
THE VICTIMOLOGIST

Volume 9, Issue 2

July-August 2005

From the Editor's Desk

Managing Editor


Michael O'Connell

The Executive Committee (EC) of the World Society of Victimology (WSV) recently endorsed two items that impact on this edition of *The Victimologist*.

First, the EC agreed with The Editorial Board's revised Terms of Reference. Accordingly, the Board intends to publish *The Victimologist* four times each calendar year. The Board will, among other things, solicit information from the WSV and other private, government and non-governmental organisations on promising practices, resources and events to publish in *The Victimologist*.

Consistent with this, the EC asked the Editorial Board to dedicate this edition of *The Victimologist* to the WSV's statement on victims' rights and other matters to the Eleventh United Nations' Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and other presentations to that Congress. The WSV is a non-governmental organisation in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

This edition of *The Victimologist* is apt given this year is the 20th anniversary of the UN's Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power.

It is also my first as Managing Editor and I thank the Board for their encouragement and contributors for their articles. 

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Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Bangkok, 18–25 April 2005

Statement on United Nations Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Professor Irvin Waller[#]

Cognisant that millions of people throughout the world suffer harm as a result of crime and the abuse of power and that the rights of these victims still have not been adequately recognised, and that they may, in addition, suffer hardship when assisting in the prosecution of offenders,

Recalling the resolution of the UN General Assembly (GA/RES/40/34) which called upon Member States to take the necessary steps to give effect to the provisions contained in the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, *inter alia* by

- a) implementing social, health, including mental health, educational, economic and specific crime prevention policies to reduce victimisation and encourage assistance to victims in distress;
- b) sponsoring collaborative action-research on ways in which victimisation can be reduced and victims aided, and to promote information exchanges on the most effective means of so doing;
- c) rendering direct aid to requesting Governments designed to help them curtail victimisation and alleviate the plight of victims;

The World Society of Victimology calls attention to the exemplary progress achieved by some Member States in

- legislation that puts the basic principles of justice into domestic laws so that a high level office will implement policies and programs to provide comprehensive measures for victims of crime
- providing victims of crime with better information, support services, reparation from

Continued on page 3



UN Congress on Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice
Statement on Effective Measures to Combat Transnational Organised Crime

Professor Paul Friday

In a report by the Executive Secretary for the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, it is noted that the general “crime problem” is composed as a mixture of old and new and that there have been dramatic shifts from traditional to new forms including human trafficking, kidnapping, and cyber crime.

The World Society of Victimology (WSV), which is dedicated to understanding and serving victim needs across the world, urges the congress to be cognisant of the fact that as we discuss the patterns of crime we are talking about real and concrete harms to millions of people throughout the world who suffer because of them. There are financial and economic crime victims, there are victims as a result of corruption and fraud, and there are victims of kidnapping, transnational organised crimes of human trafficking. To have crime means to have victims. Let us not forget that the Criminal Justice System is in response to victimisation of people and that system has a responsibility to them.

As this congress deliberates its recommendations let us remind you that it is the 20th anniversary of the *Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power*. That declaration had dual objectives: the reduction in the number of crime victims and in those instances where victimisation has occurred, to help victims recover by meeting their material, social and psychological needs.

Those goals are even more important in today’s world. These new crimes create new types of victims and a new and compelling need for the criminal justice system’s response to crime to include those victims in the process. The *Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and its Protocol Against Trafficking in Persons* calls for strengthening the criminal justice response including better protection and support for victims. To involve victims means to have concrete policies that can protect victims and to gain their support and cooperation. The prosecution and conviction of both the perpetrators of kidnapping and trafficking, for example, always require victim involvement. Yet victim involvement is unlikely when there are high levels of corruption in the police. As Mr. van Dijk indicated earlier, the level of organised crime in a country is inversely related to the performance of the police. Prosecuting crimes is enhanced when police introduce practices that protect and support victims.

The WSV is calling for concrete actions such as those mentioned by the delegates from Australia, Finland and other, to back up the concern we should all have for victims. We have identified seven such concrete actions in our organisation’s statement. But I want to highlight one point.

(Continued on p.6)

UN Congress on Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice
Statement on Corruption

Maria de la Luz Lima Mahido

In the United Nations General Secretary’s report corruption is mentioned as a great spectre that generates serious conflicts with grave consequences since those who are corrupt, piece by piece, dismantle our institutions.

In light of the radical changes that the world is living through and the new opportunities to resort to corrupt practices, we should be alert not only to the activities of governments but also representatives of the private sector, members of churches, non-government organisations and the entire community; because in a short period of time we could destroy that which has taken years to build.

Corruption exacerbates conflicts, and conflicts exacerbate corruption.

The World Society of Victimology would like to draw this to your attention, remembering that corruption victimises both society and individuals, as it creates a crises of confidence in our institutions, producing economic problems leading to inequality, hunger and the ostracism of marginalised groups; the diversion of humanitarian aid; the destruction of natural resources to the detriment of our ecology and humanity; and serious criminal offence where politicians court members of organised crime syndicates.

This is why the WSV calls upon delegates at this Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as well as others, to incorporate into their respective societies, in organised ways, the development of mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of access to information and greater transparency in order to promote a culture of values and ethics in the public sector and private sector. Furthermore, steps must be taken to ensure the impartiality and autonomy of judicial power.

The WSV also recognises the important role the media has to play in the prevention of corruption and the encouragement of intolerance of corruption. The media also has a role in the promotion of transparent processes and identifying best practice in public service for individuals and institutions. Indeed, the media can highlight those places where good governance is practiced as an exemplary role models.

Consequently, the WSV urges the media to devise more profound ways for reporting on potential acts of corruption because, by doing so, it will invite greater self-regulation.

Towards these ends, the WSV proposes this Congress resolve that adequate attention must be paid to the devastating impact of corruption on individuals and societies, as well recommend that concrete steps to be taken to eradicate corruption. 🌐

- **READ THEM — NOW SEE THEM:** The World Society of
- Victimology’s StatementS as reported in this edition of *The*
- *Victimologist*, as well as the Society’s press conference, are
- available in video format at:
- <http://www.un.org/webcast/crime2005/statements.html>
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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The policies, practices and programmes associated with the philosophy of restorative justice have garnered international attention. Commensurate with this attention, an array of books has been published. A prime example is a new book on victim-offender mediation published by the European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice. The book, which was edited by David Miers and Jolien Willemssens, covers the latest developments in the field of restorative justice in 25 European countries. Other collections of essays on restorative justice have been edited by Gerry Johnstone (A Restorative Justice Reader: Text, sources context) and Elmar Weitekamp and Hans-Jurgen Kerner (Restorative Justice; Theoretical foundations). Readers who have an interest in restorative justice, among other important matters in victimology, can find a wealth of information and engaging discourse in the International Review of Victimology, which is published by A B Academic Publishers. Offers of original research reports, short papers, etc should be sent to Professor Joanna Shapland (j.m.shapland@sheffield.ac.uk) and book reviews to Hannah Goodman (hgoodman@dmu.ac.uk).

Restorative Justice Cause Advanced at U.N. Crime and Justice Congress

According to IIRP director of research Paul McCold, there was also "unprecedented interest" in restorative justice at the 11th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, in April 2005, in Bangkok, Thailand.

An article by Abbey J. Porter reports on the event, which included an unofficial workshop on restorative justice (the first ever at a U.N. congress) and several restorative justice-related ancillary sessions. The article also includes comments by McCold, who has been instrumental in bringing restorative justice to the U.N.'s attention and helped organize the restorative justice ancillary sessions. To read the article, please go to: <http://www.realjustice.org/library/uncrimecongress.html>

The WSV thanks the national organizations that supported its statement to the UNs' Congress

Mahfoud Boucebc Foundation, Algeria; Victim Services, New South Wales, Australia; Brazilian Society of Victimology; Greek Society of Victimology; Diallo Telli Foundation, Guinée; Mexican Society of Victimology; Mexican Society of Criminology; Center for Victim Justice Research and Development, Nepal; National Senior Citizen Organization Network Nepal; Nepalese Society of Victimology; Victim Support, New Zealand; New Zealand Council of Victim Support Groups; Kanyarwanda, Rwanda; Forum for Activists against Torture, Rwanda; Serbian Society for Victimology; Victim Support, Scotland; Health Behaviour Research Unit, University of Limpopo, South Africa; CSIR Crime Prevention Centre of South Africa; National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO), South Africa; Swedish Association for Victim Support; Weisser Ring (Switzerland); National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators, USA; National Organization for Victim Assistance, USA; American Society of Victimology, USA; Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights, USA. 

offenders, compensation from the state and a role in criminal proceedings,

- establishing programs to protect victims of crime who are vulnerable because of gender or age such as all women's police stations and measures to protect child victims
- permanent boards and legislation to promote the use of effective and proven crime prevention measures at all levels of government


The WSV calls attention to the initiatives of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on the use and application of the Declaration, including:

- The Guide for policy makers
- The Handbook on justice for victims
- Victimology.nl a web site
- The funding in 2003 for 19 pilot projects
- Study by the commission of guidelines for child victims

The WSV calls on Member States to take concrete steps now to overcome the lack of recognition for the plight and justice for victims for the 21st century, including:

- a. victims of trans-national organised crime, corruption, terrorism, and economic crime,
- b. making standards work for victims,
- c. reforming criminal justice, including restorative justice, to assist victims and provide justice for all, including victims,
- d. prevention of victimisation,
- e. women and children who are victimised, particularly within their families.

The concrete steps for victims of crime should include:

1. **Legislation** that puts the basic principles of justice for victims into national laws with an office to implement the programs comprehensively,
2. **Training and guidelines** for police, lawyers, health professionals and others to ensure proper and prompt aid and respect for victims,
3. **Projects** to provide services to assist and support victims,
4. **National policies** to prevent and reduce victimisation, particularly based on the UN guidelines for prevention of crime,
5. **Actions** to implement guidelines to overcome the particular lack of recognition for victims who are women and children,
6. **Research and surveys** to monitor victimisation, services and justice for victims and implement effective countermeasures,
7. **Institutes** to sustain the reforms that are needed to prevent victimisation, assist victims and provide justice for all, including the victim. 

Prepared by Irvin Waller on behalf of the WSV UN Liaison Committee

* Several national organizations & members of the WSV provided letters of support (see list opposite).

United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The United Nations held its 11th Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Bangkok, Thailand, from 18-25 April. The official documentation may be found at: http://www.unodc.org/unodc/crime_congress_11/documents.html.

The WSV's statement and press conference are available in video format at <http://www.un.org/webcast/crime2005/statements.html>

THE NEED FOR A VICTIMS CONVENTION[#]

Associate Professor Sam Garkawe¹

November this year will mark twenty years since the unanimous agreement of the United Nations General Assembly to the 1985 UN *Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power* (the 'Declaration'). The Declaration represents an historic achievement for those who have been concerned about the poor treatment and lack of justice for the millions of victims in the world each year who suffer from physical, psychological and material harm due to the criminal conduct of individuals, private organisations and governments. The unanimous agreement to the Declaration in the General Assembly indicates that this is an issue that transcends differing cultures, religions, criminal justice systems, social structures, and stages of economic development around the world. The Declaration provides for State obligations in respect of two broad categories of victims - the traditional category of victims of crime (victims of the actions or omissions of individuals that are defined as crimes by national laws) and 'victims of abuse of power' (victims of international human rights violations that *should* have been defined as criminal by the State, but are not due to the State deliberately deciding not to define them as criminal (Lamborn 1987)).

It is now time for the international community to take the standards articulated in the Declaration to another level by agreeing to the adoption of a Victims Convention. In this short article I do not have the time to canvass what might be the exact content of such a Convention. Naturally, there will be a myriad of issues to be negotiated before a Convention could be agreed upon, one of the most important being which categories of victims are to be included in the Convention's scope. One point is obvious, however, and that is whatever further categories of victims the Convention eventually covers (if any), it will certainly contain the traditional category of crime victims. In the main, my arguments and remarks in this article are primarily directed at these victims.

There is little doubt that consensus will be very difficult to achieve on the exact wording of the future Victims Convention, particularly given the increasing number of States in the world community. However, this is not to suggest that such an enterprise is impossible or so difficult it will not be worth the effort for victim advocates to spend their time pursuing. In fact, one of the main arguments in favour of a Convention is that many of the principles

contained in the Declaration have already been included in international Treaties. For example, recently Van Dijk (2005) has calculated that out of the 10 main principles of justice found in the Declaration, the UN *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (UNTOC) contains 4 of these, whereas UNTOC's *Protocol Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* contains 6 in a mandatory form and another 3 in an optional form. Furthermore, the 2001 *Council of the EU Framework Decision* (a legally binding document for the current 25 European Union Member States) includes 8 of the 10 principles. This clearly shows that the principles contained in the Declaration are not so obscure, vague or uncertain that agreement could never be reached on the precise wording of a Victims Convention. The main effect of such a Convention would be to make available the agreed principles across the board to all types of crime victims, not just those who are the subject of specific Conventions.

Another argument in favour of a Convention is that from an international law point of view the present Declaration is insufficient. Declarations, no matter how widely supported, do not have the same status as Conventions under international law. They are not intended to have any binding effect, nor do they produce the precise obligations on States when they ratify a Declaration. Conventions form what international lawyers refer to as 'hard law' – in other words, binding international law which if a state breaches, means they are in violation of their international legal obligations and thus may be subject to the international legal principles of State Responsibility. This can be compared to 'soft law' international instruments, such as Declarations or 'Bodies of Principles' or 'Guidelines'. States generally do not take these nearly as seriously as Conventions, and they cannot be taken to task for a breach of these in the same manner as for a breach of a Convention. It is conceded that the dichotomy between 'hard law' and 'soft law' is not so clear cut - 'soft law' can often be as effective as and may lead to 'hard law'. On the other hand, due to the weakness of the international legal system, so called 'hard law' is often treated as optional (ie. like 'soft law') by states. However, it is submitted that there is no doubting the increased importance of State obligations written down in much clearer and more unequivocal language generally found in Conventions. Failure by a State to live up to their commitments found in a binding Convention, could, in a particularly high profile case of victimisation, lead to that state having to answer for their behaviour in an international forum and can be highly embarrassing. Furthermore, the international standards found in a Convention, as opposed to a Declaration, are in a number of legal systems (such as Australia's) much more likely to be accepted by the courts to help in the interpretation of ambiguous legislation or to develop courts' jurisprudence in situations where no legislation exists.

A related argument is that the drafting of a Convention, and the process of having it open for ratification, would place international public pressure on all States that would be beneficial for victims and their advocates. States that refused to move in the direction of ratification will be asked why they are not supportive of victims. States that do ratify

[#] This is an updated and edited version of a speech that the writer gave to a workshop 'The Victims Movement in the World', organised by the World Society of Victimology at the recent 11th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held in Bangkok on 18-25 April 2005.

¹ Southern Cross University, School of Law and Justice, and member of the World Society of Victimology's UN liaison committee.

the Convention will be under pressure domestically to abide by their commitments towards victims. National victim support agencies and groups would be in a far stronger position to use the standards in the Convention to hold their governments accountable for not meeting Convention standards.

In turn, this would directly help in what is ultimately the largest problem with all international Declarations and pronouncements in favour of victims – the issue of implementation. While many of the principles in the Declaration have been acted upon by a considerable number of states and there is much rhetoric supporting the Declaration, overall implementation has been spasmodic, and in the case of some States, non-existent. Even in the generally supportive and relatively wealthy environment of Europe, implementation of Europe's equivalent to the Declaration, *Council of Europe Recommendation 85/11* shows 'relatively poor results for several Member States' (Van Dijk 2005, p70, referring to Brienen & Hoegen, 2000). Making the standards found in the Declaration more binding and visible would, I believe, considerably assist implementation of these standards.

A final argument in favour of a Convention is that we should view the issue of the poor treatment of victims throughout the world as a human rights issue. One of the key observations that those in the victims movement continually make is that subsequent to victimization most crime victims are treated poorly and do not receive adequate material, psychological and social support. They can thus be viewed as a class of people, like other classes of people who are marginalized or suffer from violations of their rights, such as people tortured, disappeared without legal process or racially discriminated against, who are in need of the benefits of human rights protection. Seen in this light, like with so many other human rights issues, there should be a natural progression from a non-binding Declaration to a binding Convention. All the major human rights Conventions originated with Declarations. For example, both the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and the *International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights* were derived from the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. On this basis there is no reason why the situation of victims should be treated any differently than other human rights issues. The process of further norm setting in human rights is not yet complete and is ongoing. For example, recently in 2003 the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Family* came into force, and

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presently, there are serious moves in the UN towards agreement to a Convention on the Rights of people with disabilities. There is thus no logical reason why a Victims Convention cannot likewise be placed on the agenda.

Many of the current human rights Conventions are concerned with certain categories of victims, such as torture victims, victims of discrimination on the grounds of gender and race, abused children, and victims of inadequate economic and social support by States. They do refer, in very general terms, to the right of victims to 'an adequate remedy' if their rights are violated. However, a Victims Convention would both be more general in its scope in terms of embracing the whole range of different types of victims, as well as being focused specifically on the plight of victims. This is in contrast to the other human rights Conventions that primarily focus on the role of States in preventing human rights violations, and really only mention victims incidentally.

In conclusion, it is submitted that the above arguments in favour of a Victims Convention are strong and persuasive. It is acknowledged that it is always difficult for any social movement (of which the victims movement is one) to decide to spend their energy on international campaigns where perhaps the benefits are not immediate or obvious. This is especially so where those in the movement are already busy and overworked in trying to provide adequate care and support on a daily basis to those they are given the task to help. The writer strongly believes, however, that the push for a Victims Convention will be worth the effort and will improve the prospects for victims all around the world. 🌐




WSV Contingent in Bangkok: (Left-right Back) Marlene Young, Susan Tanner, Carlos Corvo, Karen McLaughlin, Sam Garkawe, Xin Ren & (Front) Irvin Waller (Paul Friday not shown)

In terms of the effects of transnational/organised crime and other crimes of this Century, the WSV urges the creation of a general action plan to deal with the unique needs of new victims, such as the women and children in legal limbo as a result of human trafficking, and to implement the victims' provisions in the UN protocol.

Special attention should also be given to training programs for police, prosecutors and judges and to the establishment of guidelines for identifying, recognising, and supporting victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Kidnapping is a crime that will highlight what we urge. Many of the delegates in this room or their families could be attractive targets. Regardless of how your justice system might respond, how would you feel and what would you want your system to do for you or your family?

On this 20th Anniversary of the UN's *Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power*, let this congress reaffirm that Declaration by addressing the concrete needs the victims of these new and daring crimes have. It is vital that the world make progress in reducing the number of victims of national and transnational crime. The WSV calls on our governments to establish ways to address their victims' needs and to monitor the progress and process in delivering them. 

UN Congress on Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Statement on Making Standards Work: Fifty Years of Standard-Setting in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Marlene Young

I am privileged to represent the World Society of Victimology (WSV) and its position on standards and norms as they pertain to the treatment of victims throughout the world. Others have pleaded eloquently to the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for appropriate treatment of victims. And, justly so.

Where there is crime, there are human victims. These are victims of transnational organized crime; economic crime; corruption; and terrorism, yet, there is little in the proposed Declaration that addresses the impact of these crimes on individual victims, their families and society as a whole.

(Continued on p. 8)

WSV's Statement on International Co-operation against Terrorism and Other Criminal Activities

Ass. Professor Sam Garkawe

The WSV fully supports international efforts to suppress and prevent acts of terrorism, including encouraging universal ratification of each of the international Treaties that concern terrorism, and the work of the Security Council and all other international, regional and national agencies that deal with the terrorist threat. I also would remind delegates that where such measures fail to stop terrorist acts from occurring, the result is tragically that human beings suffer. Terrorism is specifically aimed at random death and injury and causing as much human suffering as possible. Terrorists have a blatant disregard for the lives of their innocent victims. Terrorism is thus a crime where its impact on victims is particularly traumatic. It results in enormous material, social, and most importantly, psychological, problems for not only the direct victims of terrorism, but also for their families and other people close to victims. It can also affect whole communities, whole groups of people and even the well-being of an entire nation. The WSV would like to see greater emphasis in the proposed Declaration on the impact of

terrorism on individual victims, their families, communities and society as a whole. All aspects of crime should be viewed not only in terms of prevention, intervention and prosecution, but also in terms of an appropriate response to victims as well – for they are often forgotten. The crime of terrorism is no different.

There are a number of key ways in which the international community can help victims of terrorism. One important objective would be to ensure international cooperation so that an immediate response to help victims of terrorism is triggered automatically. Such a response should include urgent medical assistance, help in locating loved ones, appropriate crisis intervention and, where necessary, follow-up psychological help and support. It would be useful in this regard to study best practice and establish training and technical assistance for those responding to terrorist acts.

A second key issue is that victims of terrorism often have immediate and longer term material needs, and especially in the case of terrorism victims from developing nations, there is a strong need to compensate

them for their losses. In this respect the WSV fully supports the work of the Working group, established under Security Council resolution 1566 in 2004, that is charged with the creation of an international fund to compensate victims of terrorism, and it is hoped that much of the money for this fund will come from the assets seized from terrorist organizations, their members and sponsors. This is a good example of concrete measures adopted in favour of victims that the World Society of Victimology strongly supports.

We note also that terrorism is often connected with organized crime. We thus reiterate the need for implementing article 25 of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime that refers to assistance and protection of victims. On this 20th Anniversary of the UN's Declaration on Victims, the World Society of Victimology calls upon this congress to reaffirm that Declaration by addressing the tangible needs the victims of terrorism. We urge you to consider more concrete language for the Bangkok Declaration to ensure more effective services and justice for victims, especially victims of terrorism. 



The 5th Asian Post Graduate Course on Victimology and Victim Assistance

第5回アジア地域大学院コースー被害者学および被害者援助論ー
開催のお知らせ

The World Society of Victimology (WSV) and the Tokiwa International Victimology Institute (TIVI) will host the Fifth Asian Post Graduate Course on Victimology and Victim Assistance.

Date: August 2nd (Monday) to 13th (Friday), 2004

Place: Tokiwa University, Mito, Ibaraki, Japan

The purpose of this course is to provide an opportunity for any post graduate and professional persons, especially from Asia or Oceania to learn about this emerging field of Victimology in a compact two week course from world famous victimologists and victim service experts. All classes will be conducted in English.

In past courses, we had students from India, Nepal, Indonesia, China, Thailand, the Philippines, Korea, Hong Kong, USA and Japan. We are looking forward to hosting many more students from other countries.

For more **INFORMATION** please contact:

Tokiwa International Victimology Institute,
Tokiwa University Building F, 1st Floor,
1-430-1, Miwa, Mito-shi, Ibaraki-ken 310-8585 Japan,
Tel&Fax: +81-29-232-2522 E-mail: apgctivi@tokiwa.ac.jp



ANNOUNCEMENT

of the



WSV's 12th International Symposium on Victimology: Expanding the Mission Understanding and serving victim needs across the world.

Rosen Plaza Hotel, Orlando, Florida, USA — 20-25 August, 2006

More information forthcoming. See also www.victimology.nl

In the **NEXT EDITION** of *The Victimologist*:

New Guidelines to protect rights of child victims and witnesses adopted by the United Nations — The International Bureau for Children's Rights (that is based in Canada) says the world is one step closer to becoming a safer place for children now that these guidelines have been adopted by the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its 14th session, held in Vienna from 23-27 May, 2005.

Sexual exploitation of children on the streets in Middlesbrough, England — Diverting children and young people for street prostitution and victimisation.

New movement in crime victim support in Korea — the development of the Victim Support Centre.

Commonwealth Law Officer's discuss a draft Statement of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime.

(Continued from p.6)

All aspects of crime should be viewed not only in terms of prevention, intervention and prosecution but also in terms of a comprehensive response to victims – for they are too often forgotten. The Bui Doi (Dust of Life Children), the Untouchables (Street Children), the Decaying Garbage (Aging Prostitutes) are names applied to some victims of human trafficking reflecting their worth to society. Kidnapping victims may be only a flash in the news because of the perception that such crimes are isolated and are not random. Victims of poverty and the lack of sustainable development, particularly women and children, in Africa and other countries are increasingly not only victims of crime but victims of AIDS, are considered disposable. Victims of corruption in the criminal justice system have no recourse – as one victim said, “Who should I report this to? The police? The police, the prosecutor and the judge were all a part of the system that hurt me.” Fraud victims, while suffering extreme psychological trauma, may be dismissed since they have lost “only” money. The central role of all these victims should be addressed in planning a criminal justice response.

The nexus between victims and terrorism is clear, for terrorism is often defined as acts that may be committed for ideological or political purposes but consciously ignore the impact on individuals in their blatant disregard for human life. In fact, it uses random injury and death on innocent populations as a part of its mode of operation.


It is also important not to forget that millions of people throughout the world suffer harm as a result of what might be called individual crime and the abuse of power. The rights of these victims still have not been adequately recognized, and they, like the victims previously named, may suffer hardship when assisting in prosecution. It should be noted that promoting action on standards and norms for the treatment of victims must be integrated with continuing action on standards and norms for the treatment of offenders. We strive for balanced justice.

We urge this Congress to renew its commitment to implement the UN Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims and the Abuse of Power. It is particularly relevant to the establishment of standards and norms since it has been accompanied by tools to assist countries in implementation among them: a Handbook outlining standards for providing services and a Guide for policy makers on legislative changes.

We urge you to consider proposed substitute language to the Declaration that WSV has developed. We urge the Congress to take five practical steps to assist member States in their implementation efforts. These steps include:

- Testing and promoting best practices,
- Training and technical assistance for legal, financial and health professionals on guidelines for the treatment of victims,

- Developing model laws and implementation measures to establish the UN principles in national legislation,
- Fostering International Centres of Expertise, and
- Ensuring that the special needs are met of women, children and others vulnerable to chronic victimization.

We urge the national monitoring of progress in achieving these objectives so a report can be made to the next Congress in 2010. Remember: Justice afforded to the criminal without addressing the victim is justice denied. 

The Victimologist

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Newsletter of the World Society of Victimology
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Managing Editor:

Michael O'Connell, GPO Box 464, Adelaide, SA 5001, Australia, Phone: +61 +8 82071723, Fax: +61 +8 82071736 E-mail: oconnell.michael@agd.sa.gov.au

Editorial Board:

Georgios A. Antonopoulos, Department of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Durham, 32, Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HN, United Kingdom. E-mail: georgios.antonopoulos@durham.ac.uk

Marisol Casanova Guzman, calle 7 #I-11, Urb. Brisas del Mar, Luquillo, P.R. 00773 Phone: (787) 763-1985 ext. 259, Fax: (787) 763-5168, E-mail: mcg103@prtc.net

Dr. Otmar Hagemann, Kiel University, Germany, Email: Otmar.Hagemann@FH-Kiel.de

Almir Maljevic, Faculty of Criminal Justice Sciences, University of Sarajevo. Phone: 387 33445 452 ext: 227. E-mail: amaljevic@fknibh.edu

Jo-Anne Wemmers, Universite' de Montreal, C.P. 6128 succ. Centre-Ville, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3C 3J7 Telephone (1) (514) 343-6111 ext. 4864, Fax (1) (514) 343-5650, E-mail: jo-anne.m.wemmers@umontreal.ca

Inquiries: Address all correspondence concerning newsletter materials to the members of the Editorial Board.

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***The Victimologist* is made possible with the generous support of the Victims of Crime Co-ordinator, Attorney-General's Department, South Australia.**