



**Thirteenth  
United Nations Congress  
on Crime Prevention and  
Criminal Justice**

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**Statement submitted by the Alliance of NGOs on crime  
prevention and criminal justice\*\***

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## Doha Civil Society Forum Declaration

We, representatives of Civil Society Organizations have gathered on 12 April 2015 at Doha (Qatar) on the occasion of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to affirm the fundamental importance of its general theme “*Integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation*”, as a part of the wider United Nations Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda<sup>1</sup>,

*Aware of* the current discussions in the General Assembly to agree the Sustainable Development Goals for the United Nations for the next fifteen years, including the proposed goal 16 “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” as well as other goals,

*Noting* the Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Agenda<sup>2</sup> which emphasizes working together, a people centred transformational agenda, human rights and the rule of law,

*Encouraging* Member States to take advantage of findings, lessons learned, views and policy options developed by civil society organizations and academic institutions and to assist civil society organizations in terms of awareness raising and educational projects in crime prevention, emerging forms of transnational crime, corruption, cybercrime and trafficking in cultural property, weapons and drugs, wildlife and forest crime, as well as support concrete projects to help youth in contact with the criminal justice system, re-integration of ex-offenders, sensitising law enforcement officials, and treatment of victims of crime and trafficking.

*Aware* that sustainable development cannot happen without public participation.

*Aware of* the Declaration of the Doha Civil Society Forum “Investing in people-centered development”<sup>3</sup>,

*Welcome* the text agreed by the intergovernmental expert group on the Review of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners at its fourth meeting in Cape Town, South Africa.

*Recalling* also that non-governmental organizations and the scientific community are a valuable source of professional expertise, advocacy and assistance, and that their contributions should be fully utilized in programme development, United Nations studies, implementation and monitoring<sup>4</sup>,

*Stressing* the positive value that international standards and norms play in the advancement of crime prevention and the development of fair and effective criminal justice systems and in ensuring human rights in the administration of justice.

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<sup>1</sup> GA/RES 67/184, PP 10.

<sup>2</sup> A/69/700.

<sup>3</sup> Review Conference on Financing for Development, 25-27 November 2008, [www.un.org/esa/ffd/doha/civilsociety/forum.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/doha/civilsociety/forum.htm).

<sup>4</sup> GA/RES 46/152, Annex, OP 43.

*Emphasizing* the participation of civil society in crime prevention and criminal justice policy, practices and legislation,

*Highlighting* that crime prevention and criminal justice have a strong link with development and that monitoring progress in crime prevention and criminal justice with third party participation will be crucial for advancing the Post-2015 International Development Agenda,

*Regarding* the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and its Congress:

1. *Emphasize* the role of non-governmental organizations in the preparation for the Fourteenth UN-Congress, relevant resolutions and recommendations of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, in line with the General Assembly resolution 46/152, Annex (para. 29),
2. *Call upon* Member States to widen the avenues for the participation of civil society organizations in the United Nations policy-making processes related to crime prevention and criminal justice, including in all meetings of the Conference of the State Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and United Nations Convention against Corruption and their working groups<sup>5</sup>.
3. *Call* further upon Member States to recognize fully the role of civil society and individuals in anti-corruption efforts by involving non-governmental organizations more fully in the Review Mechanism for the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and in national level review processes,
4. *Call* upon Member States to ensure that the link between crime prevention and criminal justice on the one hand, and development and human rights on the other hand is reflected fully in the Post-2015 Agenda.

**I. Successes and challenges in implementing comprehensive crime prevention and criminal justice policies and strategies to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and to support sustainable development**

1. *Recommend* Member States include civil society organizations in the national, regional and international promotion of the rule of law, alternative approaches to justice (such as restorative justice), human rights, public participation, equality and sustainability,
2. *Request* that Member States strengthen specific mechanisms to enforce the legal standing of victims throughout the criminal justice process, especially in the courts, in keeping with their rights reflected in the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power,
3. *Call* upon Member States to implement effective measures for the recognition, protection and provision of victims' rights and assistance to victims and witnesses to all crimes, in accordance with relevant international instruments, and taking into consideration the United Nations standards and norms on crime prevention and criminal justice.

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<sup>5</sup> 2225 UNTS 209.

4. *Encourage* Member States to utilise evidence and policy options advocated by civil society organizations, and take into account the views of victims, as a reflection of public interest and human rights importance for policies and strategies in crime prevention and criminal justice.
5. *Encourage* Member States and United Nations Organizations in partnership with civil society to put into practice United Nations standards and norms on crime prevention and justice for victims, in order to advance sustainable development by aligning targets and indicators for the next 15 years for the reduction of violence and assistance to victims, based on evidence and good practice,
6. *Call* on Member States to abolish the death penalty completely and for retentionist States to immediately introduce a moratorium on death sentences and executions, and commute all current death sentences.
7. *Recommend* Member States and United Nations Organizations to promote, review and ensure proportionality of sentencing for drug offences, including the implementation of non-custodial measures and alternatives to incarceration for minor offences and vulnerable groups including women.
8. *Encourage* Member States to actively promote the involvement of civil society in the implementation of all standards and norms as they affect the rights of vulnerable and marginalised groups.

## **II. International cooperation, including at the regional level, to prevent and combat transnational organized crime and corruption**

1. *Urge* Member States to engage with, support and involve civil society organizations in the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of efforts to effectively prevent and combat transnational organised crime and corruption, especially through UNTOC and UNCAC mechanisms.

## **III. Comprehensive and balanced approaches to prevent and adequately respond to new and emerging forms of transnational crime**

1. *Recommend* civil society organizations raise awareness on emerging forms of crime, in particular wildlife, forest and other forms of environmental crime, trafficking in cultural property, economic fraud and cybercrime.
2. *Urge* Member States to acknowledge the highly organised nature of emerging forms of crime and recognise these crimes as serious transnational organised crime.
3. *Recommend* Member States apply the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime to emerging forms of crime.

## **IV. National approaches to public participation in strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice**

1. *Recommend* Member States increase their focus on community-centred initiatives, the provision of legal aid and increased participation of women and youth in consultative processes. Volunteers and youth involved in crime prevention activities and restorative justice can be agents of positive change.

2. *Call* on Member States to involve affected groups in crime prevention and criminal justice policy, programmes and delivery,
3. *Encourage* Member States to involve civil society organizations in proactive social inclusion, including drawing on their capacity to reach the most vulnerable, and facilitate vocational training and skill-forming employment, especially for youth, as part of developmental crime prevention.

**V. Role of the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice in support of effective, fair, humane and accountable criminal justice systems**

1. *Call* on Member States to adopt effective mechanisms for the implementation of the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid, including through transposition into national law, the development of national action plans, and partnerships between government and non-state actors.
2. *Request* the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to consider the establishment of a mechanism for continuous assessment of the implementation of the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid, including the collection of relevant statistical information.
3. *Recommend* Member States and United Nations Organizations implement existing human rights-based restrictions on the criminalization of people, based on their status and/or identities, including the LGBT community, and to ensure protection for all marginalised individuals and groups.
4. *Call* on Member States to minimize the use of detention for children in line with relevant international standards, as well as to take urgent measures to protect children from violence in the criminal justice system, utilising the United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children.
5. *Request* Member States to increase efforts to implement the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women in Prison and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders — the Bangkok Rules — in recognition of the gender-specific needs of women in the criminal justice system.
6. *Call* on Member States to endorse the revised text of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners agreed upon at the Fourth Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting at the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and transmit the revised Rules to the General Assembly for adoption as the “Revised United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners” (to be known as the “Mandela Rules”).

**VI. Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants: successes and challenges in criminalization, in effective protection of trafficking victims**

1. *Recommend* to Member States to increase the focus on language and cultural barriers preventing from delivering social and legal assistance to victims of trafficking and migrants in smuggling situations and offer assistance to the civil society organizations in countries of origin and destination, with a view to improving life chance opportunities at home,

2. *Encourage* Member States to provide legal assistance and alternative arrangements to repatriation such as immigration relief, civil compensation, and vocational training.
3. *Call upon* Member States to adopt a participatory Review Mechanism that fully involves civil society for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols and in the national level review processes.
4. *Further call upon* Member States and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals include goals and targets to address trafficking in persons as defined in the United Nations *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children*, inclusive of all genders and forms of trafficking.
5. *Call upon* Member States to ensure that persons affected by transnational organised crime and corruption have the time and support necessary, including legal assistance, to ensure they are able to exercise their right to remedy, in accordance with the Basic Principles on the Right to an Effective Remedy for Victims of Trafficking in Persons.

#### **VII. Public contribution to crime prevention and raising awareness of criminal justice: experiences and lessons learned**

1. *Recommend* Member States pursue new avenues for increasing public involvement in crime prevention and criminal justice and in promoting preventive and restorative criminal justice.
2. *Advise* civil society organizations be aware of money laundering dangers, the importance of public registers of beneficial ownership and to support efforts to adopt transparent public registers in all Member States.
3. *Encourage* Member States to draw on the successful experiences in crime prevention and criminal justice with a view to sharing them with public at large, so as to strengthen the acceptance of internationally recognized United Nations criminal policy standards.
4. *Encourage* member states to provide adequate legal protections for whistle-blowers, human rights defenders and journalists.

#### **VIII. Implementation**

*Call upon* Member States and United Nations Organizations to develop an evidence-based plan to further strengthen the implementation of the above recommendations, including identification of the government centres responsible for implementation; training of the officials and civil society persons responsible for implementation; setting of targets and indicators in line with social development goals; development of the mechanisms to monitor and evaluate implementation progress; formulation of a compelling cost-effective proposals to obtain adequate investment; establishment of a joint Member State civil society task force to monitor implementation.