



# ELEVENTH UN CONGRESS ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

*Bangkok, Thailand 18-25 April 2005*



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## **11<sup>TH</sup> UN CRIME CONGRESS CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF STANDARD-SETTING IN CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

BANGKOK, 20 April (UN Information Service) -- The Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice will be reviewing 50 years of standard-setting in crime prevention and criminal justice during its meetings in Bangkok today.

Since the adoption of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners by the First Congress in 1955, the body of such guidelines has progressively expanded. Subsequent standards and guidelines cover issues such as juvenile justice, victim protection, independence of the judiciary and restorative justice. These rules provide guidance to Member States in all areas of the criminal justice system.

As highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict societies (document S/2004/616, paragraph 10), “These standards also set the normative boundaries of United Nations engagement, such that, for example, United Nations tribunals can never allow for capital punishment, United Nations-endorsed peace agreements can never promise amnesties for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or gross violations of human rights, and, where we are mandated to undertake executive or judicial functions, United Nations-operated facilities must scrupulously comply with international standards for human rights in the administration of justice.”

Some of these norms have further served as a basis for legally binding instruments, for example, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the statutes and rules of the international criminal tribunals, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and related Protocols, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

The Congress will be reviewing what has been done in the application of these standards and will explore any need for further standards. Recently, an expert group met in Vienna to draft guidelines for the protection of child victims and witnesses of crime. The Congress also viewed a documentary entitled “Making Standards Work”, produced by the United States-based non-governmental organization “Two Hands Free”. The movie was inspired by the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

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