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CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Milan Plan of Action, 1/ unanimously adopted by the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, emphasized the need to review the functioning and programme of work of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. In response, the General Assembly, in its resolution 40/32 of 29 November 1985, requested the Secretary-General to initiate such a review urgently, in his report to the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control to initiate such a review, as a matter of urgency, and to submit a final report to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1987.

2. At its ninth session, held at Vienna from 5 to 14 March 1986, the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control examined the results of the initial review undertaken by the Secretary-General (see E/AC.57/1986/4) and made a number of recommendations that were subsequently endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1986/11 of 21 May 1986. This resolution reflected the evident desire of the Council to maximize the fruitfulness of United Nations activities in this field, and, at the same time, to accord that sphere of work the significance it deserved. At the same session, the Council, in its decision 1986/129 of 21 May 1986, reaffirmed the need to maintain the resources provided to the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs to enable it to continue to discharge its mandated responsibilities, and requested the Secretary-General to include in the final review an examination of the arrangements for periodic congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, including their objectives and results, periodicity, duration, cost and method of preparation.

* A/42/150.

3. The General Assembly, in its resolution 41/107 of 4 December 1986, reaffirmed the importance of such congresses and their timely preparations, and urged Member States and the Secretary-General to make every effort to translate into action, as appropriate, the recommendations, policies and conclusions adopted unanimously by the Seventh Congress. The Assembly also requested the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1987 to examine in depth the functioning and programme of work of the United Nations in crime prevention and criminal justice, taking into account the results of the 1986 review, and decided to consider the issue at its forty-second session, under the item entitled "Crime prevention and criminal justice".

4. In pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 40/32 and 41/107, as well as Economic and Social Council decision 1986/129, the Secretary-General submitted to the Council at its first regular session of the Council of 1987 a final review on this subject (see E/1987/437). The report reflected the results of the initial review, the recommendations and guidance provided by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its ninth session, and the decisions of the Council at its first regular session of 1986. The report also took account of consultations with the United Nations regional and interregional institutes on crime prevention and criminal justice and other United Nations bodies concerned.

5. In its resolution 1987/53 of 28 May 1987, entitled "Review of the functioning and programme of work of the United Nations in crime prevention and criminal justice", the Economic and Social Council took note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General (E/1987/43), endorsed the recommendations contained in paragraph 2 of that report, and requested the Secretary-General and the bodies concerned to implement them. Those recommendations touched upon a number of substantive and organizational aspects of United Nations activities, including programme present and future work priorities, the role of the quinquennial United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders and that of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, technical co-operation in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, the role of United Nations regional and interregional institutes, revitalization of the functions of the United Nations Trust Fund for Social Defence, modalities of co-operation between the Secretariat and of non-governmental organizations active in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, and the role of the Secretariat.

6. In the same resolution, the Council, recognizing the pivotal role of the United Nations in promoting the exchange of information, experience and expertise and closer regional and international co-operation towards more effective crime prevention and criminal justice policies and strategies, requested the Secretary-General, when implementing the measures and priorities proposed in chapter III of his report: (a) to develop the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs as a specialized body and facilitating agent in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice; (b) to accord priority attention to the prevention and control of the forms of crime identified in the Milan Plan of Action, including those of international dimensions; (c) to strengthen technical co-operation activities and advisory service; (d) to develop practical measures to assist Member States, upon request, in developing viable crime prevention and criminal justice strategies and

in introducing crime prevention and criminal justice proposals in their national development plans; (e) to devise strategies for the practical follow-up by the United Nations system of the decisions of the United Nations in this sphere; (f) to take measures, in co-operation with the United Nations institutes and other appropriate bodies, to establish an efficient information system on crime prevention and criminal justice; and (g) to develop diversified funding strategies, including recourse to voluntary and mixed multilateral and bilateral contributions for specific projects, and to strengthen the involvement of the United Nations development agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements for the optimal functioning of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/11, and to take further measures to strengthen the institutional linkages within the United Nations system between the programme of work of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice and other relevant activities.

7. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to ensure adequate resources for the United Nations programme of work in this field through, inter alia, appropriate redeployment of staff and funds. It further requested him to explore ways and means of supporting and further assisting the United Nations regional and interregional institutes for crime prevention and control, particularly the newly established African Regional Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, as well as the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, and invited the United Nations Development Programme to continue providing support and assistance to them. Furthermore, the regional commissions were invited to consider integrating appropriate elements of the programme of work of the United Nations into their activities relating to social development.

8. In order to further enhance technical co-operation activities, the Council invited Member States to include in the country programmes of the United Nations Development Programme indications of specific issues in this field in relation to which they felt that assistance was needed. It also invited Member States to contribute to the United Nations Trust Fund for Social Defence to facilitate appropriate technical co-operation activities.

9. At the same session, the Council, in its resolution 1987/49 of 28 May 1987, approved the provisional agenda for the Eighth United Nations Congress, as recommended by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its ninth session, and requested the Secretary-General to take all necessary steps to ensure the timely undertaking of the preparatory activities as well as the success of the Congress itself.

10. In accordance with paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 41/107, the attention of the General Assembly is invited to chapter V, section B, of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 1987 (A/42/3), 2/ as well as to the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General (E/1987/43), in particular, paragraphs 1 and 2 containing its conclusions and recommendations.

Notes

1/ See Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, 26 August-6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.1), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/42/3).
