



ELEVENTH UN CONGRESS ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Bangkok, Thailand 18-25 April 2005



18 April 2005

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

The Eleventh UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice opened in Bangkok, Thailand today. In his message to the Congress, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for universal ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, the Convention against Corruption, and the 12 universal counter-terrorism instruments.

The message was delivered by Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director, United Nations *Office on Drugs and Crime*, and Congress Secretary-General. Mr. Annan also appealed to States to take advantage of the special treaty event being held during the High-Level Segment of this Congress, and also during the 60th session of the General Assembly, to deposit instruments of ratification and accession.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Costa elaborated on the progress made since the last Congress, held in Vienna, Austria, in 2000. He referred to the links between crime and terrorism, and the need to establish rule of law. "Whether we fight crime, or oppose corruption, or struggle against trafficking people or protect innocent civilians against deadly terrorist attacks -- one particular goal stands out: the need to strengthen criminal justice systems the world over. Nations struggling to impose the rule of law, to build cultures that respect one another's rights, or to promote good governance and administrative integrity, need proper legislation, honest courts, skilled and aggressive prosecutors, and adequate detention facilities."

Suwat Liptapanlop, Justice Minister of Thailand was elected as President of the Congress. In his opening remarks, Mr. Suwat said it was of utmost importance for the international community to undertake concerted action towards building a new security consensus. He said an effective response to the challenges required a better international regulatory framework, improved cooperation among States and above all, political willingness, commitment and determination in taking appropriate measures at the national and local levels.

At a press briefing today, Mr. Suwat expressed his hope that Member States attending the Congress would cooperate in creating a Bangkok Declaration. Mr. Costa emphasized the importance of implementing the United Nations conventions, and of keeping abreast of the changing face of crime and terrorism -- including advances in money-laundering and cyber crime. Later in the afternoon, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Thailand Maha Vajiralongkorn addressed the Congress. He said that the Congress provided a valuable opportunity for United Nations Member States to promote cooperation in crime prevention and to ensure international norms and levels of effectiveness in the criminal justice system.

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