

# THE VICTIMOLOGIST

Volume 1 Number 1 August 1997

NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD SOCIETY OF VICTIMOLOGY

## Victim Empowerment and Support in South Africa

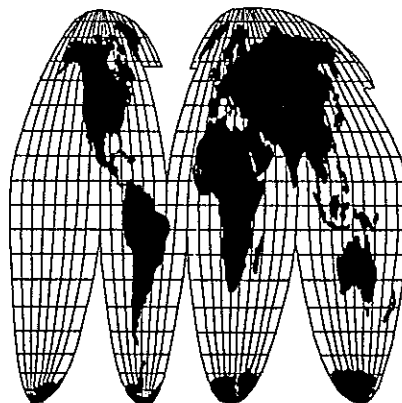
*HF (Rika) Snyman*

Crime is at present regarded as one of the four most strategic challenges in South Africa. The impact of crime is felt on a large front, that varies from the individual victim who is harmed by crime and who receives very little, if any, support, to foreign investors that would like to invest in South Africa, but who are often scared off by the high crime rate. Contrary to the high crime rate and the emphasis placed on the reduction of crime, very few services are available to the victims and aspects like a meaningful role for the victim in the justice process, and compensation, are non-existent.

Civil society feels helpless against crime and believe that the South African government is not doing enough to protect them against crime. It is felt that the Constitution, accepted in February 1997, and specifically the Bill for Human Rights, favours offenders and fails to address the rights of victims. Despite the fact that the latest official crime statistics indicate that crime has decreased and stabilised in the first three months of 1997, public perception holds the opposite viewpoint. Various protest actions, in the form of protest marches, petitions to the State President and support for harsher penalties in the form of signs taped to motor vehicles, are regularly launched.

In South Africa awareness of the needs of crime victims as well as services for them are found to compare unfavourably with developments elsewhere in the world.

Due to reasons like the absence of a human rights culture in pre-1994 South Africa; the focus on offender-based strategies to combat crime; and the divided nature of South African society in general; very little attention was paid to victims. Children as victims of crime, women as victims of abuse, and



### **Recent initiatives by government and civil society placed crime victims firmly on the national agenda**

the rape victim, were the only categories of victims that received any attention in the past. Service delivery was mainly offered by Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) that were funded by foreign countries and state departments, like the South African Police, distanced themselves from the victim issue.

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## Manual on the Implementation of the UN Declaration

*Jo-Anne Wemmers  
Thijs van der Heijden*

On March 6th and 7th 1997, the third expert meeting on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power was held in The Hague, The Netherlands. The two prior meetings had taken place in Vienna (1995) and in Tulsa, Arizona (1996). The meeting was attended by experts from over 15 different countries and representatives of various international organizations.

The United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power was adopted by consensus in the General Assembly in 1985. It reflects a collective will of the international community to restore the balance between the fundamental rights of suspects and offenders, and the rights and interests of victims. The Declaration is based on the philosophy that victims should be adequately recognized and treated with respect for their dignity. Victims are entitled to access to the mechanisms of justice and prompt redress for the harm and loss suffered. They are also entitled to receive adequate specialized assistance in dealing with emotional trauma and other problems caused by the impact of victimization.

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The adoption of the Declaration, however important, is just a first step towards actual improvements in practice. The objective of the Expert Meeting in the Hague was to prepare a more advanced version of the draft manual for policy-makers and to design a draft resolution on Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. The purpose of the manual is to draw the attention of policy-makers to what has been done, and what can be done to ensure that the effectiveness and fairness of criminal justice, including related forms of support, is enhanced in a way that respects the fundamental rights of suspects and offenders as well as those of victims. The manual would be submitted to the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention at its sixth session as an annex

to the draft resolution on Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power by the Government of the Netherlands.

The Meeting also continued work on the draft handbook for practitioners and volunteers. In the handbook more concrete topics are addressed such as how projects can be set up and preconditions for the successful implementation of projects. The goal is to make the handbook available on a special web site and that this "open document" will be up-dated regularly.

Throughout the meeting key issues in victim policy were addressed including the important relationship between victim support and crime prevention. It was argued that by helping victims of crime, authorities could in fact help

prevent crime. For example, the prevention of repeat victimization. In addition, it was suggested that an international databank of promising practices in victim assistance should be established. Such a databank is presently being developed for promising practices in crime prevention by the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime.

At the end of the two days it was agreed that the manual and the draft resolution were ready for submission to the United Nations Commission. It was decided that the manual would be translated into the different working languages in advance of the sixth session of the Commission in Vienna in May 1997. □

## From The Editor's Desk ...

The World Society of Victimology has approximately 400 members from countries around the globe. Both the WSV and its membership actively contribute to the advancement of research on victims and victim assistance and the promotion of victims' interests throughout the world. However, in order to realize these goals, co-operation and communication are essential. The *Victimologist* provides members with a tool with which we, together, can further our efforts for victims.

This first edition of *The Victimologist* contains contributions from around the world. The contribution by Irvin Waller, President of the WSV, addresses the developments within the WSV and provides suggestions for the future. Ryka Snyman's article on Victim Empowerment and Support in South Africa presents an overview of the important changes for victims which are taking place there and in doing so provides ideas for other nations in transition. Kristina Kangaspunta's contribution provides insight into international developments in the fight against domestic violence. The contribution by Jo-Anne Wemmers considers the importance of recent developments in restorative justice for victimology. In addition to these articles, this edition of *The Victimologist* also contains news regarding the activities of the WSV.

This is just a preview of the intentions of the Editorial Board. For future issues we would like to include short articles on research and

developments around the globe, personal news of victimologists, conferences and events, new publications of members, book reviews, victimological services and institutions, position announcements, interviews with victimologists. We would like to publish the *Victimologist* several times a year however this depends completely on the input from the membership.

All of the contributions in this first issue were directly solicited. For future issues we need contributions from the members of the WSV. We therefore urge every member to send information, short articles, ideas etc. which could be published under the above mentioned categories or features to the members of the Editorial Board. Contributions should be sent both in written form and floppy disk or via e-mail in Word or Word Perfect.

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## Special Session on the Manual in Amsterdam

During the Ninth International Symposium on Victimology in Amsterdam a special meeting will be held to discuss the draft manual on the use and application of the UN Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. The meeting will take place on Thursday August 28th. The suggestions made at this meeting will be included in the final version of the manual which will be submitted to the UN Commission on Crime Prevention next year. Be sure to attend the meeting and contribute to development of this important instrument. □

# President's Message

## A Challenge to Victimologists

Irvin Waller

Let us start the next millennium with a paradigm shift in place that fosters the universal programs and legislation to respect the basic principles of justice for victims of crime and abuse of power.

The World Society of Victimology is now in its eighteenth year - a year of maturity. It has learned to walk, passed through a period of adolescence and is ready to go out to work. This Newsletter provides a new tool for WSV members to do that work. We need to harness our commitment to comparative research, advocacy and cooperation to strengthen the victimology movement, expand our membership and promote the concrete action that is overdue.

The WSV has achieved much in its short life. The program for the ninth symposium is testimony to this. Who would have thought in Jerusalem in 1973, Boston in 1976 or Münster in 1979, that the ninth symposium in Amsterdam in 1997 could have a program like this.

- *We can deliberate the results and future of the International Crime Surveys successfully completed three times over a decade, involving more than 50 countries and 30 cities in developing countries and those in transition!*
- *We can evaluate the extent to which governments have implemented their own guidelines in Europe. Are there now meaningful provisions on victim compensation, the role of the victim in criminal procedure and victim assistance and prevention?*
- *We can hear how the leading countries created extensive and universal networks providing support to victims of crime. We can*

*note the gradual extension of services for victims of women and child abuse in more countries. We can learn about the effectiveness of special prevention services for repeat victims.*

- *We can debate the contributions of the international criminal court and a national truth and reconciliation commission.*

For nearly a decade, we have been able to share scientific writing through the International Review of Victimology. We have an extensive international bibliography and publications from eight symposia. We can cut and paste material from that bibliography or the addresses of our members instantaneously anywhere in the world on the Internet. But before the launch of this newsletter, our efforts to encourage each other and share challenges and successes were often limited to the symposia.

The 10th symposium on victimology will take place in Montreal in the year 2000. This will be 15 years after the adoption of the UN Declaration on Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. It will be 21 years after the creation of the World Society of Victimology.

How can we prepare for this symposium, so that the next millennium dawns on a world where programming, activity and legislation have realized the basic principles enunciated by the UN General Assembly.

We know that millions of persons will be the victims of crime and abuse of power across the world every year. Their loss and pain will be exacerbated by systems limited to respecting the rights of innocent and convicted persons. Their needs will rarely be understood by emergency or helping services.

The members of the WSV have been successful in the past in mobilizing governments as well as international and national organizations. In 1985, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the "Declaration on the Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. This Magna Carta for the next millennium is the cornerstone

for a quiet revolution across the world in policies that respond to crime.

According to the Declaration, police, social and health services, and local governments should provide practical and emotional support for victims to enable them to recover. Furthermore, the police, prosecutors, judges, and correctional workers must provide victims with information on the criminal justice process, allow victims participation in the criminal justice process, and give victims an appropriate opportunity to defend their interests at critical stages in the process.

The declaration recommends more use of restitution, mediation, and where necessary, state compensation. The declaration also refers to similar recommendations for victims of abuse of power to protect them internationally, such as appearing before an international criminal court or tribunals that have been established to investigate war crimes.

This UN declaration has inspired progress in many jurisdictions by improving how the criminal justice and social service systems respond to victims of crime. The principles of the declaration are included in the guide book for all UN peacekeepers. It is the subject of legislation in India where one in seven of the world's people lives. A recent book in China promotes concern for victims in the world's most populous country. The declaration is cited as the reason for national and international legislation across the world.

Victimization has already violated the most basic right of a person to their safety and security. The International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC) has been created to harness international know how to reduce delinquency, violent crime and insecurity. It is a unique partnership

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## President's Message continued...

between city organizations, crime prevention agencies, governments and the private sector. It will make public shortly some powerful tools to help cities and countries put to work 100 international crime prevention best practices. These will be accessible through an Internet site which structures the information on crime prevention and how to put it to work. These will be brought to the attention of leaders of government, business and criminal justice through a *Crime Prevention Digest: Successes, benefits and pathways*.

Recently, the members of the WSV have played a key role in launching the initiative to interest governments and the United Nations in implementing that declaration. In Amsterdam, we can hear

about the progress in developing a training manual and articulating an action plan with the encouraging support of the governments of the Netherlands and the USA.

Our successes must be celebrated but they remain the exception rather than the rule. The Amsterdam Symposium has fittingly chosen the Good Samaritan as its logo. Consistent with the parable, we must encourage the rest of society to show respect for victims.

We must use this Newsletter to propose and collaborate on other concrete steps to move our countries closer to the research and action that respects the principles of the UN declaration. For instance, how can we foster:

- legislation and directives governing the police to clarify their role as "first in aid" to victims;
- reform of penal and procedural codes to include the principles from the UN Declaration for Victims of Crime;
- model projects, sharing of best practices and comprehensive action plans to assist governments and non-governmental agencies;
- amendments to Constitutions to include basic rights for victims of crime, such as concern for their safety and security, reparative justice and consideration of victim's interests. □

# 1997 Elections Executive Committee

*Gerd Ferdinand Kirchhoff*

In 1997 the members of WSV elected new members to the Executive Committee. The new Executive Committee consists of : Sara Ben David (Israel); Ewa Bienkowska (Poland); Jan van Dijk (Netherlands); John Dussich (Japan); Paul C. Friday (USA); Gerd Ferdinand Kirchhoff (FRG); Helen Reeves (England); Hans Joachim Schneider (FRG); Aglaia Tsitsoura (Greece); Irvin Waller (Canada); Frans Willem Wirkel (Netherlands); Marlene Young (USA).

All those elected have already accepted the positions they were voted in. The first convention of the new Executive Committee will take place August 25th, 1997, at 15.30 in the Aula. During this meeting the members will elect the new President, the Secretary General, the Treasurer, the four Vice Presidents and coopt three members to assist in the work but who do not have voting rights.

The new Executive Committee will be in session from 1997 to 2000. Formally, the period of the old Executive Committee ends with the IXth International Symposium on Victimology in Amsterdam. The period of the new Executive Committee starts then and will continue until the Xth International Symposium in Montreal, in the year 2000.

# Review of the first International Conference on Restorative Justice for Juveniles

Jo-Anne Wemmers

In May 1997 the first International Conference on Restorative Justice for Juveniles was held at the University of Leuven in Belgium. The conference was organized by the International Network for Research on Restorative Justice for Juveniles. The objectives of the conference were:

- to address as the state of affairs in restorative justice,
- to stimulate further research and experiments,
- to formulate an adequate policy into a restorative social response to juvenile crime and
- to lay the foundations for systematic comparative work.

During the three-day conference keynote speeches were given on a wide range of topics including theory and empirical research on restorative justice. The workshops were divided into six themes: 1) principles of restorative justice 2) legal rights 3) competency development 4) victims, mediation 5) communities in restorative justice 6) restorative models in several countries.

The members of the International Network formulated a Declaration on the advisability of promoting the restorative approach to juvenile crime which was supported by the participants. According to the Declaration, the aim of restorative justice is to restore the harm done to victims and to contribute to peace in the community and safety in society. To achieve this, a process is set up "whereby all parties with a stake in a specific offence come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future"<sup>1</sup>.

Hence, the aims of restorative justice are closely linked with the needs of victims of crime and victims of crime play an important role in the restorative process.

Despite the important role which victims play in the mediation process, the focus of the conference was on offenders. This is illustrated in the title of the conference namely, restorative justice for juveniles. Some victims are victimized by young offenders and others by adult offenders. By narrowing the focus to juvenile offenders, a large group of victims is excluded from restorative justice efforts. By taking the victim as the starting point for restorative justice, the distinction between juvenile and adult offenders becomes superfluous.

The focus on offenders was also evident in the workshops. Only two presentations centred on victims of crime. One of these presentations was that by Mark Umbreit. He presented evidence which showed that victims who participated in mediation programmes are highly satisfied with the outcome of the process and show a significant decrease in fear of crime following mediation. This seems to suggest that mediation can be very beneficial for victims of crime.

All of the mediation programmes described in the workshops revealed an absence of sensitivity to the position of the victim. They all start with the offender and his/her willingness to participate in mediation and only approach the victim after the offender has clearly stated he/she is willing to participate. The argument for this is that one wishes to avoid disappointing the victim. However, this approach may place unnecessary pressure on the victim to participate especially in cases where the victim and offender already know each other. Moreover, research shows that victims appreciate the interest and consideration shown by authorities when they are asked what they would like. The outcome of such efforts are secondary to the process and victims understand that their attempts will not always be successful<sup>2</sup>. Fear of disappointing the victim is not supported by victimological research.

The developments in restorative justice are by definition of importance to victimologists. Especially, in view of the short-comings in the present work on restorative justice,

victimologists should become more involved in this area of research. By shifting the focus from offenders to a balance between the interests of victims and offenders, victimologists can play a valuable role in the further development of restorative justice.

For those who are interested in learning more about restorative justice, a number of the papers which were presented at the conference will be published later this year in *Restorative Juvenile Justice An exploration of the restorative justice paradigm for reforming juvenile justice*, L. Walgrave and G. Bazemore (eds.), Criminal Justice Press, Monsey, N.Y..

Notes:

1 T. Marshall.

2 J. Wemmers, 1996

## Publish your short article or review in The Victimologist

The Editorial Board of The Victimologist strongly urges all members of the World Society of Victimology to send in contributions for upcoming issues of The Victimologist. You can find out more about where to send your contributions to on page 2 of this issue.

THE WORLD SOCIETY OF VICTIMOLOGY PRESENTS.....

## FIRST ASIAN POST GRADUATE MITO COURSE: VICTIMOLOGY AND VICTIM ASSISTANCE

August 31 to September 11, 1998  
Tokiwa University  
Mito, Japan

*Gerd Ferdinand Kirchhoff*

*This first Asian Post Graduate Mito Course on Victimology and Victim Assistance will serve to cover the fundamentals of both major areas. In addition, students will learn about more advanced subjects such as: victimization surveys, victim needs, victim/offender relationships, new forms of victimization, victims of interpersonal violence, victims of abuse of power, non-criminal victimizations, fear of crime victimization, victims of disasters, the role of the victim in the criminal justice system, the society's response to victims, the range of victim services, victim trauma and recovery, victim service models, victim compensation, victim restitution, mediation and reconciliation, victimological theory, and comparative victimology.*

*Course Schedule:*

The course will begin at 9:00 August 31st at the Department of Applied International Studies, Tokiwa University in Mito. The course language will be English. Directions will be provided to all registrants and resource persons. During the second week, a field trip to the Mito police headquarters will be arranged. During the middle weekend, an excursion to the famous Nikko Park and waterfalls will be arranged (an extra charge will be collected).

*Registration Fee:* US\$30/JPY2900

*Registration Deadline:* June 1, 1998

*Faculty Commitment:* February 1, 1998

*Participant/Faculty Housing:*

Guest House of the Tokiwa University  
Room Costs: JPY  
19,500(US\$200)(including linen and clean-up)  
Reservations must be made through Dr. Dussich by July 1, 1998  
For private arrangements hotels are available in the city of Mito.

*Provisional list of Resource Faculty:*

Ewa Bienkowska (Poland), K. Chockalingam (India), Insub Choi (South Korea), Sarah Ben David (Israel), Jan van Dijk (The Netherlands), John Dussich (Japan), Glen Edwards (Australia), Paul Friday (USA), Jianan Guo (China), Richard Knudten (USA), Ester Kosovski (Brazil), Vitali Kvashis (Russia), Koichi Miyazawa (Japan), Hidemichi Morosawa (Japan), Susumu Nagai (Japan), Helen Reeves (England), Xin Ren (USA), Hans Schneider (Germany), Nobuho Tomita (Japan), Aglaia Tsitsoura (Greece), Irvin Waller (Canada), Frans Willem Winkel (The Netherlands), Marlene Young (USA).

*Registration:*

*In order to register for the course, please write anyof the co-directors. On site registration will be possible only if space is available. Payment of all fees is due on the first day of the course.*

*Co-Directors:*

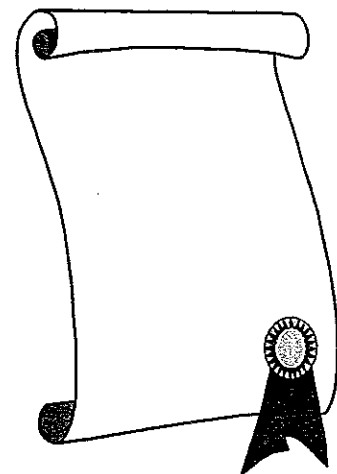
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**10TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON VICTIMOLOGY**  
**RESEARCH AND ACTION FOR THE 3RD MILLENNIUM**  
**AUGUST 6 TO 11, 2000**  
**MONTREAL, CANADA**

*Marie-Marthe Cousineau*

The year 2000 will mark the 10th anniversary of the triannual International Symposium of the World Society of Victimology. Under the leadership of the *Association québécoise Plaidoyer-Victimes*, an initial planning committee has come together to outline how to celebrate this event in Montreal - a city renowned not only for its *joie de vivre*, good food and cultural activities but also, closer to our common interest, for its substantial role in victimology, victim advocacy and crime prevention.

Under the presidency of Mrs. Arlène Gaudreault, president of the *Association québécoise Plaidoyer-Victimes*, and Professor Irvin Waller, director of the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC), various organizations and groups have accepted to be part of the Organizing Committee among which: provincial and federal ministries of Justice, municipal, provincial and federal police forces, crown attorneys, representatives of the World Health Organization, the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA, USA), the Canadian Criminal Justice Association, the Canadians Against Violence Everywhere Advocating its Termination (CAVEAT, Canada), several victim assistance organizations, the International Centre for comparative criminology, the schools of criminology of the Universities of Ottawa and Montreal, and finally from the Montreal Urban Community and the Montreal Convention Centre Society.

Altogether, they propose a conference focused on the duality and bridges between research and action, with a programme tackling the traditional issues of victimology, including those related to women, children, elderly people, visible minorities and marginalized groups. The conference will involve daily plenary sessions where leading members of reputable universities and researchers will assess the state of the art and priorities for the future, covering: support, compensation and policing;

restorative justice, mediation and legislated rights; international protection for victims of abuse of power; prevention of victimization.

Workshops will be held on victimization surveys, victims' rights, constitutional amendments, protection and services for victims, victim compensation, victim support, repeat victimization, aboriginal justice, mediation and reconciliation to name a few. All subjects related to victimology, traditional or innovative, are welcome.

An international scientific committee composed of leading victimologists from several countries will be invited to supervise the selection of papers. I, myself, will coordinate this committee.

**The Association québécoise  
Plaidoyer-Victimes is pleased  
to welcome victimologists  
from all around the world to  
the Tenth International  
Symposium on Victimology  
titled: *Research and Action  
for the 3rd Millennium.***

Plans for the conference call for simultaneous translation of plenary sessions and selected workshop tracks between English, French and Spanish. A market place - *carrefour d'échanges* - will provide an opportunity to display books and materials relating to victimology.

Plans will be developed for visits to local programmes and facilities of interest to victimologists. Accommodations and activities will also be organized for accompanying persons and children.

The Association brings together professionals working with victims and various members of organizations, such as assistance services or prevention

programmes, correctional services, crown prosecutors office, health and social services, juvenile protection services, police forces and ministries concerned with the question of victims.

Over the years, the Association has brought forth many novel ideas for the training and awareness of professionals. It has organized three provincial symposiums on assistance for victims of crime which took place in 1986, 1989 and 1996, as well as workshops and activities on numerous themes.

The Association, whose expertise is recognized and respected, has acquired great credibility, and has become a leader in its field.

As hosts of the 10th International Symposium of the World Society of Victimology, we are delighted to be part of this momentous event. The enthusiasm is immense on our part and we consider it a privilege to host this great event in the year 2000. We certainly are hoping that the symposium will serve as an additional broad step in the development of knowledge and experience in victimology and we can assure everyone that we intend to spare no efforts to make this event an unforgettable one.

*Hoping to see everyone take care for victims in Montreal in the new millennium.*

For the organizing committee and from  
*l'Association Plaidoyer-Victimes*

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# The WSV Student Paper Competition 1997

Gerd Ferdinand Kirchhoff

The World Society of Victimology (WSV) received several papers in the Student Paper Competition, all of which were of high quality. The papers were sent in by students from countries around the world and covered a wide range of topics such as: victims of mass rape; victim-offender mediation; prevention of victimization; victims of corruption and abuse of power.

Jurors Committee was chaired by Prof. Dr. Hans Joachim Schneider, founding president, EC member and Treasurer of WSV. It included Prof. Dr. Paul C. Friday, member of the EC and Chair of Criminal Justice at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, USA; Prof. Dr. Zvonimir Paul Separovic, Law School, University of Zagreb; Dr. Frans Willem Winkel, EC member and senior lecturer of social psychology at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, NL; and Prof. Dr. Kirchhoff, EC member and Secretary General of WSV who coordinated the competition and the jurors work. All members of the Jurors Committee were Co-Directors of the

Inter University Centre Dubrovnik for Post Graduate Studies Course "Victimology, Victim Assistance and Criminal Justice".

*The Victimologist* congratulates both students. Although very different, their papers were chosen for their interdisciplinary approach, their thorough bibliographical documentation and their conscientious attempts to describe what was already known and to develop this a little bit through own empirical work.

The winners of the WSV Student Paper competition are...

Anna Costanza Baldry from Rome's University "La sapienza", Italia for her paper titled: *Victim Offender Mediation in the Juvenile Justice system - Restorative Justice Approach in the Italian Juvenile Justice System*

Antonija Petricusic, Sveuciliste u Zagrebu, Pravni Fakultet, Croatia for her paper titled: *Systematic Rape. A Weapon of War in Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina*

The award money was donated to WSV by the Joshie Miyazawa Foundation in Tokyo, Japan. WSV awarded flight tickets to the Amsterdam Symposium where the winners of the competition will receive the award at the Closing Session of the symposium.

Both prize winners will participate in the WSV's Student Course "Victimology, Victim Assistance and Criminal Justice" which takes place from August 20 to 30, 1997 in Amsterdam. Prof. Dr. Hans Joachim Schneider will give the award to the prize winners at the closing session of the symposium

The paper on "Hidden Sexual Victimization - The Hungarian Study" was not ranked within this competition because two jurors felt a conflict of interest. However, the Secretary General was able to secure an additional sum of money by INTEG, Gesellschaft zur Förderung integrativer Maßnahmen e.V. in Germany, to be awarded to the Hungarian student Anita Skobl, so that she can participate in the IXth Symposium.

## Domestic Violence

Kristiina Kangaspunta

The elimination of violence against women is one of the priorities of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme. The UN urges governments and other entities to intensify their efforts to prevent violence against women as well as to improve police training in order to ensure that all incidents of violence against women are investigated, that adequate assistance and support are given to them and that their rights are respected.

In 1995 the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy, in co-operation with the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme

Network and with the Canadian authorities, developed a global training project to help prevent and address domestic violence. In order to develop a core training curriculum and a delivery plan an International Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence was formed. The Committee suggested that a series of pilot projects should be held in different countries in order to highlight both the inadequacies and the flexibility of the core curriculum in order to be tailored to the specific needs of different countries.

The first pilot course for Central and Eastern European countries was held in Vilnius, Lithuania, from 14 to 17 January 1997. It was organized by the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the

United Nations (HEUNI) together with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the Lithuanian Women's Issues Information Centre and UNDP Lithuania.

The pilot consisted of two parts: a seminar for policy-makers and a training for practitioners. The seminar provided a starting point for the training. The purpose of the training was to provide training for future trainers. Following the pilot a brief handbook on domestic violence issues will be prepared by HEUNI and distributed to all Lithuanian police officers and practitioners dealing with domestic violence problems. HEUNI will also consider the possibilities for continuing the training and organizing a second part of the training course that would focus on more practical issues in police performance when working with domestic violence cases. □



## South Africa

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Recent initiatives by government and civil society placed crime victims firmly on the national agenda. The National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS), an interdepartmental and intersectoral government initiative, was launched in May 1996. It promotes a victim-centred approach to crime prevention where "the onus is on government to deliver a crime prevention approach which places the rights and needs of victims at the centre of the strategy". Whilst attention from service providers, be it state departments or civil society, has traditionally focused on victims of sexual violence as well as women and children, the national programme promotes a more generic approach to victims, namely that all victims of crime receive, at least initially, equal treatment from the police and justice officials. This will avoid the danger of enforcing stereotypes of women and children as vulnerable groups. The Victim Empowerment Programme Team of the NCPS regards the empowerment of victims of violence and crime through the creation of sustainable victim centred policies and programmes at all levels which will minimise and address the harmful effects of all forms of victimization and the

prevention of crime, as its desired outcome.

The South African Law Commission has prepared a number of discussion documents, inviting comments from all sectors, on issues like restorative justice (compensation for victims of crime and victim empowerment); alternative dispute resolution, and juvenile justice. This will pave the way for mechanisms like victim-offender mediation, victim impact statements and a compensation scheme to be introduced in the criminal justice system.

There are various challenges that must still be met before South Africa can claim to have an effective victim empowerment programme and a victim-centred crime prevention approach.

- All the roleplayers in the criminal justice process need to be transformed - structurally, for example separate waiting rooms for victims and perpetrators, and functionally, in the form of sensitive interaction with and accountability to victims and victimised communities.
- The inadequate crime information system that is currently in place needs to be restructured and supplemented with

data from victimization surveys.

- Effective witness protection programmes should be established that are shaped to serve the needs of victims, rather than merely offering protection to perpetrators who opted to turn state's witness.

- A compensation scheme for victims of violent crimes needs to be established as a matter of urgency. The argument that it is a very expensive venture that can not be realised at present should be turned around to accommodate innovative measures of setting the compensation fund up.

- The Victim Empowerment Programme Team, that is compiled from representatives of state departments and non-government organizations that are involved in the criminal justice process, will have to gain official recognition as the national co-ordinating body for victim empowerment.

- Service providers outside of government structures, should work together in a co-ordinated manner without duplicating services and jeopardising each other in the scramble for the scarce and dwindling funds. □

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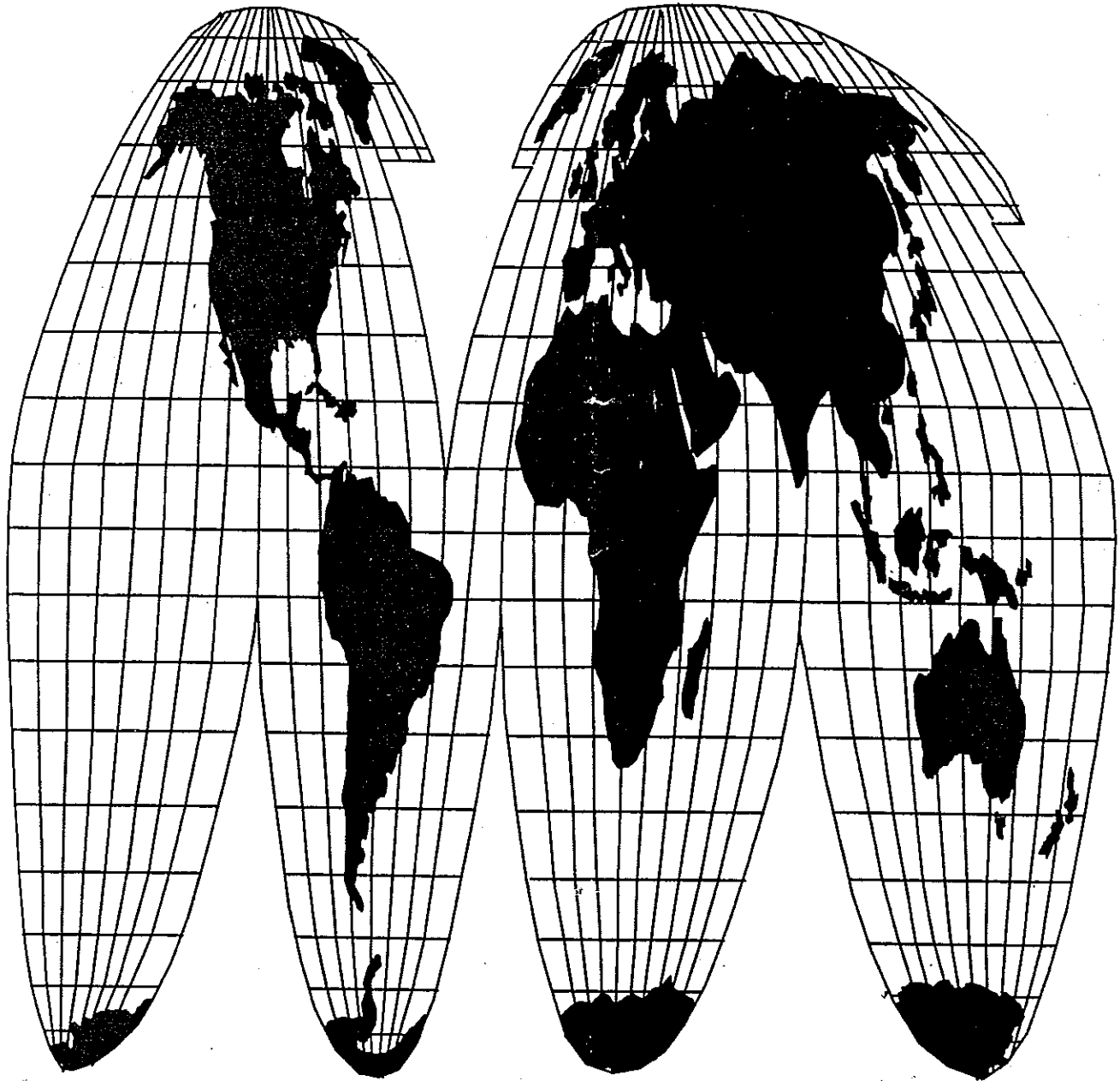
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