



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

32nd Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Side Event

Holistic approach in crime prevention and protection of children within the justice sector

23 May 2023 – 9.00 a.m (C.E.T), Hybrid (Room M3 and Join online: <https://tinyurl.com/3vap2mab>)



BACKGROUND

There are mainly two pathways in which children and youth get involved in violent behaviours – as victims of violence and crime and as perpetrators of crime. The side event aims to provide real and practical sector-wide approaches that the justice sector can adopt, while sharing best practices on the adoption of a holistic justice prevention strategy for children and youth. Justice systems need to be well equipped to prevent and respond to violence against children and youth; with a focus on ensuring better access to justice; reducing recourse to deprivation of liberty; promoting child-sensitive investigation and court procedures; non-custodial sanctions, restorative justice, and diversion; recovery and reintegration of children and youth and prevention of abuse and exploitation.

In line with the Beijing Rules and the Riyadh Guidelines a societal child/youth-centered approach should be the focus of any preventive programme for purposes of promoting the well-being of young persons. This means involving, inter alia, the family, community, and schools in promoting their well-being, right from their childhood. This can be achieved through a number of measures, but the side event will focus on:

- a) The effective application, streamlining and promotion of restorative justice measures by promoting whole-society approaches, including rehabilitation, reintegration and conciliation; along with the application of alternatives to prosecution and trial by the justice actors – so that entry into the justice system for children and youth will be as a measure of last resort. Challenges faced in the successful implementation of these restorative justice measures will also be identified and mitigation measures documented.
- b) Propose novel community-targeted initiatives that are tailored to the unique circumstances of children and young persons with a focus on reintegration and conciliation. This should be a priority for the justice actors before the release of children and youth to avoid secondary victimisation and reduce the risk of exclusion. Release into communities that are not ready and have not received adequate sensitization and conciliation tools, adversely contributes to the secondary victimisation of the released children/young person.
- c) Propose recommendations on the application of standard procedures and protocols that ensure that children and youth who come into contact with the law, will have their matters disposed of at the earliest, and are protected from re-traumatization and secondary victimisation. Child/ youth victims and witnesses who do not receive proper child and gender sensitive consideration and protection can be revictimized during their participation in the criminal justice system, which may lead to recidivism.

PROPOSED PANEL MEMBERS

1. **Hon. Justice Martha Koome**, EGH, Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya and Chairperson of the National Council on the Administration of Justice
2. **Ms. Mary Muthoni**, HSC, Principal Secretary State Department for Correctional Services
3. **Mr. Noordin M. Haji**, OGW, CBS, Director of Public Prosecutions, and Vice Chairperson of the National Council on the Administration of Justice
4. **Professor Jennifer Davidson**, Executive Director, Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures, University of Strathclyde
5. **Mr. George Ochieng Odalo**, Executive Director, Slum Child Foundation (virtual participation)