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

(It is kindly requested that this information note, prepared by the United Nations Secretariat, be given wide publicity in part or in full in any language.)

1. This is the third circular on the subject of the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The first circular (A/CONF.56/INF.1) was issued on 5 June 1972 and the second (A/CONF.56/INF.2) on 28 September 1973. This circular is intended to bring the information on Congress preparations up to date. It is hoped that this account of the progress so far and the state of the planning for the Congress will prove useful to Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and others.

I. BACKGROUND

2. The General Assembly, in its resolution 415 (V), provided for the convening every five years of an international congress on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders. The first was held at Geneva in 1955; the second in London, in 1960; the third, at Stockholm, in 1963; and the fourth, at Kyoto, in 1970.

II. DATE AND PLACE

3. The Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders will be held at Toronto, Canada, from 1 to 12 September 1975, rather than from 1 to 15 September 1975, as announced in previous circulars. The Government of Canada will act as host and has appointed a co-ordinator for the Congress. The Co-ordinator, who now has a permanent office and staff in Ottawa and a branch office in Toronto, implements the work of the Canadian Organizing Committee. The Solicitor-General of Canada convened a National Advisory Committee in January 1973, and that meeting was attended by United Nations Secretariat officials who had detailed discussions with the Solicitor-General. A further meeting of Federal, Provincial and City officials to be concerned with the Congress

took place in Toronto from 29 to 31 January 1974. The draft agreement, which follows the pattern of that between the Government of Japan and the United Nations on the Fourth United Nations Congress, has been under further consideration by the Government of Canada and the United Nations and is expected to be signed soon.

III. MEMBERSHIP

4. It has been established practice for the Congress to include three categories of participants, namely:

(a) Members officially appointed by their Governments who are experts in the field of social defence or are directly concerned with policies and programmes affecting the prevention and control of crime and delinquency (e.g., social planners and educational, social welfare, youth development and employment experts and policy-makers) and who have a special knowledge of and experience in the topics on the agenda;

(b) Representatives of the specialized agencies of the United Nations, of intergovernmental organizations and of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council interested in or concerned with social defence matters; and

(c) Individual participants having a direct interest in the field of social defence (such as members of the teaching staffs of universities, of criminological or social research institutes and of national non-governmental organizations concerned with social defence matters; staff of correctional establishments and institutions for juvenile delinquents; members of courts and Bar Associations; social workers; youth workers, education specialists; police officials).

5. In consultation with the Government of Canada, it has been decided that a Congress of more than 2,000 participants would not be possible or desirable, and this decision has been confirmed by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control. This will not affect the size of Government delegations or of official representations of the specialized agencies, non-governmental or intergovernmental organizations. Together these usually constitute no more than 50 per cent of total participation. It will, however, greatly affect the number of individual applications in category (c) which can be accepted for registration. In view of the need for the Congress to have adequate geographic representation, it has been decided to ensure that qualified registrants in category (c) from abroad are given first priority and that registrants from the North American continent be limited, the selection to be made according to the following criteria:

(a) Official responsibilities in the crime prevention and criminal justice field;

(b) International professional reputation;

(c) Application date.

IV. REGIONAL MEETINGS

6. The Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders was held at Tokyo, Japan, from 16 to 21 July 1973. The Government of Brazil hosted the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting at Brasilia from 5 to 10 November 1973. The Canadian Government sent observers to both meetings. Regional Preparatory Meetings for Africa and for the Middle East are expected to be held in late 1974 or early 1975. An interregional seminar on the use of research as a basis for social defence policy and planning (Copenhagen, Denmark, 20-31 August 1973) was also used to provide substantive contributions to the preparations for the Congress, and the Government of Denmark invited European Governments to send representatives to a special Regional Preparatory Meeting held on 17 August 1973 to consider the Congress agenda. The Hungarian Government convened a meeting of European Governments in Budapest from 28 to 31 May 1974.

7. Countries in developed regions are being encouraged to consider holding meetings at their own expense in preparation for the Congress. This kind of co-operation is necessary in view of the need to obtain world-wide studies of the questions to be considered by the Congress while at the same time containing the budget for the United Nations and the host Government. The Government of Canada, for example, invited officers of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control and the Secretariat to Canada in June 1973. At that time they participated in the programme of the biennial Canadian Congress of Criminology and Corrections. Special arrangements were made by the Canadian Criminology and Corrections Association for a review of the international aspects of crime prevention and control and particularly the agenda for the Fifth United Nations Congress.

V. PRE-CONGRESS RESEARCH MEETING

8. After consultations with experts in the research field, including those from Europe, America and the Soviet Union, the United Nations and the host Government have accepted a proposal for a pre-Congress research meeting to be held during the week-end preceding the Congress. However, this will not be an official United Nations meeting in the sense that it qualifies for full conference and interpretations services.

9. The research meeting will be held at Montreal, Canada, from 29 to 31 August 1975. It will study certain areas of scientific interest related to the Congress agenda, concentrating specifically on

- (a) Changing concepts of deviancy in different countries at different levels of development;
- (b) Various evaluative methodologies for the several services within the criminal justice system; and
- (c) Studies of discretion as this is exercised in the administration of justice.

10. The organization of the meeting has been entrusted to the United Nations Social Defence Research Institute (UNSDRI) and the International Centre for Comparative Criminology in Montreal.

11. Papers will be commissioned from selected experts as a basis for discussion, and non-governmental organizations will be invited to send scientific workers to the meeting. Each national delegation will be asked to send one member to attend the research meeting, which will therefore be limited in number and should comprise about 100 to 120 persons. The conclusions of this meeting are not intended to prejudge issues at the Congress, but delegations will be free to make such use of the discussions at the research meeting as they feel would be most appropriate to the issues at the Congress itself.

12. It should be noted that the research meeting will deal only with selected issues of a scientific nature and will not be concerned with policy issues, which are properly matters for the Congress as a whole.

VI. PARTICIPATION COSTS

13. Membership costs - i.e. travel and subsistence expenditures - will be the responsibility of participating Governments for their delegations, of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their representation and of individuals for their own participation. This, again, is in accordance with previous practice. Advance notice might prove helpful to Governments and organizations budgeting for the travel and subsistence funds necessary to ensure adequate representation at the Congress. It is important that delegations include representation of all the criminal justice and crime prevention services, i.e. police, prisons, courts, probation, parole, social welfare, forensic medicine, criminology etc. There will be no restriction on the numbers of official delegates since they are essential to the success of the Congress. The size of delegations varies, but to ensure full representation of all the interests in the subject of crime, delegations exceeding 10 persons have not been unusual.

14. For the guidance of prospective participants, the current costs of single rooms at the Congress hotels range from \$US 26 to \$US 32 at the Four Seasons-Sheraton and from \$US 24 to \$US 30 at the Royal York; and for double rooms, from \$US 34 to \$US 40 at the Four Seasons-Sheraton and from \$US 31 to \$US 37 at the Royal York. This does not include food. The host Government has arranged with the hotels that the rates charged will be fixed at the figures available in September 1974. Accordingly, a further announcement in this respect will be made in the near future should there be any rate increase.

VII. PROGRAMME

15. The theme for the Fifth United Nations Congress will be "Crime prevention and control - the challenge of the last quarter of the century", and the agenda, as approved by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its second session (E/CN.5/494), will be as follows:

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(1) Changes in forms and dimensions of criminality - transnational and national;

(2) Improvements in criminal legislation, law enforcement, judicial administration and correctional systems with a view to the prevention of crime and the treatment of the offender in the community;

(3) The emerging roles of the police and other law enforcement agencies, with special reference to changing expectations and minimum standards of performance;

(4) The treatment of offenders in custody, with special reference to the implementation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners adopted by the United Nations;

(5) Economic and social consequences of crime: new challenges for research and planning.

16. These five items provide for four separate section meetings and allow the first subject on the agenda to be discussed in a continuing plenary session, which will also be the forum for lectures and special addresses.

17. The Congress programme will also include visits to Canadian crime prevention services and correctional institutions, film shows and an exhibition; post-Congress tours and visits to places of interest are to be arranged by the host Government.

18. The host country received few responses to its proposal to hold an international prison arts exhibition. Since most of the answers did not support the proposal, the host Government has decided against proceeding with an exhibition on an international scale and proposes to confine itself to an exhibition of Canadian prison arts. If it should be found possible to include exhibitions from the few countries which have expressed an interest, a further announcement will be made. Further inquiries on this subject should be addressed to:

Office of the Canadian Co-ordinator
Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of
Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
Post Office Box 1975, Station B
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R.5
CANADA

19. The official languages of the Congress will be Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Further information on meetings services will be communicated in due course.

VIII. DOCUMENTATION

20. The United Nations Secretariat will prepare a working paper on each of the substantive items on the Congress agenda. Those documents will set the stage for discussions by giving the elements of the problem, indicating the preoccupation of various countries and defining the major issues involved. Specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may also prepare, at the invitation of the Secretariat, background documentation on specific questions pertaining to the subject matter under consideration. Any such documents prepared for circulation to the participants should be submitted in the following languages and numbers of copies: English, 1,300; French, 500; Spanish, 300. A certain number of copies in Russian would also be helpful if it is possible to provide them. All copies for circulation must reach the Executive Secretary of the Congress before 1 May 1975. Since the United Nations cannot accept responsibility for the translation of these documents, they will be circulated in the languages received. National statements prepared by Member States will be invited in advance of the Congress.

21. Documents will be mailed to participants at least six weeks beforehand and there will be no distribution of documents during the Congress.

IX. "SMALL GROUP" MEETINGS

22. Many different groups of professional and scientific interests need to be provided for by the Congress. Already applications are being received from organizations which would like to arrange meetings at the time of the Congress. This creates a problem, since the limitation of Congress membership is related to the organization, facilities and accommodation, and not all those attending such meetings could gain physical admission to the Congress, quite apart from the question of qualifying for official membership. The tendency, therefore, has been to discourage meetings which would arouse expectations of participation which cannot be fulfilled, and the United Nations would appreciate being consulted by any groups having such plans long before they near completion. In general, it would be unwise to plan for meetings unless all participants have been able to secure registration for Congress membership.

23. Following the precedent of previous Congresses, the host country is making a consultant available to organizers of group meetings and will provide rooms. Ordinarily it will be impossible, however, to provide interpretation. All available interpreters will be fully engaged in servicing the official meetings and will be unable to service side meetings of any kind. This leaves organizers with the choice either of holding common-language group meetings or of managing with such consecutive interpretation as they themselves can supply. The host Government, however, may be able to a limited extent to supply interpretation services in its own two official languages, English and French.

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24. The host country has requested that application for accommodations for such a meeting should reach it no later than 1 February 1975, preferably earlier, to ensure that space can be provided at suitable times and thereby avoid last minute disappointments. Applications should be addressed to:

Office of the Director of Conference Services
Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Sir William Mulock Building
241 Jarvis Street
Toronto, Ontario M5B 2C3
CANADA

X. REGISTRATION AND FURTHER INFORMATION

25. Registration will commence on 1 September 1974. Bearing in mind the limitations set out in paragraph 5 of this circular, persons qualified under section III, subparagraphs 4 (a), (b) and (c) may apply for registration forms to the

Executive Secretary for the Fifth United Nations Congress
on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
c/o Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section
Social Development Division
United Nations, New York 10017

26. Persons falling under section III, subparagraphs 4 (a) and (b), however, need not apply individually until such time as they have been included in the official list of representatives sent by their Governments or organizations to the United Nations. Thereafter they will be supplied with registration forms to complete.

27. Since the Secretariat anticipates that the number of applications will exceed the capacity of Congress facilities, early submission of registration forms by individual participants is advisable; in any case, these forms should be returned not later than 31 March 1975.

28. It would also be helpful for the Executive Secretary to be notified as soon as possible about the number of official representatives each Government or organization plans to send to the Congress. The names of representatives, of course, may be submitted at a later date.

29. Upon receipt of a completed registration form, the Secretariat will signify official recognition of the applicant's status as a participant by returning to him a registration slip bearing a registration reference number. For administrative purposes this number should be quoted in all subsequent correspondence.

30. There will be no registration fee.

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.