

**Opening Remarks by**  
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**“Regional Training on Victimization Surveys in Asia and the Pacific”**  
**Pattaya City, Thailand**  
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President Zin Hwan Kim of KIC,  
Ms. Magarita Guerrero,  
Mr. Michael Jandl,  
Distinguished guests, experts, and participants  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour and pleasure for me to address the “Regional Training on Victimization Surveys in Asia and the Pacific.” First of all, on behalf of the Thailand Institute of Justice, or TIJ, -- and on behalf of Dr. Kittipong Kittayarak, the TIJ Executive Director, who unfortunately cannot be with us today, -- I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you to Thailand. I am delighted to see the gathering of experts and practitioners from so many countries in our region. It signifies that we all share the common aspiration to enhance the quality and availability of crime and criminal justice statistics.

As we are very well aware, data is an invaluable asset. Quality data and statistics allow us to better understand the current status of the problem, which can be a crucial step for any efficient and effective interventions. But in reality, the accurate data is not easily obtained, and in many circumstances, the effective use of statistics in driving policy decision can be quite challenging.

The adoption of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development represents an excellent window of opportunity for the criminal justice system to contribute to building a peaceful and inclusive society, but it also creates a clear demand for quality data to monitor the progress made. To meet such a demand, we need to develop necessary capacity, which for some countries, can be quite a challenge. This is why close cooperation, technical assistance, and knowledge sharing among peers are greatly important.

Like any other areas of policy making, the criminal justice system requires empirical evidence in order to effectively fulfil the complexity of its functions. But unlike many public sectors, the criminal justice system sometimes needs more than just the administrative data to render a clear picture of the real situations we are facing. While it is important, we also know that for various reasons, the data collected by the government agencies as part of the routine process can be incomplete. And even with the very best administrative data, certain things cannot be fully explained by the official data alone.

The magnitude of the actual crime experienced by citizens which can go undetected or unreported, is one such thing. To this end, crime victimization survey can be a powerful tool to shed light upon the unreported – “dark figure” of crime. Crime Victimization survey is also valuable when we want to know about the crime situations faced by marginalized groups like women, children and the underprivileged who are more likely to be victimized and often incapable of access to the justice system.

The availability and quality of statistics brought about by the incorporation of administrative data and comprehensive surveys will play a significant role -- not only in developing crime prevention and criminal justice policies, but also in the implementation and monitoring of its functions, as well as

its contribution to the SDGs goals. However, good statistics needs serious investment. This is especially true for crime victimization survey which requires a large amount of budget that sometimes seems almost unattainable for a middle of lower income countries. This is not to say that we should just give up, for we are all very well aware of the benefit of this survey. The fact that all of you are here today means that someone in your home countries also sees the benefit of crime victimization survey. But to actually push forward the implementation, we need to secure the active and focused commitment of our governments. We as stakeholders need to work together and work very hard.

Although somewhat new and inexperienced in this area, TIJ is committed to supporting our region in our efforts to improve crime and criminal justice statistics. And it is with great pride that we join hands with other partner organizations to realize this. Therefore, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the UNODC, the ESCAP, and the Korean Institute of Criminology, not only for jointly organizing this training, but also for being our great allies since the First Regional Meeting on Crime Statistics held in Thailand in 2014, and the second meeting in Seoul last year. My appreciation also goes toward the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence, for sharing with us the training modules that has proved effective in the Latin American region, as well as sending an expert to be the trainer for our training event.

This regional training could not have come at a better time. I am confident that as we examine the methodology and learn more from experiences of each other, we can better set our national priority and determine the steps forward on implementation of the crime victimization survey. I wish you all a productive and enjoyable week. And I look forward to the concrete cooperation, and more importantly, that network of friends to follow this successful training.