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### Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

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### Draft report

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#### Addendum

### Thematic discussion on maximizing the effectiveness of technical assistance provided to Member States in crime prevention and criminal justice

1. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, on 25 April 2006, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice considered agenda item 4, entitled “Thematic discussion on maximizing the effectiveness of technical assistance provided to Member States in crime prevention and criminal justice”. The thematic discussion was chaired by Vasyl Pokotylo (Ukraine), Vice-Chairman of the Commission, and was structured under four sub-items: (a) establishing priorities; (b) taking stock; (c) mobilizing resources; and (d) evaluation.
2. For its discussion of the item, the Commission had before it a conference room paper entitled “Maximizing the effectiveness of technical assistance provided to Member States in crime prevention and criminal justice” (E/CN.15/2006/CRP.2). In addition, the following informal documents had been made available to delegations in advance of the session at the request of the Commission during its intersessional period: (a) note on the thematic discussion; and (b) non-paper on achievements of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice since 1992.
3. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, made a statement at the opening of the thematic debate. Statements were also made by the Chief of the Human Security Branch of the Division for Operations of UNODC, on sub-item (a) establishing priorities and sub-item (b) taking stock; and by the Director of the Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs of UNODC on sub-item (c) mobilizing resources



and sub-item (d) evaluation. Audio-visual presentations were made by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat on sub-item (b) taking stock; by the observer for the European Commission on sub-item (c) mobilizing resources; and by the observer for the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy on sub-item (d) evaluation.

4. Statements were made by the representatives of Austria (on behalf of the European Union), Canada, China, Brazil, Pakistan, the United States of America, Egypt and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Statements were also made by the observers for Sweden, France, Afghanistan, Algeria, Morocco, Australia and Tunisia. The observers for the Council of Europe, the World Bank, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and the International Association against Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking also made statements.

## **A. Deliberations**

5. In her statement, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, highlighted the importance of an adequate response to violence against women, at both the international and the national level. She indicated that the international legal framework aimed at ending violence against women was being progressively strengthened, with sexual offences now included in a range of international conventions. Criminal justice responses to violence against women, the Special Rapporteur suggested, were of great importance, including aspects such as ensuring the existence of appropriate legal frameworks and criminal justice institutions with adequately trained staff experienced in the necessary specialized approaches. Given the mandate of UNODC in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, the Special Rapporteur stated that there was scope for greater coordination between her work and that of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

### **Sub-items (a) and (b): Establishing priorities and taking stock**

6. In his introductory statement, the Chief of the Human Security Branch of the Division for Operations of UNODC outlined the combination of factors that influenced the selection of priorities and issues to be addressed through technical assistance. These included factors that were internal to the United Nations, for example strategic priorities set by governing bodies, such as the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and the capacity and field presence of UNODC, as well as external factors, such as requests received for technical assistance, the absorption capacity of recipient States and donor priorities. Given that financial and human resources were limited, it was noted that UNODC needed to balance its response to current requests for technical assistance and the requirement to address emerging issues. While it was always a challenge to set priorities in a complex and often changing environment, UNODC had entered into or completed various processes related to determining strategic priorities, including developing an overall strategy for UNODC and formulating strategic programme frameworks at the country level. The Programme of Action, 2006-2010, for Africa, adopted by the Round Table for Africa held in Abuja on 5 and 6 September 2005, constituted a good example of prioritizing both a geographical region and a set of

substantive issues. A capacity to assess institutional strengths and weaknesses in the criminal justice sector was crucial for the design of effective and sustainable technical assistance and UNODC was developing a series of assessment tools in that regard.

7. Taking stock of what had been achieved through the provision of technical assistance in crime prevention and criminal justice, the representative of UNODC noted that the crime programme had grown significantly in recent years. There were currently some 40 ongoing projects, valued at \$87 million. One lesson that had been identified was that generic tools and training materials that were adaptable to various country environments needed to be available, to enable relatively rapid responses to requests for assistance. It was also noted that an important prerequisite for success in the provision of technical assistance was a basic criminal justice infrastructure within the framework of which more specialized training and capacity-building activities could be organized. A key goal of UNODC was to be a centre of expertise within the United Nations system on crime prevention and criminal justice matters.

8. A number of thematic areas were highlighted. These included the need to focus on and prioritize specific themes; the importance of regional initiatives; the requirement to both strengthen and rely on the capacity of UNODC field offices; the importance of assessing needs before finalizing technical assistance interventions; the need to gather and exchange information; and the critical importance of coordination, both within the United Nations system and with other multilateral and bilateral actors.

9. Several speakers highlighted how important it was for UNODC to focus on a clearly defined set of substantive areas. In particular, the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (General Assembly resolution 55/25, annex I) and the United Nations Convention against Corruption (resolution 58/4, annex) were seen as priority areas for the provision of technical assistance. One speaker highlighted the fact that the Commission, as the policymaking body on crime prevention and criminal justice in the United Nations system, had a central role to play in determining areas of work and providing overall guidance to UNODC. Nevertheless, and while it was important to respond to emerging crime issues, the Commission must be disciplined in what it requested UNODC to do, bearing in mind the limited resources available. One speaker highlighted the importance of the ongoing process within the United Nations to review mandates older than five years and, in that context, suggested that a corresponding process should be undertaken to assess whether ongoing projects and activities were still relevant.

10. With regard to the implementation of projects at the country level, one speaker suggested that such projects should be selected on the basis of their demonstration value, in order that lessons could be learned for other technical assistance activities. Similarly, another speaker argued that an important aim of technical assistance should be the creation of national centres of excellence in specific criminal justice and related areas. In order to improve international cooperation, one speaker emphasized the importance of technical assistance in the area of mutual legal assistance and extradition.

11. Several speakers highlighted the importance of regional initiatives where States had common experiences and requirements. It was underscored by one speaker that existing regional arrangements and frameworks should be used, rather than creating new ones. There was an important role to be played at the regional level by the Institutes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme network and regional organizations.

12. Several speakers welcomed the work of UNODC to develop a set of criminal justice assessment tools, which would allow a systematic determination of which issues should be selected for the focus of technical assistance. One speaker suggested that such assessments should also take into account the presence of informal or parallel justice systems in some States. The importance of assessment missions as a means to analyse the real needs of requesting States was highlighted. Another speaker added that the specific socio-political and economic circumstances of requesting States needed to be taken into account. One speaker pointed out the importance of information-gathering at the global level, in order to serve as a basis for possible technical assistance interventions. Another speaker highlighted the importance of monitoring and peer-review mechanisms, suggesting that experience showed that technical assistance was much more effective when such mechanisms were in place.

13. A number of speakers underscored the value of the UNODC field office network in the provision of assistance. Field offices were well placed to understand the unique problems and challenges of the regions and States where they were based. The need to strengthen the UNODC field office network, including through training and other capacity-building interventions in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, was emphasized.

14. A presentation by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat highlighted, among other factors, the critical importance of coordination and cooperation between United Nations bodies in the area of criminal justice. The speaker argued that, while progress was being achieved, there was considerable room for improving collaboration. Given that 10 United Nations funds, programmes and agencies worked on some aspect of the rule of law and criminal justice, and all suffered from resource constraints, it was imperative to cooperate, taking into account their various mandates and areas of expertise. With regard to the specific issue of post-conflict peacebuilding, the speaker emphasized that United Nations peacekeeping operations needed to draw on expertise from across the United Nations system. In-country coordination between various United Nations entities on the ground was achieved under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, although the nature of that coordination effort sometimes varied from mission to mission. He highlighted a number of areas, including the requirement for adequate responses to organized crime, drug trafficking and corruption in many post-conflict settings, where UNODC was a natural partner and provided expertise. In addition, UNODC was well placed to provide technical tools and manuals, such as the criminal justice assessment tools, a project in which the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was a partner. The Department had initiated the development of a rule of law index and UNODC was providing inputs where relevant.

15. Several speakers welcomed the cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNODC, which demonstrated how entities of the

United Nations system could work together more effectively. Several speakers reiterated the importance of achieving a common approach at the country level to avoid duplication and unnecessary competition between entities of the United Nations system. It was emphasized that integrated assessments, both when peacekeeping assessments were being initiated and at later stages in their development, were crucial to ensuring effective coordination and complementarity of programmes. One speaker emphasized that, while better United Nations system coordination was clearly to be welcomed, competition and lack of coordination at the country level and with bilateral donors remained an issue in some cases. In that regard, the importance of adequate exchange of information was emphasized.

#### **Sub-items (c) and (d): Mobilization of resources and evaluation**

16. In his presentation on sub-items (c) and (d), the Director of the Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs of UNODC outlined the trends, dimensions and challenges in resource mobilization. He underscored that the challenges the Office was facing in relation to the first two dimensions related to the difficulties States had in linking the topics of rule of law and development. Reference was made to the Round Table for Africa and the subsequent Programme of Action, 2006-2010, which had shown that development was unlikely to be successful without the rule of law. He noted that donor contributions were increasingly made through direct budget support to recipient States and earmarked contributions for UNODC. That trend resulted in less flexibility for UNODC to prioritize its work and made it difficult to respond to emerging issues. He went on to underscore the importance UNODC attached to building strategic partnerships with members of the United Nations family, the international financial institutions and other development partners. To that end, it was key for such partnerships to have their foundation in policy and operational dialogues and to draw on each other's comparative advantages.

17. He noted that important lessons could be learned from evaluations carried out over recent years, which included the importance of counting on solid baseline data, applying several different tools that could be used throughout and at different stages of a project's life, feeding the findings from an evaluation into new projects and clearly identifying their results and impact.

18. In its presentation, the European Commission referred to its financial mobilization mechanisms and outlined several new instruments of external aid that applied to partner States within, as well as outside, the European Union. He underscored that the principles of the Union's aid programming included multi-year strategies, partnership and local ownership, donor coordination and complementarity as well as the integration of issues into broader sector policies. He indicated that recently aid provided by the European Union had shifted towards direct budgetary support and sectoral approaches.

19. Several speakers expressed their appreciation for the work of UNODC and noted that confidence in the Office would be aided by the ongoing development of an overarching strategy, which would lead to increased transparency and accountability. They stated that the implementation of the strategy and the Office's adherence to it would facilitate the identification of projects and partnerships in a more strategic way. Ongoing measures by UNODC to introduce result-based budgeting and the formulation of an overarching strategy were regarded as important developments.

20. Several speakers noted that it was important that the Office increase its technical assistance efforts. One speaker indicated that the forward-looking contribution by UNODC to the formulation of the Programme of Action, 2006-2010, for Africa had been important, but noted that States had not been forthcoming in financing its implementation.

21. The need for training and other materials in various United Nations languages that would match the official language of a State seeking to use such materials was brought to the fore by a couple of speakers. Another speaker asked UNODC to increase its efforts in creating model laws and legislation, as such models were required for technical assistance staff working throughout the world.

22. Referring to the issue of how best to coordinate and maximize the use of technical resources, one speaker proposed the setting up of a working group to identify the best possible use of technical assistance and its coordination, which could report to the Commission at its sixteenth session.

23. Several speakers noted that, while a challenge in itself, the establishment of crime issues in the mainstream of the larger development agenda was critical; there was a very large resource base to tap into and UNODC must be proactive and vigorous in that respect.

24. In his intervention, the observer for the World Bank emphasized that, in order to mobilize resources for crime prevention and criminal justice, it was imperative that those issues should be given due prominence in a country's national development strategy and, in particular, in its poverty reduction strategy. He noted that, owing to the important links between security, development and human rights, different stakeholders from within and outside the development community could learn from each other through the consultative process leading up to the adoption of a poverty reduction strategy.

25. In introducing sub-item (d), evaluation, the observer for the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy highlighted the challenges and benefits of monitoring and evaluating technical assistance and capacity-building. He stated that it was difficult to evaluate the impact of technical assistance that had been provided without evaluating the impact of the reforms that the assistance was purporting to support, as results could only be truly evaluated with reference to baseline data. To that end, he pointed to the recent work of UNODC to produce criminal justice assessment toolkits, which should help to provide a basis not only for the planning of technical assistance, but also for measuring the impact of the activities undertaken. Key matters to be taken into account in relation to how evaluations should be conducted included local ownership of the project and its evaluation, including its timeliness and cost, noting that good evaluations were rarely inexpensive.

26. A number of speakers spoke in support of the work of the Independent Evaluation Unit of UNODC and underscored that the evaluations it had undertaken would be crucial in enhancing the Office's role as a source of solid, reliable data. Furthermore, in order to maximize the effects of technical assistance, it was critical to ensure a robust evaluation and project cycle management. To that end, clear objectives should be established from the outset, visualizing the desired impact and how it would be measured, which meant that a project could be refocused while being implemented to ensure that its end goal remained in focus.

27. At the end of the thematic discussion, the Third Vice-Chairman of the Commission summarized the salient points as follows:

(a) The relationship between sustainable development, security and justice and the role of UNODC in promoting the rule of law and the functioning of criminal justice systems were acknowledged;

(b) Appreciation was expressed for the technical cooperation provided by UNODC in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice and the need to provide adequate resources was acknowledged. In that context, further efforts were being made to meet the challenges of current and future requests for provision of technical assistance and to address emerging issues;

(c) Prioritization in planning and programming of technical assistance was essential and had to be based on factors such as strategies set by United Nations governing bodies, availability of human and financial resources and requests for assistance received from Member States. Inputs from the Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption would also play a role in that process in their respective areas of competence;

(d) The overarching strategy currently being developed by UNODC would assist the process of prioritization. In that context, it was noted that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had a major role to play in determining priorities for UNODC technical assistance, by providing policy directives and strategic guidance;

(e) Emphasis was placed on the notion that assistance should focus on developing countries that were willing to implement crime prevention and criminal justice policies in an effective manner, including the new crime treaties, but unable to do so owing to lack of resources;

(f) Technical assistance provided by UNODC should promote the dissemination and application of best practices and practical tools with the aim of promoting universal ratification and implementation of new international instruments and standards and norms in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. The tools developed by UNODC should be tailored to the needs of individual States. It was noted that, in assessing needs, it was important that the social, economic, cultural and political circumstances of a particular partner State should be taken into account and efforts should be made to conduct assessments of parallel or informal justice systems that might operate in the country;

(g) Overall, UNODC worked to provide a coherent, multisectoral programme of technical assistance, based on what was needed and feasible. Gathering of information, also in coordination with non-governmental organizations and research institutes, could be improved;

(h) Emphasis was placed on the need for a common approach, such as the development of United Nations joint programmes of assistance in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice for specific States, which was seen as a good practice;

(i) Better synergies between various providers of technical assistance, starting at the assessment and planning phases, would assist in the better utilization of resources. Coordination efforts between UNODC and its multilateral partners, such as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, should continue to be enhanced. UNODC was seen as having a key coordinating role within its mandates. Improved coordination of bilateral and multilateral providers of technical assistance was also required. With its comparative advantage and expertise, UNODC could be a catalyst to bring the rule of law into the mainstream of the agendas of various United Nations entities;

(j) Assessment of the needs of requesting States, which was fundamental for prioritizing technical assistance requests, based on a thorough analysis of national capacity and the development of assessment tools in partnership with other United Nations system entities, was regarded as a good practice;

(k) The role of the UNODC field offices in assessing technical cooperation needs was emphasized, in particular in relation to the fact that the field offices were best placed to understand prevailing conditions in the countries and regions they covered;

(l) The need to integrate crime prevention and criminal justice elements into peacebuilding operations was underlined in anticipation of providing support to States in post-conflict situations. The cooperation established between UNODC and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in promoting the rule of law in countries in post-conflict situations was appreciated;

(m) The Round Table for Africa and the Programme of Action, 2006-2010, of UNODC was identified as a good example of prioritizing specific areas of assistance, based on the needs of a region, and could be recommended as a model for future planning in other regions;

(n) It was generally felt that it was possible and desirable to achieve better cooperation with the international aid community and to promote the alignment of donor assistance to national strategies and priorities in the rule of law sector;

(o) It was noted that voluntary funding for UNODC technical assistance programmes in the area of prevention and criminal justice had increased considerably. It was, however, also noted that the majority of contributions were earmarked for activities in specific areas and/or States. More general-purpose funding was needed to enable the Office to better plan and implement longer-term activities compatible with its mandate and core functions and to provide a degree of flexibility and the capacity to respond to emerging issues;

(p) The overarching strategy being developed by UNODC was welcomed and it was recognized that it would facilitate the development of programmes and the promotion of strategic partnerships. It would also contribute to increasing the confidence of donors in the Office and reduce the earmarking of their contributions. The management review process currently being undertaken by UNODC, covering areas such as result-based performance and transparency, would also contribute to an increase of donor support;

(q) It was also recognized that efforts to streamline crime issues into the larger development agenda should be continued, in order to increase the resources



available to support crime prevention and criminal justice programmes and promote their sustainability;

(r) Monitoring and evaluation of technical assistance, the measurement of its impact and the further use of lessons learned were essential elements of technical assistance;

(s) While technical assistance in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice did not always lend itself to evaluation of impact, it was necessary to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of projects and programmes in that field, rather than the delivery of outputs.

## **B. Workshop**

28. A workshop on the theme “Maximizing the effectiveness of technical assistance provided by Member States in crime prevention and criminal justice: solutions for the future—key components for effective technical assistance” was organized by the institutes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme network. The workshop was chaired by Shahbaz (Pakistan), First Vice-Chairman of the Commission and Chairman of the Committee of the Whole. Six presentations were made at the workshop. These covered two main thematic fields, related to ways of enhancing the effectiveness of technical assistance and recent experience in technical assistance, respectively.

29. In his opening remarks, the Chairman noted that the objectives of the workshop were to outline factors impeding the effectiveness of technical assistance and to consider possible remedies; to provide models and projects exemplifying successful approaches to technical assistance; and to stimulate discussion.

30. In his introductory statement, the Chief of the Strategic Planning Unit of the Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs of UNODC stressed the special role of the institutes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme network in promoting knowledge-building, in strengthening national and international policies and in assisting in the implementation of United Nations standards and norms, including the relevant normative instruments. He further illustrated that, within the framework of the overall UNODC strategy, the assistance provided to Member States should cover a whole range of issues related to prevention, rule of law, treatment and reintegration and analysis of thematic and cross-sectoral trends for effective policy formulation and operational response. In that respect, it would be important to have in place a number of enabling conditions for rendering such assistance more effective and efficient, such as diversification of funding, alignment of resources with existing strategies and performance, and coordination among the key players in the field.

31. The observer for the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime made a presentation on the key components for effective technical assistance and possible future solutions towards revitalizing technical assistance activities in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice. Using as an example the incomplete effort to establish and maintain on an ongoing basis a database on international projects in crime prevention and criminal justice in Central and Eastern Europe, she put emphasis on the need to utilize the lessons learned in order to achieve better results

and address the new challenges in the field of technical assistance more effectively. Consideration was further given to certain constraints that rendered technical assistance inadequate and ineffective, such as the lack of sufficient resources; the uncoordinated, fragmented and scattered nature of the assistance provided; the partial failure of existing coordination mechanisms; the failure to take into account the receiving State's needs and interests and, thus, to instil a sense of ownership; the lack of sensitivity to the specific context of the recipient State; the neglect of areas requiring action as a result of the failure to embrace a more comprehensive and integrated approach to technical assistance; the failure to take into account the capacity of the receiving States to implement or benefit from technical assistance programmes; and corruption and abuse. In the speaker's view, recent initiatives at the national, regional and international levels had already shown that a consensus was emerging on a set of approaches and possible guidelines aimed at enhancing the efficiency of technical assistance activities. In that context, she mentioned the following key elements: promotion of comprehensive and holistic approaches to strengthen the justice sector as a whole; country-led programming to stimulate country ownership and sustainability; building on existing strengths and preference for long-term assistance; participation and active involvement of civil society; and research-based and result-oriented monitoring and evaluation.

32. The observer for the European Commission provided an overview of the European Union's strategy on aid effectiveness. He stressed that the European Union had fully endorsed the five partnership commitments of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, adopted by the High-level Forum, held in Paris from 28 February to 2 March 2005, concerning ownership by the partner States, alignment of donors with partner countries, harmonization of donor actions, managing for results and mutual accountability of donors and partners. He also made reference to the four additional commitments entered into by the European Union: increasing use of multi-donor arrangements in capacity-building assistance; channelling 50 per cent of Government-to-Government assistance through country systems; avoiding the establishment of new project implementation units; and reducing the number of uncoordinated missions by 50 per cent. He put emphasis on the establishment of a joint multi-annual programming framework of the European Commission with partner States and other donors, as well as on the need to develop operational principles for ensuring coordination and to revise the European Union rules on co-financing with a view to facilitating joint financing arrangements. In the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, the efforts of the European Union were geared towards increasing the effectiveness of technical assistance and included the development of a concept and guidelines on security system reform; the preparation of rules and tools to recruit the appropriate experts; and the identification of commonly agreed indicators on the results of technical assistance in the field of governance.

33. The observer for the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy focused his attention on technical assistance in small States. He underlined that the effectiveness of technical assistance was dependent on the adaptation of methods to differing country situations, taking into consideration the political and institutional context; geopolitical factors; psychological attitudes, including the level of public support for reforms; economic circumstances; the normative framework; government effectiveness; the commitment to and progress made in controlling corruption; and civil society involvement. Further reference was

made to the vulnerabilities of many small States arising from factors such as globalization and transnational crime, as well as to the difficulties they encountered owing to limited capacity and human resources and the inability to participate fully in global regimes and international policies and treaties. The speaker argued that the justice sector was particularly affected in most of those States by the limited capacity of existing institutions and the declining levels of development assistance. He noted the need to establish priorities and promote regional approaches and underscored that coordination among multiple donors was important for exploring flexible programming options and reducing the transaction costs for small States. Equally important for donors and technical assistance providers would also be to tailor their tools and instruments to suit the institutional capacity of such States, as well as to adopt whole-sector and integrated assistance approaches in consideration of the relatively small scale of the systems involved.

34. During the presentation of recent technical assistance experience, the observer for the Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders provided a brief description of a collaborative partnership with the Philippines on the revitalization of its Volunteer Probation Aide Programme. The key objective of the Programme was to promote community involvement in the treatment of offenders in accordance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules, General Assembly resolution 45/110, annex). The technical assistance project was intended to foster a sense of ownership by the recipient State and was premised on the introduction of the corresponding Japanese model as good and long-standing practice in that area.

35. The observer for the Norwegian Police Directorate presented the lessons learned from the perspective of a donor country (Norway) on technical assistance programming and policing on the occasion of a specific project to promote bilateral and multilateral police assistance in Serbia and Montenegro. That project was launched in 2002 and focused initially on a small police district aiming at building capacity, through training, to fight financial and narcotics crime, as well as improving infrastructure, management skills and forensic capacity. The project was later expanded to cover all police stations in the targeted region and led to the identification of general indicators on sustainability and local ownership.

36. The observer for the Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders presented the experience of the Institute in the field of technical assistance on criminal justice and prison reform in Latin America. He listed examples of technical assistance programmes channelled through the Institute, which had managed, despite limited resources, to play the role of a catalytic agent in that field. The speaker also stressed the importance of adopting a cross-cutting diagnostic approach when assessing the needs to be addressed through technical assistance and further favoured the improvement of methodologies used for evaluating the impact of technical assistance.

37. In the discussion following the presentations, questions were raised about the limited value of piecemeal technical assistance activities that were not integrated into broader reform and capacity-building initiatives and were not fully endorsed and supported at the national level. In that context, the importance of ensuring ownership over the quality of the assistance provided during each stage of the relevant process and over the results and timeliness of such assistance was emphasized. It was also suggested that further action should be taken to meet the

specific needs of the recipient States and to address problems related to the evaluation of the effectiveness of technical assistance activities. Moreover, the institutes were encouraged to continue working closely with each other, with United Nations entities and with Member States with a view to defining a more systematic strategy and approach to ways and means of maximizing the effectiveness of technical assistance in the future.

38. In concluding, the rapporteur for the workshop reiterated the importance of technical assistance as a main element of any effort to address crime prevention and criminal justice issues in the context of sustainable development and human security in an effective manner. However, he recalled that technical assistance activities were often assumed to be ineffective or inadequate and to fail to meet the deeper needs of recipient States. In that connection, and building upon recent developments at the national, regional and international levels, some of which were presented during the discussion, he stressed that consensus could be reached on the way forward and on the criteria that could be established and followed for enhancing the effectiveness of technical assistance. He further linked that issue to the general discussion on the revitalization of the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and pointed out that consideration should be given to the perspective of making technical assistance a long-standing item on the agenda of the Commission. He also noted that it might be appropriate to work towards the “formalization” of the above-mentioned criteria through the establishment of a set of guidelines for planning and implementing technical assistance, as well as for measuring its impact and effectiveness.

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