, Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 8.
- ⁴ Kristina Kangaspunta et al., Profiles of Criminal Justice Systems in Europe and North America, 1990-1998 (Helsinki, HEUNI, 1999).
- On 1 July 1997, the territory of Hong Kong became the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China.
- ⁶ See "Recorded crime drops", Crime and Justice International, July-August 1999, pp. 9-10.
- ⁷ United Nations International Drug Control Programme, World Drug Report (New York, Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 19
- ⁸ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.IV.2.
- ⁹ Pino Arlacchi, Schiavi (Milan, Rizzoli, 1999), p. 83.
- See "UK organised crime on the rise", BBC Online Network, 6 September 1999.
- ¹¹ See "Al Gore addresses cyberstalking", Global Crime Update (New York), No. 31, 20 October 1999.
- 12 The draft elements of responsible crime prevention first appeared as an annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/33 of 21 July 1997. They have since been developed further by an expert group meeting held in Buenos Aires from 8 to 10 September 1999, in response to Council resolution 1999/25 of 28 July 1999, entitled "Effective crime prevention". The revised draft elements are annexed to the working paper prepared by the Secretariat on effective crime prevention (A/CONF.187/7).
- 13 See Gallup International 50th Anniversary Survey, www.gallup-international.com/survey1.htm

This archiving project is a collaborative effort between United Nations

Office on Drugs and Crime and American Society of Criminology, Division of
International Criminology. Any comments or questions should be directed to

Cindy J. Smith at CJSmithphd@comcast.net or Emil Wandzilak at

emil.wandzilak@unodc.org.