



## Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Beirut, 26–28 March 2019

### Report of the Western Asia Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Beirut from 26 to 28 March 2019

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## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [56/119](#), on the role, function, periodicity and duration of the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, the General Assembly decided that each congress should be preceded by regional preparatory meetings and also decided to call future congresses United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice.

2. The Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Lessons Learned from United Nations Congresses on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its meeting held in Bangkok from 15 to 18 August 2006, discussed how to incorporate regional concerns and perspectives into the preparation of the congresses. The Group stressed the importance of regional preparatory meetings as a key preparatory tool for the congresses and noted that, despite globalization and the increasingly transboundary nature of criminality, different regions of the world continued to have different concerns, which they wanted to see properly reflected in the consideration of various topics by the congresses ([E/CN.15/2007/6](#), para. 23).

3. In its resolution [72/192](#), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to facilitate the organization of the regional preparatory meetings for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and to make available the necessary resources for the participation of the least developed countries in those meetings and in the Fourteenth Congress itself, in accordance with past practice. In the same resolution, the Assembly encouraged the relevant United Nations programmes, specialized agencies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as other professional organizations, to cooperate with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the preparations for the Fourteenth Congress.

4. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, to prepare a discussion guide for the regional preparatory meetings for the Fourteenth Congress and for the Congress itself in a timely manner, and invited Member States to be actively involved in that process.

5. At its twenty-seventh session, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice considered the draft discussion guide. In its resolution [73/184](#), the General Assembly took note with appreciation of the draft discussion guide and requested the Secretary-General to finalize it in a timely manner, taking into account the recommendations of the Commission, as well as additional comments and feedback from Member States, in order to enable the regional preparatory meetings for the Fourteenth Congress to be held as early as possible in 2019. The finalized discussion guide ([A/CONF.234/PM.1](#)) was published in September 2018.

6. In its resolution [72/192](#), the General Assembly encouraged Governments to undertake preparations for the Fourteenth Congress at an early stage and by all appropriate means, including, where appropriate, the establishment of national preparatory committees. Also in that resolution, as well as in resolution [73/184](#), the General Assembly urged participants in the regional preparatory meetings to examine the substantive items on the agenda and the topics of the workshops of the Fourteenth Congress and to make action-oriented recommendations to serve as a basis for the draft recommendations and conclusions for consideration by the Congress.

## II. Conclusions and recommendations

7. The Secretary of the Western Asia Regional Preparatory Meeting recalled that the main theme, agenda items and workshops of the Fourteenth Congress had been carefully identified by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and adopted by the General Assembly. In that regard, she highlighted that, building on the success of the Thirteenth Congress and in accordance with General Assembly

resolution 71/206, all efforts had been made to ensure that the overall theme, the agenda items and workshop topics were streamlined. She reminded participants that, since the main theme was designed to serve as an umbrella for the substantive agenda items and workshop topics and for the discussions under those that would take place at the Congress, they were invited to engage in a general, aspirational discussion with regard to the relationship between the main theme and the substantive agenda items of the Congress, as well as the policy implications of that relationship. She explained that, in order to facilitate the preparations for and discussions at the regional preparatory meetings and the Congress itself, the discussion guide had clustered the agenda items that dealt with issues of broad and global importance together with the relevant workshop topics, on the understanding that the latter were designed to cover more specific topics and draw on practical experiences and approaches.

8. Presentations were delivered by representatives of the Secretariat introducing the main theme, substantive agenda items and workshop topics.

9. Stemming from the meeting, the following summary of deliberations was prepared and recommendations were identified, which were not negotiated by the participants.

#### **A. Main theme of the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice: “Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda”**

##### **Summary of deliberations**

10. The Meeting emphasized the mutually reinforcing relationship between the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice and sustainable development, which is manifested in the interrelationship between Sustainable Development Goal 16 and other relevant Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this connection, participants reported on their national and international efforts in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, which in turn also supported the implementation of the entire dimension of the Agenda.

11. It was noted that, given the interconnected nature of the Sustainable Development Agenda, there could be no development without laws that protect society from all forms of crime and violence. It was also noted that in order to prevent crime there was an imminent need to reinforce international cooperation and partnerships to be able to implement the Agenda in a holistic and multidimensional manner.

12. The Meeting welcomed the overall theme of the Fourteenth Congress and its unique timing, building on the overall theme of the Doha Declaration adopted at the Thirteenth Congress. In this regard, it was noted that the Thirteenth Congress had allowed for an in-depth dialogue that must now be continued on the importance of the rule of law for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda.

13. It was also emphasized that the overall theme of the Fourteenth Congress was essential in highlighting the importance of building effective crime prevention and criminal justice systems that were robust and respectful of the rule of law and human rights.

##### **Outcome of deliberations**

14. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Consider the importance of ensuring that the future Kyoto declaration has a robust overarching political message that reflects, among others, the commitments of the international community towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda. The Meeting also recommended that Member States bear in

mind, during the negotiation of the Kyoto declaration, that its implementation and follow-up should reflect the priorities of Member States, as well as the challenges and needs of developing countries, in a way that does not conflict with their principles and beliefs and accords with the principle of the common responsibility of States to promote human development programmes;

(b) Invest in the training of crime prevention and criminal justice practitioners with a view to enhancing their knowledge and capacity to perform their functions and duties efficiently, exchanging information and expertise among such practitioners and promoting international cooperation, noting in this regard that these are key elements for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda;

(c) Complement traditional rule-of-law approaches with comprehensive approaches that focus on people, particularly children and youth, with a view to fostering trust and respect among the general public towards the law and its enforcement, thereby fostering a culture of lawfulness;

(d) Emphasize the importance of promoting public-private partnerships in crime prevention efforts and undertaking multistakeholder approaches that cover a broad range of domestic actions, including in the education, health and social welfare sectors;

(e) Strengthen the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in continuing to act as the main policymaking body in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice that provides a dialogue forum for practitioners and other stakeholders to advance international cooperation in criminal matters and the building of partnerships.

## **B. Substantive items and workshops**

### **1. Comprehensive strategies for crime prevention towards social and economic development (agenda item 3); and evidence-based crime prevention: statistics, indicators and evaluation in support of successful practices (workshop 1)**

#### **Summary of deliberations**

15. It was recognized that multifaceted crime prevention strategies were of key importance in preventing crime and violence and implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. In this regard, the Meeting emphasized that training and capacity-building for practitioners, including prosecutors, police officers and probation and correction officers, was essential to ensure enhanced coordination and cooperation among those practitioners, including at the regional level.

16. Preventing the involvement of children and youth in crime and building their resilience, as well as the utilization of educational, social and health measures, as well as sports initiatives to advance crime prevention efforts, were issues thoroughly discussed by participants at the Meeting. In this regard, the importance of investing in strategies aimed at preventing the exploitation of children for the purposes of trafficking and terrorism was underlined.

17. Participants also discussed the importance of multidimensional actions and interventions that brought together the family, child protection agencies, practitioners and health and education specialists to ensure a child-centred approach to crime prevention and criminal justice efforts.

18. The need for holistic crime prevention approaches that incorporated family, community and school-based interventions was noted.

19. Participants stressed the importance of the economic empowerment of youth, including through the creation of job opportunities, with a view to encouraging young people to assume a leadership role in initiating and implementing various innovative programmes and activities. The importance of public-private partnerships was also

stressed in this regard. One participant mentioned the importance of alternative development in this regard.

20. It was noted that crime prevention efforts could not succeed without involving society at large or working with young people with a view to empowering them as agents of positive change, which, in turn would enhance public confidence in and cooperation with law enforcement, thereby fostering a culture of lawfulness.

21. In noting the importance of community-based policing, participants stressed that a new model was needed based on a shift from a police “force” to a police “service”.

22. Participants underlined the importance of giving consideration to the special needs of women and girls in crime prevention programmes and interventions.

23. The importance of evidence-based crime prevention, including by strengthening data collection, was emphasized. It was noted that data collection should be in accordance with the requirements of domestic legislation to ensure proper implementation.

### **Outcome of deliberations**

24. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Integrate crime prevention into all relevant social and economic policies and programmes, in particular those affecting young people, with a special emphasis on programmes focused on increasing educational, recreational and employment opportunities for young people;

(b) Ensure the full protection of children and the promotion of their rights, and provide technical support to practitioners, law enforcement officials and judges through comprehensive crime prevention strategies that are evidence-based and built on good practices and experiences;

(c) Strengthen community-based crime prevention and social cohesion, including through the development of coordination mechanisms at the local level that encourage the active participation of civil society organizations, educational institutions, law enforcement authorities, health professionals, urban planners and social workers;

(d) Promote effective community and action-oriented policing practices aligned with international standards and norms with a view to strengthening trust between citizens and the police and enhancing comprehensive crime prevention efforts;

(e) Develop inter-agency coordination mechanisms to establish effective and comprehensive national crime prevention strategies involving all relevant sectors in society (education, community, policing, prosecution, judiciary, et cetera), at both the State and local levels, based on sociological and criminological research; in doing so, increase efforts to reduce crime and violence rates, and promote a human-rights based approach to crime prevention, with a particular focus on young people;

(f) Include in crime prevention policies and strategies the promotion of the rule of law, inter alia, youth education and awareness-raising efforts, which fosters a culture of lawfulness;

(g) Promote crime prevention approaches that include social and economic development, such as parenting skills and life skills for young people, community-based prevention through the active engagement of community stakeholders, reducing opportunities for crime through environmental design and providing information to potential victims, and the prevention of recidivism through social reintegration programmes for offenders in prison and community settings;

(h) Prevent, and devise responses to, the recruitment, exploitation and victimization of children by criminal groups, including organized crime and extremist

and terrorist groups; in doing so, take into account the different realities and experiences of young people and address the risk factors and their needs;

(i) Support UNODC in continuing its key role in providing its expertise and technical assistance to Member States in the area of crime prevention through the various ongoing global and regional programmes, including the Global Programme on the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, and other relevant programmes on community-based policing and alternative development and sustainable livelihood;

(j) Increase efforts to collect and share knowledge and data on crime and criminal justice systems to support evidence-based policies in relation to preventing and reducing crime and violence, as well as improving access to justice and fighting corruption;

(k) Share available data and practice and experience on relevant crime and criminal justice issues, improve coordination in data-related activities and avoid duplication of initiatives aimed at data collection;

(l) Map existing needs and develop joint research initiatives to increase understanding of crime prevention and criminal justice systems;

(m) Support countries to increase their capacity to collect, produce and share data, including through the implementation of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes and of victimization surveys, as well as corruption surveys, while taking due note that statistics need to be structured and compiled in accordance with the legal framework of each Member State;

(n) Invite Member States to share experiences in developing new methodologies in data collection to measure the hidden part of crime.

## **2. Integrated approaches to challenges facing the criminal justice system (agenda item 4); and reducing reoffending: identifying risks and developing solutions (workshop 2)**

### **Summary of deliberations**

25. Participants in the Meeting noted the importance of addressing the rights and needs of the victims of all forms of crime, including cross-border cases and cases involving young people and women. A number of participants provided information on their national efforts in providing reparations and restitution to victims, such as through the establishment of trust funds for the victims. The importance of securing access to justice was also highlighted.

26. It was stressed that comprehensive and balanced approaches were needed to develop policies for the treatment of offenders. Participants noted that, in addition to the nature and gravity of the offence, the individual background of offenders, such as disability, gender, age, education level and cultural background, should be taken into account to ensure that programmes were tailored to their needs. In this regard, information on national efforts, of both a legislative and a programmatic nature, addressing child and youth offenders, such as through education and vocational training, were shared.

27. The importance of gathering statistics and conducting surveys on the operation of prisons and on the rehabilitation of former offenders was noted, in developing prison reform with a view to ensuring the reintegration of prisoners after they have served their sentences.

28. Good practices and experiences regarding alternatives to imprisonment were shared by a number of participants. In order to address prison overcrowding, the use and implementation of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules) was recognized as a useful and important tool.

29. The need for capacity-building for probation services, which play a fundamental role in providing continued support to offenders in the community, in coordination with other relevant governmental and non-governmental entities, was noted.

30. In ensuring the reintegration of former offenders into society, the role and support of the community was noted as a key element, including peer-to-peer support and the engagement of youth. In this regard, cooperation between government agencies at all levels and cooperation with the private sector, such as ensuring employment opportunities, was emphasized. It was also acknowledged that public understanding and community cooperation were key elements in offender rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The need to conduct comprehensive awareness-raising activities that address various target groups, involving the Internet and social media for the widest possible dissemination of information and interactive communications, was noted in this regard.

31. The development of work-related programmes and brands of prison products were mentioned as a means to generate income for prisoners and their families, to increase prisoners' employability upon release and, more generally, to promote a positive image of prisoners within society.

32. National strategies to counter corruption were reported, and participants highlighted the technical assistance provided by the United Nations and the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network to address those challenges.

#### **Outcome of deliberations**

33. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Consider reforming laws, policies and practices to ensure that the rights and needs of victims of all types of crime are respected, including efforts to establish victim compensation and reparation programmes and funds, and ensure that victims are protected against stigmatization and discrimination and are protected as whistle-blowers when they report crime;

(b) Establish or strengthen juvenile justice systems that are fair and child-sensitive;

(c) Invest in the promotion of the practical application of the revised United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), relying on the technical guidance material and advisory services offered by UNODC;

(d) Develop prison-based rehabilitation programmes aimed at increasing prisoners' skills, promoting prison brands and focusing on, inter alia, education, vocational training and work opportunities, to ensure their successful reintegration into society and reduce reoffending;

(e) Allocate adequate resources to explore the cost-effective use of information technology for the sharing of experiences and good practices to reduce recidivism to reintegrate offenders into society;

(f) Explore practical measures to strengthen inter-agency cooperation and public-private partnership at the national, regional and local levels, in the effort to reintegrate former offenders into society, such as through supporting employment of former offenders and involving youth in the reintegration of youth offenders into the community;

(g) Request UNODC to continue its efforts to provide technical assistance to Member States, upon request, to strengthen accountability and efficiency within the criminal justice system, in particular through its Global Judicial Integrity Network.

**3. Multidimensional approaches by Governments to promoting the rule of law by, inter alia, providing access to justice for all; building effective, accountable, impartial and inclusive institutions; and considering social, educational and other relevant measures, including fostering a culture of lawfulness while respecting cultural identities, in line with the Doha Declaration (agenda item 5); and education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime (workshop 3)**

**Summary of deliberations**

34. Participants in the meeting emphasized that effective, impartial and inclusive institutions are essential to promoting the rule of law and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16. It was noted that, with a view to building peaceful and just societies, partnerships among the Government, civil society and the private sector played a key role in reducing all forms of violence and promoting access to justice for all, with a special focus on vulnerable members of society.

35. Participants in the Meeting reported on their national efforts to strengthen their crime prevention and criminal justice systems and to ensure that they are fair, just and humane, with a special focus on children and women. They also reported on their measures to use education as a key prevention effort and on other social and economic measures that empower youth.

36. The discussion also focused on the measures that could be taken to ensure that the criminal justice system met its multiple accountability responsibilities, with participants noting that the reform of the criminal justice system must be coupled with the principle of accountability, which is the backbone of the rule of law. The Meeting discussed the importance of strengthening judicial integrity, accountability and professionalism, and the use of the *Commentary on the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct* were highlighted as important tools and resources for supporting the judiciary. It also welcomed the Global Judicial Integrity Network and the work undertaken by the Network thus far. In that regard, it was noted that strengthening the accountability of the criminal justice system could also foster a culture of lawfulness.

37. Participants in the Meeting reported on their national efforts, good practices and experiences in strengthening access to justice for all and in strengthening their crime prevention and criminal justice systems. The Meeting emphasized the importance of strengthening the rule of law through legal and technical mechanisms that supported the provision of access to justice for all, including access to a defence counsel, the protection of witnesses and whistle-blowers, the right to a fair and free trial and other measures.

38. It was stressed that the Fourteenth Congress presented an opportunity to provide a platform for discussing approaches taken by Governments that contributed to fostering a culture of lawfulness among the general public in the context of promoting the rule of law, and in this regard it was noted that building the capacity of criminal justice institutions contributed to building the public's trust and respect for the law and its enforcement and might therefore be an important measure that contributed to fostering a culture of lawfulness.

39. Participants recognized that a culture of lawfulness could be promoted and fostered through educational programmes and activities aimed at instilling values, skills and knowledge among children and youth to prevent violence, crime, corruption and terrorism. It was also noted that sport was a powerful tool to help in building resilience and preventing criminal behaviour among youth. Participants noted the important work done under the Education for Justice (E4J) initiative and the youth crime prevention through sport initiatives under the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration. Reference was also made to the international youth forum.

40. In discussing the importance of empowering and building the resilience of youth, the host country of the Fourteenth Congress reiterated its intention to organize a Youth Forum and introduced the discussion topics: (a) youth engagement in crime



prevention and reintegration; (b) youth education for fostering a culture of lawfulness; and (c) youth commitment towards a safe information society.

41. It was acknowledged by participants that such initiatives to involve youth in the crime congresses would be a promising approach to foster a culture of lawfulness through youth education and empowerment in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.

### **Outcome of deliberations**

42. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

(a) Undertake appropriate and comprehensive crime prevention and criminal justice reform strategies, policies and programmes to ensure that access to legal aid that is effective, credible, sustainable and accessible to all without discrimination is provided at all stages of the criminal justice process, and support the exchange of good practices and evidence-based initiatives;

(b) Increase access to justice for children by strengthening the responses of the criminal justice system and ensuring that it can provide children with fair, equitable and effective, child-sensitive responses;

(c) Assist Member States in developing and implementing measures to increase access to justice for women victims as well as women offenders and prisoners;

(d) Enhance coordination between criminal justice institutions and education sectors in the formulation of crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule-of-law policies at the national, regional and international levels;

(e) Ensure and promote quality education and awareness-raising activities such as youth forums, which provide children and youth with the knowledge and skills enabling them to foster a culture of lawfulness and enhance their perception of the rule of law, thereby reducing conflict with the law;

(f) Recognize the need to enhance preventive measures in addressing new and emerging forms of crime, including through education and various awareness-raising activities for all stakeholders including youth, civil society and the private sector;

(g) Promote the establishment of early law-related education curriculum in schools, or integrate the rule of law into education, with particular emphasis on teaching core values of the rule of law, with a view to fostering a culture of lawfulness among the general public;

(h) Support the sharing of good practices among Member States and enhance the coordination between them and the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network with relevant expertise and experience in technical assistance and capacity-building projects that contribute to fostering a culture of lawfulness;

(i) Encourage Member States to undertake holistic and multidimensional approaches, and in so doing to consider using and strengthening the use of the *Compendium of United Nations Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice* and the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary and the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct, as well as UNODC tools and programmes, including the Global Judicial Integrity Network, the E4J and youth crime prevention through sports initiatives.

**4. International cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address all forms of crime: (a) terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; and (b) new and emerging forms of crime (agenda item 6); and current crime trends, recent developments and emerging solutions, in particular new technologies as means for and tools against crime (workshop 4)**

**Summary of deliberations**

43. Participants at the meeting highlighted the pivotal role of regional and international cooperation among practitioners and policymakers through enhanced bilateral, regional and international mechanisms that enable the exchange of practical solutions and good practices to address the challenges that undermine effective cooperation.

44. Participants also stressed the importance of enhancing the capacity of law enforcement and other criminal justice officials and underlined that accelerating international cooperation was the cornerstone in the fight against new and emerging forms of crime. Regional platforms for the regular exchange of practical and operational information as well as mutual learning among criminal justice practitioners and institutions were given special attention during the Meeting.

45. The Meeting stressed that the implementation of relevant United Nations conventions and of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as regional and bilateral treaties, were important to effectively address the growing threats of transnational organized crime and terrorism. In this regard, the three international drug control conventions, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the 19 instruments to counter terrorism were noted as being instrumental in successfully countering traditional and new forms of crime.

46. Participants shared their national experiences in concluding regional and bilateral agreements addressing new forms of crime, including organ removal and maritime piracy. They also discussed how their countries were affected by new and emerging crimes, including trafficking in cultural property.

47. Several participants noted the need for a new legal framework to address cybercrime in addition to the existing instruments, including the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime and the Arab Convention on Combating Information Technology Offences. One speaker referred to the unbridged gap between the positions of Member States on such a new legal instrument on cybercrime, and noted that the Expert Group to Conduct a Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime provided a forum for the exchange of practical experiences and other technical aspects related to that phenomenon, and welcomed the Expert Group's workplan.

48. The misuse by terrorists and their organizations of modern information and communications technologies, such as the Internet and social media, was also discussed by participants, who noted that these technologies were misused for the purpose of indoctrinating youth and minors, spreading propaganda, recruiting, funding and training.

49. Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations was condemned by participants, and reference was made to its being not only a security threat to the international community but also an ideological threat. Participants noted that promoting dialogue and tolerance, as well as activating the role of society to support their Governments, were required to prevent crimes that fostered hatred and racism. The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters was also discussed, as were the complex challenges faced by Governments, particularly those related to developing efficient criminal justice responses against terrorist threats, including responses to threats posed by the so-called lone wolves.

50. Information was shared by participants on national efforts to counter terrorism and transnational organized crime, such as border control management and national coordination mechanisms that aimed to detect falsified documentation.

51. Participants stressed the importance of regularly reviewing national legislation in order to respond effectively to terrorism, corruption and new and emerging forms of crime, such as money-laundering and cybercrime. The establishment of national committees to counter terrorism and trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants was also noted as a good practice.

52. Participants noted the need to bring domestic laws into compliance with international instruments on money-laundering in order to support the identification and combating of illicit financial flows. In this regard, regional and international cooperation with other States and with financial institutions were noted as important measures to track illicit financial flows and to freeze, seize and recover assets deriving from criminal activities.

53. The Meeting stressed the need to leverage the use of advances in information and communications technology for the benefit of law enforcement agencies and criminal justice institutions in the fight against crime. On the other hand, in looking at how such advances facilitates crime, the Meeting noted that strengthened and concerted efforts were needed to prevent and counter the misuse of information and communications technology, such as cryptocurrencies, for criminal purposes.

54. Technical assistance and capacity-building provided by UNODC in the area of international cooperation was recognized by the Meeting as an important enabler to address and respond to terrorism and to emerging challenges relating to cybercrime, trafficking in cultural property and wildlife crime.

55. Good practices in cooperation between national authorities, the Arab Interior Ministers Council, the League of Arab States, the International Criminal Police Organization and other relevant actors were shared at the Meeting. A participant highlighted the usefulness of cooperation with the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network.

### **Outcome of deliberations**

56. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants were identified:

(a) Examine the best possible approaches to further enhance international cooperation among criminal justice practitioners, in particular those in the central authorities, and explore effective approaches to capacity-building for criminal justice institutions and practitioners;

(b) Encourage the strengthening of formal and informal channels of international cooperation, including with a view to strengthening cooperation on terrorism to deal with, among others, foreign terrorist fighter-related cases, such as through the Multi-Agency Task Force for the Middle East and North Africa, established with UNODC support;

(c) Identify and assess the risks of terrorist financing within national economies, including the risks of the misuse of non-profit organization and charitable funds for terrorist funding, and take appropriate measures in response;

(d) Strengthen cross-regional cooperation to detect and intercept cross-regional movements of foreign terrorist fighters and conduct rule of law-based and effective investigations and prosecutions of terrorism cases;

(e) Implement the provisions of the international drug control conventions, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the 19 instruments to counter terrorism to advance international cooperation. Call upon States that have not yet done so to consider becoming parties to those conventions;

(f) Explore ways and means that enable criminal justice practitioners to utilize evolving information and communications technologies, including artificial intelligence and big data, to fight against criminals and criminal syndicates that take full advantage of such innovations;

(g) Strengthen the capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice officers in charge of international cooperation and enhance the use of platforms for the exchange of information;

(h) Request UNODC to continue supporting the establishment and functioning of central authorities responsible for dealing with mutual legal assistance requests and provide technical assistance to Member States, upon request, in order to enhance the capacity of practitioners to effectively and expeditiously deal with such requests;

(i) Enhance the role of UNODC in providing technical assistance and capacity-building to Member States, upon their request, including through its global programmes on cybercrime and counter-terrorism;

(j) Encourage the Expert Group to Conduct a Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/230, to expedite its necessary work, in accordance with its mandate, to devise an international legal instrument against cybercrime, taking into account the call by the Member States of the region to devise such an instrument;

(k) Explore ways to make use of tools developed by UNODC, such as model laws and the Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool, to enhance international cooperation in criminal matters and respond efficiently to transnational crime.

### **III. Attendance and organization of work**

#### **A. Date and venue of the Meeting**

57. The Western Asia Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was held in Beirut from 26 to 28 March 2019.

#### **B. Attendance**

58. The following States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia were represented at the Meeting: Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Yemen.

59. Japan was represented by an observer.

60. The following entities of the United Nations system were represented by observers: United Nations Development Programme, Economic and Social Council for Western Asia and UNODC.

61. The following institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network were represented by observers: International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council and United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

62. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented by observers: Arab Interior Ministers Council, Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf and Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

63. The following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were represented by observers: Luz Maria Foundation and Terre des Hommes.

## C. Opening of the Meeting

64. The Western Asia Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was opened on 26 March 2019 by the Secretary of the Meeting.

65. The Executive Secretary of the Fourteenth Congress, speaking on behalf of the Executive Director of UNODC, highlighted the importance of the United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice as a vital forum for taking stock of and assessing preparedness to deal with challenges and emerging threats and for undertaking a periodic review of crime-related standards and norms. Reference was made to the fact that the Fourteenth Congress would be held in Kyoto, Japan, where the Fourth Congress, the first Congress to be preceded by regional preparatory meetings, had been held 50 years previously. Since that time, the regional preparatory meetings had played a meaningful role in examining the substantive agenda items and topics of the workshops, and in making action-oriented recommendations from a regional perspective. He also referred to the host country's support for the preparatory process and for the follow-up process to the Thirteenth Congress, held in Doha in 2015. He emphasized that the Thirteenth Congress had been focused on the mutually reinforcing relationship between the rule of law and sustainable development, and that its political outcome had been well reflected in Sustainable Development Goal 16. The Fourteenth Congress, which would be held five years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, would provide an opportunity to take stock of and formulate practical and operational recommendations for action in support of peaceful and just societies.

66. The representative of the Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa of UNODC and the representative of the Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council Region of UNODC provided information on ongoing programmes and capacity-building activities in their respective regions that supported practitioners and other relevant stakeholders in various areas of crime prevention and criminal justice.

67. A representative of the secretariat made a statement on the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, which supports the translation of the Doha Declaration into concrete activities. He noted that the Doha Declaration again drew to the attention of the international community the importance of fostering a culture of lawfulness, which had first been introduced in the Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime. He referred to the achievements of the integrated and strategic programming through the Global Programme ensuring the building of partnerships with a wide array of stakeholders, including international organizations, civil society actors, educators, children and young people.

68. The Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia addressed the Meeting and emphasized the importance of the regional perspective of Western Asia, which should be taken into account in the preparations for and discussions at the Fourteenth Congress. He also highlighted the urgent need to address the root causes of crime and terrorism in the region in order to respond effectively and efficiently to the vicious circle that threatened the growth and prosperity in the region, bearing in mind that young people were the most vulnerable and the most affected.

## D. Election of officers

69. At its 1st meeting, on 26 March 2019, the Meeting elected, by acclamation, the following officers:

<i>Chair:</i>	Zakaria Alansari (Kuwait)
<i>Vice-Chair:</i>	Elias Eid (Lebanon)
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	Abdullah F. Al-Ansary (Saudi Arabia)

## **E. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

70. Also at its 1st meeting, the Meeting adopted its provisional agenda (A/CONF.234/RPM.2/L.1), which read as follows:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
4. Main theme of the Fourteenth Congress: “Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda”.
5. Substantive items on the agenda and the topics of the workshops of the Fourteenth Congress:
  - (a) Comprehensive strategies for crime prevention towards social and economic development (agenda item 3); and evidence-based crime prevention: statistics, indicators and evaluation in support of successful practices (workshop 1);
  - (b) Integrated approaches to challenges facing the criminal justice system (agenda item 4); and reducing reoffending: identifying risks and developing solutions (workshop 2);
  - (c) Multidimensional approaches by Governments to promoting the rule of law by, inter alia, providing access to justice for all; building effective, accountable, impartial and inclusive institutions; and considering social, educational and other relevant measures, including fostering a culture of lawfulness while respecting cultural identities, in line with the Doha Declaration (agenda item 5); and education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime (workshop 3);
  - (d) International cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address all forms of crime: (a) terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; and (b) new and emerging forms of crime (agenda item 6); and current crime trends, recent developments and emerging solutions, in particular new technologies as means for and tools against crime (workshop 4).
6. Recommendations for the Fourteenth Congress.
7. Adoption of the report on the Meeting.

71. At the same meeting, the Meeting approved its organization of work. The list of documents before the Meeting is contained in the annex to the present report.

## **F. Other matters**

72. A representative of Japan, the host country of the Fourteenth Congress, briefed the participants about the organizational and substantive preparations for the Fourteenth Congress and the Youth Forum that would precede it. His briefing included a video presentation. He provided information about the city of Kyoto, which would host the Fourteenth Congress. He also provided a historical overview of the deliberations at the Fourth Congress, held in the same city in 1970, and the outcomes of that Congress, which had resulted, for the first time, in the adoption of a political declaration.

73. The observer for the Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders delivered a statement, providing information about the Institute’s preparations for the workshops and activities to be held at the

Fourteenth Congress. He encouraged Member States to consider including in their delegations experts who could offer substantive expertise to the deliberations during the workshop. He referred to the Institute's efforts to build an international network of its alumni, and encouraged the active participation of the alumni from various jurisdictions, including from Western Asia, in the Fourteenth Congress.

74. The observer of the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council also delivered a presentation on the arrangements for the ancillary meetings to be held during the Fourteenth Congress.

#### **IV. Adoption of the report and closure of the Meeting**

75. At its 6th meeting, on 28 March 2019, the Meeting considered and adopted its report ([A/CONF.234/RPM.2/L.2](#), [A/CONF.234/RPM.2/L.2/Add.1](#), [A/CONF.234/RPM.2/L.2/Add.2](#), [A/CONF.234/RPM.2/L.2/Add.3](#) and [A/CONF.234/RPM.2/L.2/Add.4](#)).

## Annex I

### List of documents

A/CONF.234/PM.1	Discussion guide
A/CONF.234/RPM.2/L.1	Annotated provisional agenda
A/CONF.234/RPM.2/L.2 and Add.1–4	Draft report
A/CONF.234/RPM.2/INF/2/rev.1	List of participants
A/CONF.234/PM/CRP.1	Note by the Secretariat entitled “From policy directives to concrete results: a quinquennial strategic operational road map”

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