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FIRST UN CONGRESS ON PREVENTION OF CRIME AND TREATMENT
OF OFFENDERS CONCLUDES SESSION IN GENEVA

(The following is based on information received from the UN Information Center, Geneva.)

With the more than 500 delegates acclaiming the results achieved as holding "great promise for contributing to the cause of human welfare," the first United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders was concluded on Saturday, 3 September, in Geneva. The delegates adopted a resolution which expressed the opinion that the Congress had been a significant success.

In formally closing the two-week session, Congress President Edouard de Steiger of Switzerland stressed that the delegates could be proud of their achievements, having adopted minimum rules on the treatment of prisoners, rules on the recruitment of prison personnel, a nine-point recommendation on "open institutions" -- prisons without bars, locks or other security measures -- rules on prison labor, and recommendations on the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

The resolutions adopted, he said, were evidence of the admirable harmony with which delegates had contributed to the common endeavor.

Earlier, the Congress completed examination of recommendations in the field of prevention of juvenile delinquency by adopting recommendations on research relating to delinquency causes, prediction and prevention.

On future UN action in this field, the Congress gave its unanimous approval to a resolution calling the attention of the Secretary-General to the need for maintaining the priority given this problem in the program of work of the Social Commission, and requesting him to inform that Commission of the following suggestions, with a view to their inclusion in the social defense program:

(a) That a study be made of methods used for the prevention of juvenile delinquency for the purpose of assessing the practical results of these methods both direct and indirect;

(b) That the help of non-governmental organizations with special knowledge in this field be sought in this connection, in accordance with resolution 155 C (VII)

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of the Economic and Social Council;

(c) That UN regional consultative groups and seminars continue to devote attention to various aspects of juvenile delinquency; and

(d) That when organizing forthcoming congresses, conferences or seminars the organizations concerned, taking into account the problems facing different regions of the world, should select clearly defined topics allowing for a thorough study and a useful comparison of the experience acquired in various countries.

The resolution was presented by Thorsten Sellin (United States), General Rapporteur of the Congress, and amended jointly by Belgium, Denmark, France, the Holy See, Netherlands and Switzerland.

The Congress also adopted a resolution on technical assistance which expresses the hope that the United Nations will furnish assistance to those governments requesting it in order to facilitate implementation of the rules adopted by the conference.

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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.