

UNITED NATIONS

INFORMATION CENTRE  
European Office of the United Nations  
Geneva

Press Release No. SOC/12:  
30 August 1955

(For use of information media; not an official record)

FIRST UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS  
ON THE PREVENTION OF CRIME  
AND THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS

CONGRESS HEARS LECTURE BY MR. MOSTAFA EL SAID,  
RECTOR OF ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY (EGYPT), ON  
NEW TRENDS IN THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND THE  
TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS IN EGYPT

The First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders met in plenary session this morning at 9.30 a.m. with Mr. William P. Rogers (United States of America) in the chair.

Mr. Mostafa El Said, Rector of Alexandria University (Egypt), gave a lecture on "New trends in the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders in Egypt". He said that Egyptian penal legislation today has two outstanding features: closer adjustment of the penalty to the offender, and the humane and social factors in the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders. Both appear in legal provisions affecting adults and juveniles alike, but they apply particularly to young offenders.

In the treatment of adults they take the form of reduced penalties for extenuating circumstances; suspended sentences; indeterminate sentences for some recidivists; improvement of prison conditions for some prisoners because of their former standard of living, their social record and the nature of their offence; elimination of unjustifiable cruelty in the execution of sentences, such as convicts' chains; the organization of education and paid work for prisoners; parole before the final release of prisoners sentenced to more than five years; financial assistance to prisoners' families and discharged prisoners; co-operation between the authorities and private bodies to find work for discharged prisoners; abolition of the former police supervision of prisoners on parole; and abolition of entry of minor convictions in the extract from the court record.

Legislation is tending to treat the problem of the young offender as a social rather than a legal one. It prescribes nearly the same treatment for juvenile offenders as for juvenile vagrants in need of protection but not guilty of an offence. It lays down almost the same educative measures for the two groups, and forbids either completely or partially, application of the ordinary penalties to juvenile offenders under a certain age.

The special children's court makes no difference between juveniles in the two categories. All are subject to the same procedure before judgment. The judge must study the social aspects of each case, and after judgment the social supervision by qualified organizations is the same for both categories. The judge can revise his sentence, or alter one already pronounced.

In conclusion the lecturer pointed out that it is useless to propose systems which cannot be carried out in practice. The living standard in prison must not be in any way higher than that outside, to avoid removing the fear of prison and thus depriving it of one of its essential features.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

The Congress will hold a plenary session this afternoon to examine the set of Minimum Rules for the treatment of offenders.

---

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](mailto:CJSmithphd@comcast.net) or Emil Wandzilak at [emil.wandzilak@unodc.org](mailto:emil.wandzilak@unodc.org).