

**United Nations
Congresses on Crime Prevention
and Criminal Justice 1955–2020**
65 years of achievement



65 years of United Nations Crime Congresses

Every five years policymakers and practitioners working in crime prevention and criminal justice gather for the United Nations Crime Congress to help shape the agenda and standards of the United Nations on crime prevention and criminal justice. The Kyoto Congress – due to be held in 2020, postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic – offers the international community a unique opportunity to undertake a comprehensive stocktaking exercise, with a view to charting the way forward towards the role that the criminal justice system and the institutions comprising it can play as part of the infrastructure of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The United Nations Crime Congress is the world's largest and most diverse gathering of governments, civil society, academia and experts in crime prevention and criminal justice. For 65 years the congresses have had an impact on criminal justice policies and strengthened international cooperation against the global threat of transnational organized crime.

The practice of holding international conferences on crime control matters at five-year intervals dates back to 1872 when conferences were held under the auspices of the International Prison Commission which later became the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission (IPPC).

The First United Nations Congress was held in Geneva in 1955.

Sixty-five years later, this tradition continues with the Government of Japan hosting the Fourteenth United Nations Congress in Kyoto. The theme of the Fourteenth Congress is “advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda”.

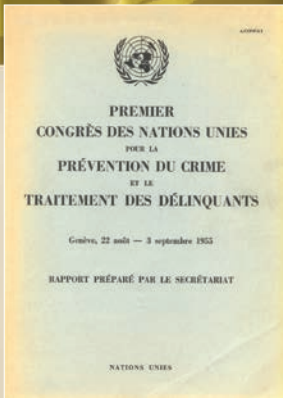


UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



FIRST UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Geneva, Switzerland
22 August - 3 September 1955



The First Congress adopted the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

The First Congress concluded with the adoption of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners which cover the general management of institutions, and are applicable to all categories of prisoners, criminal or civil, in pre-trial detention or following conviction and sentencing, including prisoners subject to “security measures” or corrective measures ordered by a judge.

Since their development and adoption the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners have had immeasurable impact on the treatment of prisoners worldwide. Today they remain the standards against which many concerned human rights, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations determine the treatment of prisoners.



Over 50 governments and 500 participants took part in the first UN Crime Prevention Congress. The main focus of the event was the treatment of juvenile delinquents and prisoners, the numbers of which had risen dramatically in post-war Europe.

Congress topics:

- “Open” penal and correctional institutions
- The selection and training of prison personnel
- The proper use of prison labour
- The impact of the mass media on juvenile deviancy

The Congress made recommendations:

For the prevention of juvenile delinquency through the community, the family, schools and social services, as well as the selection and training of prison personnel.

51 governments +++ 43 NGOs +++ 512 participants



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
London, England
8 - 19 August 1960



Over one thousand participants converged on London for the 1960 Congress which focused on crime, including juvenile delinquency, that resulted from social changes accompanying rapid economic development. Following the adoption in 1959 of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the Congress concentrated on new forms of juvenile delinquency, their origin, prevention and treatment.

The Congress made recommendations on:

- Short-term imprisonment
- The integration of prison labour with the national economy
- The remuneration of prisoners
- Pre-release treatment and assistance to dependents of prisoners
- Parole and released prisoners' transition to community life
- After-care, including vocational guidance, training and placement
- The role of national planning in preventing crime

Special police services for the prevention of juvenile delinquency

The Second Congress made recommendations on special police services for the prevention of juvenile delinquency, with special emphasis to the development of the greatest possible cooperation

The Second Congress recommended special police services for juvenile justice

between the police, various national specialized agencies and the general public regarding measures to prevent juvenile delinquency.

Establishment of Regional Networks

To involve developing regions more closely with the United Nations Crime Programme the Second Congress set in motion the creation of regional crime institutes.



68 governments +++ 50 NGOs +++ 1,046 participants



UNODC

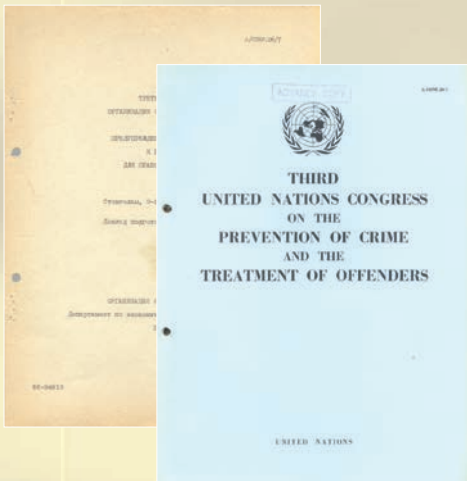
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Stockholm, Sweden
9 - 18 August 1965



The Third Congress analyzed the relationship between criminality and social change



The Congress topics focused on:

- Social change and criminality
- Social forces and the prevention of criminality
- Community action for preventing crime
- Special preventive and treatment measures for juveniles and young adults
- Measures to reduce recidivism

The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute

The Congress recognized the importance of research and training in the field of crime, including the launching of regional and inter-regional initiatives. As a follow-up to the actions of the Third Congress, the United Nations Social Defence Research Institute was established in 1968 in Rome. In 1989, the Economic and Social Council formally recognised the expansion of UNSDRI into the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

“Prevention of Criminality” was the main theme of the Stockholm Congress, which started to devote attention to technical assistance in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, stressing the need of criminological research for crime prevention.

74 governments +++ 39 NGOs +++ 1,083 participants



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



FOURTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Kyoto, Japan
17 - 26 August 1970



The Fourth Congress called for improved crime prevention planning for economic and social development

Under the theme “Crime and Development” the Kyoto Congress was the first to be preceded by regional preparatory meetings, which were held in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. Previously, there had been little opportunity for experts of all regions to formulate a common policy approach to the items on the agenda.

Congress topics:

- Social defence policies in relation to development planning
- Public participation in crime prevention and control of crime and delinquency
- The organization of research for policy development in social defence
- Developments in the correctional field

Improved crime prevention planning for economic and social development

The Kyoto Congress was the first to adopt a declaration, calling on governments to take effective steps to coordinate and intensify their crime prevention efforts in the context of economic and social development.

It further recognized that crime in all its forms sapped the energies of nations, undermining efforts to achieve a more wholesome environment and a better life for their people. In addition, the Congress discussed for the first time the problem of terrorism and airplane hijacking.



79 governments +++ 31 NGOs +++ 998 participants

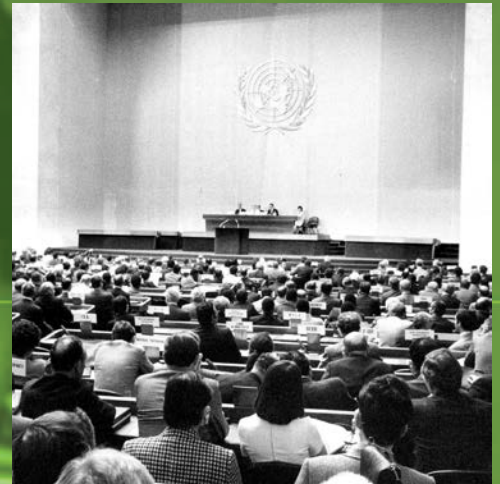


UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



FIFTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Geneva, Switzerland
1 - 12 September 1975



The Fifth Congress approved the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The Congress returned to Geneva in 1975. For the first time, discussions focused on the new forms and dimensions of criminality, including organized crime as a business, and the costs of crime.

The Congress made recommendations on:

- Offences involving works of art and other cultural property
- Criminality associated with alcoholism and drug abuse

- Interpersonal violence
- Criminality associated with migration and flight from natural disasters and hostilities
- Female criminality
- Terrorism

The Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The Fifth Congress adopted a resolution in which it recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, subsequently developed into a convention by the Commission on Human Rights. The Congress also recommended the formulation of an international code of conduct for law enforcement officials.



101 governments +++ 33 NGOs +++ 909 participants

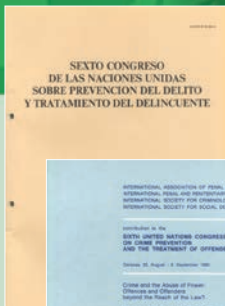


UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



SIXTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Caracas, Venezuela
25 August - 5 September 1980



Under the theme
“Crime prevention and the quality of life”,
the Sixth Congress recognized that
crime prevention must be based on the
social, cultural, political and economic
circumstances of countries

The Sixth Congress called for broad support and participation in crime prevention and the development of alternatives to imprisonment, as well as measures to address crime and abuse of power.

The Congress adopted resolutions on:

- Crime trends and crime prevention strategies
- Improvement of crime statistics
- Development of minimum standards of juvenile justice
- Measures to put an end to torture and extra-legal executions
- De-institutionalization of corrections and community measures
- Specific needs of women prisoners

The “Caracas Declaration”

Through the “Caracas Declaration”, Member States underlined the vital role played by the United Nations in encouraging international cooperation and the development of norms and guidelines in the field of criminal policy. Member States were also called to ensure that those responsible for the functioning of the criminal justice system should be properly qualified for their tasks and should perform them in a manner, which is independent of personal or group interest. The Congress also recommended the establishment of a regional institute in Africa.

102 governments +++ 38 NGOs +++ 920 participants



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



SEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Milan, Italy
26 August - 6 September 1985



The Milan Congress was preceded by regional and interregional preparatory meetings which proved valuable for their access to new information and ongoing research. The meetings were also strategically important for evaluating progress in the implementation of recommendations from previous congresses.

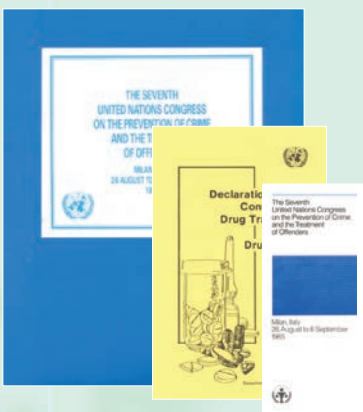
The Congress approved:

- The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice
- The Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power
- The Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary
- The Model Agreement on the Transfer of Foreign Prisoners.

The Seventh Congress adopted the Milan Plan of Action and several new United Nations standards and norms under the theme “Crime prevention for freedom, justice, peace and development”

The Milan Plan of Action:

The Milan Plan of Action called the attention of the international community to the problem of crime as an issue of global concern, hampering the political, economic, social and cultural development of people. It reiterated that crime threatened human rights, fundamental freedoms, and peace, stability and security. It also recommended that the United Nations, as a universal forum, has an important role to play in multilateral cooperation, particularly in taking concerted action against terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and organized crime.



125 governments +++ 58 NGOs +++ 1,395 participants



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



EIGHTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders Havana, Cuba 27 August - 7 September 1990



The Havana Congress took place at a time when it was recognized that crime with its international dimensions was increasing at an alarming rate.

The Congress approved standards on:

- The Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners
- The United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency
- The United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty
- The Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials
- The United Nations Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors
- The Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers
- Standard Minimum Rules for Non-Custodial Measures

The Congress also approved:

- The Model Treaty on Extradition
- The Model Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance
- The Model Treaty on Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters
- The Model Treaty on Transfer of Supervision of Offenders Conditionally Sentenced or Conditionally Released

The Eighth Congress recommended action against organized crime and terrorism under the theme “International crime prevention and criminal justice in the twenty-first century”

Prevention and control of organized crime and measures against terrorism

The Congress recommended research into the structure of organized crime and evaluation of the existing counter-measures, as well as strengthened international cooperation against terrorism. The Congress also recommended that a summit be held in Paris in 1991, leading to the establishment of an intergovernmental commission on crime prevention and criminal justice as the principal policy-making body of the United Nations.



127 governments +++ 46 NGOs +++ 1,127 participants



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



**NINTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Cairo, Egypt
28 April - 5 May 1995**



The Egyptian capital was the venue for the 1995 Congress, the first to incorporate technical workshops as an integral part of its proceedings. The workshops discussed strategies to prevent violent crime, computerization of criminal justice, the role of mass media in crime prevention and extradition.

Congress topics:

- Action against transnational and organized crime
- The role of criminal law in the protection of the environment
- Criminal justice and police systems
- Crime prevention strategies in urban areas
- Youth crime

International cooperation and practical technical assistance for strengthening the rule of law

The Congress placed a high priority on the technical cooperation and advisory services offered by the United Nations to assist Member States in

The Ninth Congress focused on international cooperation and practical technical assistance for strengthening the rule of law under the theme “Seeking security and justice for all”

achieving the goals of preventing crime within and among States and improving the response to crime. The recommendations for assistance included training programmes, field studies and action-oriented research at the regional, sub-regional, national and local levels.

Programme Network of Institutes (PNI)

In 1995 the PNI welcomed the U.S. Justice Department's National Institute of Justice and the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy, Vancouver, Canada. The PNI members conduct research, disseminate information and provide training and technical assistance.



138 governments +++ 73 NGOs +++ 1,899 participants

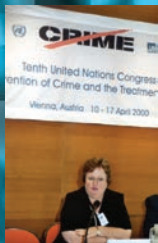


UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



TENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
on the Prevention of Crime
and the Treatment of Offenders
Vienna, Austria
10 - 17 April 2000



Almost two thousand participants met in the Austrian capital of Vienna in 2000 for the first Crime Congress of the new Millennium. "Crime and justice, meeting the challenges of the 21st century" was the theme of this Congress.

The Tenth Congress adopted the Vienna Declaration committing Member States to take international action against corruption

Congress topics and workshops:

- How to promote the rule of law and strengthen the criminal justice system
- International cooperation in combating transnational organized crime
- Effective crime prevention: keeping pace with new developments
- Combating corruption
- Crimes related to the computer network
- Community involvement in crime prevention
- Women in the criminal justice system



and speedy measures to combat terrorism, trafficking in human beings, illicit trade in firearms, smuggling of migrants and money-laundering. The Declaration further committed States to take enhanced international action against corruption, stressing the need for a new international legal instrument in addition to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

The Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice

The Tenth Congress adopted by acclamation the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice in which Member States pledged to take resolute

Programme Network of Institutes (PNI)

UNICRI, together with the regional and associated institutes (PNI), helped to organize the workshops thus continuing to assist the international community in strengthening co-operation in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice.

137 governments +++ 58 NGOs +++ 1,902 participants



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



ELEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
Synergies and responses: strategic
alliances in crime prevention and
criminal justice
Bangkok, Thailand
18 - 25 April 2005



The Eleventh Congress adopted the Bangkok Declaration, a crucial political document laying the foundation for and showing the direction towards strengthening international coordination and cooperation efforts, in order to prevent and combat crime.

Congress topics

- Effective measures to combat transnational organized crime
- Economic and financial crime: challenges to sustainable development
- Corruption: threats and trends in the twenty-first century
- International cooperation against terrorism and links between terrorism and other criminal activities
- Making standards work: 50 years of standard-setting in crime prevention and criminal justice

Workshops

- Enhancing international law enforcement cooperation including extradition measures
- Enhancing criminal justice reform including restorative justice
- Strategies and best practices for crime prevention
- Measures to combat terrorism
- Measures to combat economic crime including money-laundering
- Measures to combat computer-related crime

129 governments +++ 35 NGOs +++ 3,000+ participants

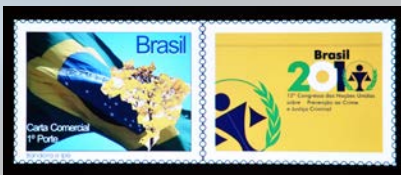


UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



TWELFTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
Comprehensive strategies for global
challenges: crime prevention and
criminal justice systems and their
development in a changing world
Salvador, Brazil
12 - 19 April 2010



The Twelfth Congress adopted the Salvador Declaration, which among other things, opened the door to discussions on new national and international responses to cybercrime.

Congress topics

- Children, youth and crime
- Terrorism
- Crime prevention
- Smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons
- Money-laundering
- Cybercrime
- International cooperation in fighting crime, and
- Violence against migrants and their families

Workshops

- International criminal justice education for the rule of law
- Survey of United Nations and other best practices in the treatment of prisoners in the criminal justice system
- Practical approaches to preventing urban crime
- Links between drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime
- Workshop on strategies and best practices against overcrowding in correctional facilities

104 governments +++ 45 NGOs +++ 17 IGOs
 +++ 2,000+ participants



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



THIRTEENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
 Integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation
 Doha, Qatar
 12 – 19 April 2015



The Thirteenth Congress adopted the Doha Declaration, which focuses on links between security, justice and the rule of law, and the attainment of a better, more equitable world.



Congress topics

- Successes and challenges in strengthening the rule of law to support sustainable development
- Combating transnational organized crime through better international cooperation
- New and emerging forms of crime: threats the world must reckon with
- The role of the public in strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice

Workshops

- Role of the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice in support of effective, fair, humane and accountable criminal justice systems
- Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants
- Strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice responses to evolving forms of crime
- Public contribution to crime prevention and raising awareness of criminal justice: experiences and lessons learned

141 governments +++ 46 NGOs +++ 4,000+ participants



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



FOURTEENTH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
Advancing crime prevention, criminal
justice and the rule of law: towards
the achievement of the 2030 Agenda
Kyoto, Japan
7 - 12 March 2021

Congress topics

- Comprehensive strategies for crime prevention towards social and economic development
- Integrated approaches to challenges facing the criminal justice system
- Multidimensional approaches to promoting the rule of law including fostering a culture of lawfulness while respecting cultural identities
- International cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address all forms of crime including terrorism in all its forms and new and emerging forms of crime

Workshops

- Evidence-based crime prevention: statistics, indicators and evaluation in support of successful practices
- Reducing reoffending: identifying risks and developing solutions
- Education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime
- Current crime trends, recent developments and emerging solutions, in particular new technologies as means for and tools against crime

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to build back better will be addressed throughout the Crime Congress.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
GOES HAND IN HAND WITH
THE RULE OF LAW**