



# General Assembly

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## European Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fifteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Vienna, 25–27 March 2025

### Draft report

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### Addendum

## II. Recommendations (*continued*)

### B. Substantive items and workshops – Agenda item 5 (a)

#### 1. Advancing innovative and evidence-based crime prevention strategies towards social, economic and environmental development (agenda item 3); and building resilient societies, with a focus on protecting women, children and youth: fostering engagement, education and the culture of lawfulness (workshop 1)

1. An introductory presentation was delivered by a representative of the Secretariat introducing the agenda item and workshop. Statements were made by the representatives of France, the Russian Federation, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Finland.

2. A statement was also made by the representative of the European Union,<sup>1</sup> in her capacity as observer.

3. Statements were further made by the observers for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, INTERPOL and the Council of Europe.

4. A statement was furthermore made by the observer for the Alliance of NGOs on crime prevention and criminal justice.

#### Summary of deliberations

5. During the debate, many speakers stressed the importance of adopting a multisectoral, evidence-based and whole-of-government approach to crime prevention. Speakers noted that crime prevention strategies should be tailored to local contexts, promote respect for the rule of law, and take an integrated approach, thereby promoting cooperation among a variety of stakeholders. Some highlighted examples

<sup>1</sup> Also on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union.



of such integrated approaches, including joint efforts with law enforcement, the judiciary, social services as well as the education sector.

6. Several speakers supported innovative, evidence-based crime prevention strategies that uphold fundamental rights. The need to strengthen public policies to counter discrimination, promote social inclusion, and improve gender equality was considered crucial by several speakers.

7. A number of speakers noted that it was essential to acknowledge the specific needs of women, children, and young people in crime prevention and criminal justice policies, ensuring their protection and appropriate responses to crimes committed by or against them. In this context, speakers mentioned that women and youth should be engaged in the development of prevention policies and referred to the importance of prevention programmes addressing violence against children, including online abuse, and strengthening children's protection and participation to promote a culture of lawfulness and non-violence.

8. Several speakers highlighted the need for adequate support to victims, including to prevent revictimization. In this regard, the involvement of victims/survivors in awareness-raising and crime prevention campaigns was considered useful to strengthen these efforts and help overcome stigma.

9. Many speakers noted the need for multi-stakeholder initiatives to prevent domestic violence and gender-based violence against women and girls, including the need to take appropriate action to reduce the availability of firearms which was considered crucial in preventing domestic violence.

10. Several speakers drew attention to technology-facilitated crime and violence against women and girls as well as the need to address gender-specific issues when addressing cybercrime.

11. Many speakers expressed concern about youth involvement in crime, including organized crime and gang-related crime, highlighting the need for multidisciplinary programmes that strengthen relevant protective factors.

12. Many speakers noted that youth are particularly vulnerable to technology-facilitated and online abuse and exploitation and called for targeted initiatives to prevent their victimization, including education and awareness-raising activities.

13. Concern about the recruitment of minors below the age of criminal liability into serious and organized crime was expressed by several speakers who highlighted the need for early prevention in this regard.

14. Some speakers acknowledged the significant negative impact of crimes against the environment, emphasizing its cross-border and complex nature, and called for evidence-based measures to prevent these crimes and deter offenders.

15. Many speakers noted the rise in online crime, including fraud, human trafficking, hacking, identity theft, cyberbullying, and the exploitation of children online. In the same vein, it was stressed that more needs to be done to prevent scams, especially those originating online.

16. A number of speakers noted the threats posed by drug and firearms trafficking, the smuggling of migrants, and trafficking in persons and the need to prevent such crimes.

17. Several speakers highlighted the economic aspects of crime, emphasizing the importance of preventing illicit financial flows, countering corruption, and improving transparency and accountability.

## Outcome of deliberations

18. The following recommendations, which were not negotiated by the participants, were identified:

- (a) Involve all relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of crime prevention strategies to ensure a comprehensive approach, including national and local government actors, civil society, and the private sector;
- (b) Promote evidence-based crime prevention strategies that are tailored to local needs, while encouraging a multidisciplinary approach that addresses local vulnerabilities and considers national and transnational crime challenges;
- (c) Ensure that crime prevention strategies respect and uphold the fundamental rights of affected individuals, including their procedural rights in criminal proceedings, privacy, data protection, and protection from discrimination. This includes also to prevent, prosecute and punish all forms of torture and any other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- (d) Support crime prevention research and evaluation and exchange knowledge and good practices between and within countries on evidence-based and data-driven crime prevention strategies, including strategies aimed at preventing technology-facilitated crimes;
- (e) Enhance international cooperation to improve innovation in crime prevention strategies considering new and emerging crimes and improve exchanges and sharing of good practices. In this context, encourage innovative approaches to prevention by using and integrating new technologies, including artificial intelligence, into existing systems and public policies while aiming at the right balance between protecting fundamental freedoms and public safety;
- (f) Address youth crime, including youth recruitment into organized crime, through innovative prevention approaches and foster social inclusion and employment opportunities to facilitate social reintegration of offenders;
- (g) Implement effective, gender-responsive crime prevention strategies that prioritize victim support and promote safety; and increase efforts to prevent child sexual abuse and exploitation through sustained political will, investment in evidence-based prevention programmes, and cross-sector collaboration, ensuring the protection of children and addressing the misuse of the digital space;
- (h) Adapt crime prevention strategies to the specific nature of each crime, recognizing that targeted, individualized approaches are most effective in preventing juvenile delinquency and sexual and gender-based violence;
- (i) When it comes to child victims of crime, ensure the availability of targeted and integrated support services that respond to the specific needs of those children; and thereby promote the provision of trauma-informed care as well as the cooperation among all relevant actors working with child victims;
- (j) Facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices for the prevention of child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation and the protection of and assistance to victims, especially in border areas; and advance collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including private sector service providers, to remove child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation material from their platforms;
- (k) Establish specialized support facilities for vulnerable individuals, such as shelters and legal aid; and improve training for professionals including law enforcement, justice personnel, and social workers on handling the specific needs of such vulnerable individuals in the context of crime prevention;
- (l) Implement evidence-based measures, including awareness campaigns, effective sanctions, and protection mechanisms for whistle-blowers and affected communities, to prevent crimes against the environment and ensure accountability; strengthen the fight against crimes that affect the environment by adopting a

comprehensive approach, thereby recognizing links to organized crime, corruption, and drug trafficking, and involving multidisciplinary collaboration with law enforcement, judicial authorities, civil society, and the academic community, while enhancing specialized training, allocating adequate resources, and encouraging the ratification of international legal instruments to strengthen global efforts in detection, investigation and prosecution;

(m) Integrate the environmental dimension into crime prevention strategies, addressing the role of climate change, environmental degradation, and resource depletion, while also incorporating green initiatives such as green prisons and environmental rehabilitation;

(n) Recognize fraud as a serious crime and advance innovative, evidence-based crime prevention strategies using a whole-of-government approach; develop and implement effective measures to address the economic dimension of crime, including a “follow the money” approach, which involves identifying, tracing, seizing, confiscating, recovering and returning proceeds of crime;

(o) Strengthen the capacity of institutions responsible for countering the illicit trafficking in firearms, including by enhancing border controls; and consider using advanced technologies for registration, control and traceability.

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