

# Victimology in The Hague

Final Report

14<sup>th</sup> International Symposium  
World Society of Victimology  
20-24 May 2012, The Hague

**Date report:**  
September 30, 2012

**Symposium Organising Committee (Chairs):**  
Victor Jammers, Stephan Parmentier, Rianne Letschert, Ivo Aertsen

Conference manager: Barbara van Gorp

## **1. Introduction**

This Final Report has been written by the Symposium Organising Committee of the 14<sup>th</sup> Symposium of the World Society of Victimology. Information has been gathered among the members of the committee and among the participants of the conference through an evaluation form that was sent out by email, 183 forms were completed by participants. Part of the results of the evaluation form is included in a number of figures in the text.

### **1.1 Early planning**

The planning of the Consortium<sup>1</sup> for the 14<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Victimology began with a formal proposal to hold the 2012 event in The Hague, submitted to the Executive Committee (EC) of the World Society of Victimology in August 2009. After the EC officially selected the Consortium as the host for the 14<sup>th</sup> Symposium in August 2009, the Consortium created a small initial planning committee that started planning logistical details such as selecting the conference venue, session structure and organisational structure.

Between August 2009 and July 2010 the initial planning committee met four times. In July 2010, this committee presented a summary of its planning progress in the form of a Prospectus to the Executive Committee.

At the beginning of 2011, the Consortium and the EC began negotiating the Symposium Agreement. This process took longer than expected, but in May 2011 WSV and INTERVICT (on behalf of all consortium partners) signed the Symposium Agreement. In the meanwhile the Consortium had created the Symposium Organising Committee (SOC), the primary body that would plan and execute the symposium.

### **1.2 Symposium Organising Committee (SOC)**

The SOC was the main decision-making body in preparation for the 14<sup>th</sup> Symposium, and was responsible for the execution of the symposium, including all administrative and logistical planning for the event, as well as final decisions about the entire symposium. The SOC was chaired by Mr. Victor Jammers, member of the Executive Board of Victim Support Europe, and vice chaired by Prof. Stephan Parmentier, Professor of Criminology at LINC, and Prof. Rianne Letschert, Professor of International Law and Victimology at INTERVICT. Other members of the SOC were Prof. Ivo Aertsen, Dr. Sonja Leferink, Dr. Antony Pemberton, Dr. Inge Vanfraechem, Miriam Sessink, Danique Gudders and Birgit Vanderstraeten.

In 2010 the SOC met 4 times. As of January 2011 monthly meetings were convened with the SOC as the primary body. In the second half of 2011 the responsibility for different aspects of the planning was divided among related SOC members, who formed working groups based on those areas of responsibility (i.e. PR/Communications Workgroup, Events Workgroup, Course Workgroup, Logistics Workgroup, Fundraising and sponsoring Workgroup and Financial Affairs Workgroup). At the end of 2011 a Mini SOC (chair, vice-chairs and conference manager) was created in addition to the SOC to decide on logistic and financial matters.

### **1.3 Scientific Programme Committee and Review Committee**

The Scientific Programme Committee (SPC), chaired by Prof. Ivo Aertsen, Professor of Criminology at LINC and vice chaired by Dr. Sonja Leferink of Victim Support Netherlands, Dr. Felix Ndahinda of INTERVICT and Dr. Inge Vanfraechem of LINC, was primarily responsible for the planning of the symposium's entire academic programme, including the planning of the symposium schedule, the selection of its sub-themes, the management and

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<sup>11</sup> The Consortium consisted of the following parties: Victim Support Europe, the International Victimology Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT) and the Leuven Institute of Criminology (LINC).

selection/rejection of all individual paper and poster presentations, and the oversight of other related aspects of the programme (such as the Book of Abstracts). Next to the SPC's chair and vice chairs, the SPC consisted of Danique Gudders and Birgit Vanderstraeten, both of LINC, while a third person, An Adriaenssen, also from LINC, offered substantial support during the last weeks before the symposium.

A Review Committee was installed, consisting of 9 internationally renowned experts in the field of victimology from nine different countries, who agreed to review and comment on all submitted abstracts to the symposium. The Review Committee was mainly composed by members of the WSV Executive Committee, completed by four external victimology experts in order to have the French and Spanish language groups represented (see Annex B for a list of names.) The Review Committee together with the above mentioned members of the SPC evaluated all online submitted proposals (abstracts) for workshops, joint workshops, panels, round tables and posters. This work was coordinated by LINC, while the communication with the submitters was taken care of by Victim Support Netherlands. Criteria to evaluate the proposals were drafted, and an evaluation procedure was agreed on. The Review Committee did his work in a pro-active way: when proposals were not deemed appropriate, often a second opinion was asked for. All proposals that were not considered as appropriate were double checked by the Chair of the SPC. This often resulted in further suggestions to the submitter on how to amend his/her proposal. The main reason of non-acceptance was the lack of victimological relevance of proposals. As a consequence, in many cases, the initial proposals were reformulated and resubmitted.

A total of 351 abstracts were received, of which finally only 7 were definitively refused after a last check by the President of the EC.

## **2. Scientific Programme**

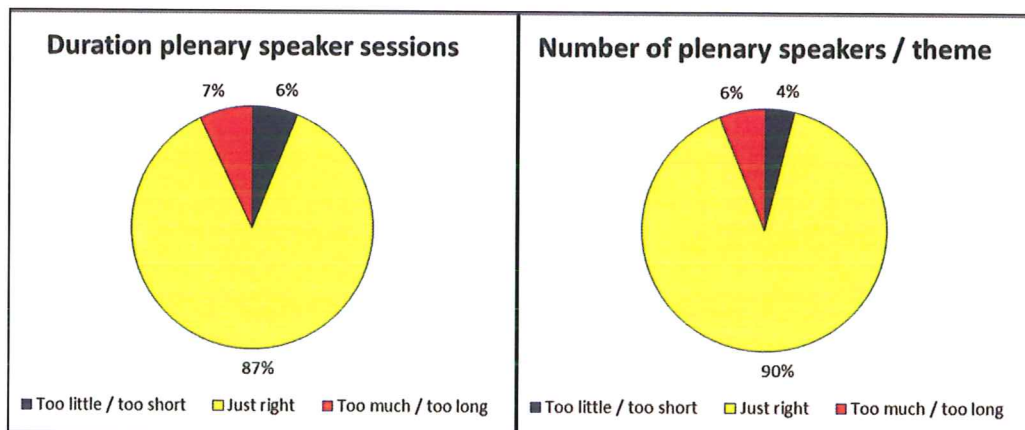
### **2.1 Plenary Sessions**

There were 10 plenary sessions divided over four days of the symposium (21-24 May), Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday/Thursday corresponding with one of the three symposium subthemes. Each plenary session featured one or two keynote speakers and a chair; each keynote address lasted roughly 30 minutes. A count-down system (only visible for the keynote speaker) showed the minutes left for the address.

Instead of having a brief question and answer period following the keynote address, the SOC chose for a different concept: every keynote speaker was asked to hold a special session during the week (mostly on the same day as the keynote address was scheduled) in which he or she could further elaborate on the ideas they had developed in their keynote speeches, interact with their audience and have lively discussions in a smaller group. This format of having short plenary keynote speeches followed by a more in-depth discussion in a smaller group ('special session') was highly appreciated by many participants.

Every day was chaired by either the President of the WSV (21 May), or by one of the SOC-members (22 May, Professor Stephan Parmentier; 23 May, Professor Ivo Aertsen, 24 May, Professor Rianne Letschert).

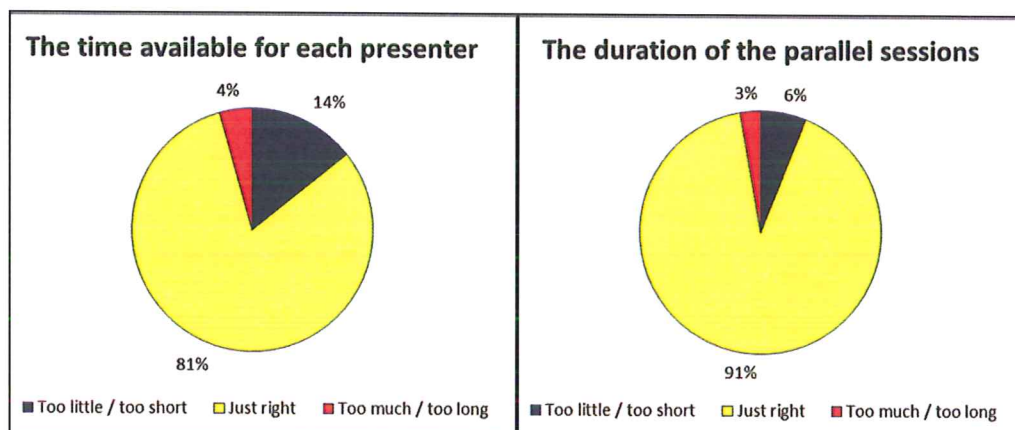
As recommended by the EC, each plenary session contained professional English-Spanish simultaneous interpretation. As with the opening ceremony, headsets were handed out at the door by symposium staff to participants who requested them and collected again after the session was over.



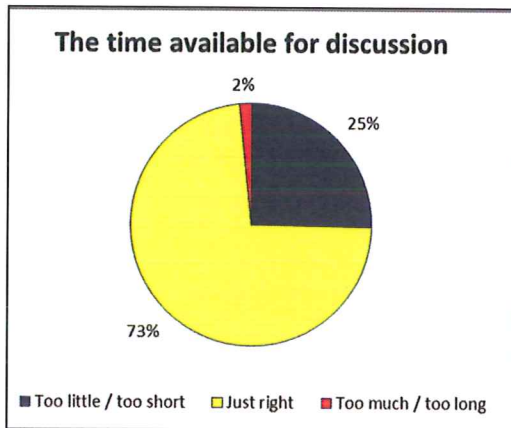
## 2.2 Parallel Sessions

The 'Parallel Sessions' which contained all of the symposium's individual presentations, took place from Monday through Thursday. All parallel sessions were one and a half hours long. Originally there were 9 time slots; this had to be extended to 11 time slots due to the large number of abstracts submitted. Sessions were divided into 11 different rooms for each time slot, bringing the total number of parallel sessions for the week to 118. Parallel sessions were not simultaneously interpreted into Spanish, though there were some parallel sessions entirely in Spanish.

There were various types of parallel sessions: workshops, joint workshops, panels, round tables. On top of that, 'extra sessions' were organised, where the keynote speakers further elaborated and discussed their findings with a smaller group of interested persons (see above). Finally, also three 'special sessions' were organised, for which well known experts on a given topic were invited (e.g. victims in international criminal justice, sexual abuse in the church).



One hour and a half was seen as an appropriate time slot. Almost all sessions consisted of three presentations. The time in each session was divided among the presenters. A session chair and a student part-time staff member were assigned to each of the parallel sessions in support of the presenters. The involvement and presence of the student in each room worked very well, both in a practical and technical way. The progression of each session was left up to the chairs.



### 3. Symposium programme - Events

#### 3.1 Opening Ceremony and Welcome Reception

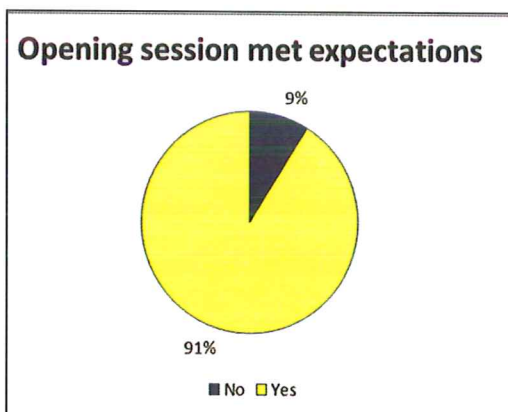
The Opening Ceremony was held on Sunday, May 20, from 4:00 - 5:30 PM in the Hall of Knights, located about 15 minutes from the symposium venue by bus, organised by the SOC. Because of security reasons, participants had to register first at the World Forum.

Professional simultaneous interpretation service in Spanish was arranged for the opening ceremony and headsets were handed out and collected from participants upon entry and exit of the ceremony hall, respectively. Free bottled water was placed underneath each chair, offered by Earth Water, one of the symposium supporters.

Preceding the opening ceremony a special reception was organised for VIP's only (i.e. keynote speakers, rapporteurs, EC-members, and some 15 local guests) in which they were being introduced to the Dutch State Secretary for Security and Justice, who would give a congratulatory address.

The opening ceremony programme consisted of an opening address of the chair of the SOC, congratulatory addresses by the Dutch State Secretary for Security and Justice, the Deputy Mayor of the City of The Hague and the President of the International Criminal Court, an opening address by the President of the WSV and an address about the WSV by its Secretary General.

Following the official programme, a Welcome Reception was held in two other halls in the same building, which included drinks and bites from 05:30 - 07:00 PM.

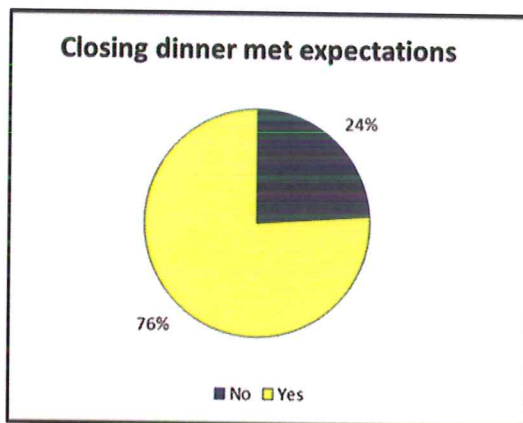


### 3.2 Closing Ceremony

The Closing Ceremony took place on the afternoon of Thursday and offered simultaneous interpretation in Spanish. The format of the closing ceremony included an opening address by Marc Groenhuijsen as re-elected president of the WSV, an awards ceremony and an introduction of the location for the 15<sup>th</sup> WSV Symposium in Perth, Australia by a representative of the future host. The ceremony ended by a brief closing speech of the President of the WSV honouring the symposium management staff, and a closing address by the chair of the SOC.

### 3.3 Closing dinner

The closing dinner was held on the evening of Thursday in a restaurant on the beach. Bus shuttle services were offered from the World Forum to the Beach Club and vice versa. The dinner was partly a walking dinner, party buffet style, and contained different food options for different cultural and religious dietary preferences. Live music was performed by a singer. As the weather was warm and sunny, guests could enjoy the terrace on the beach outside and watch a beautiful sun set.



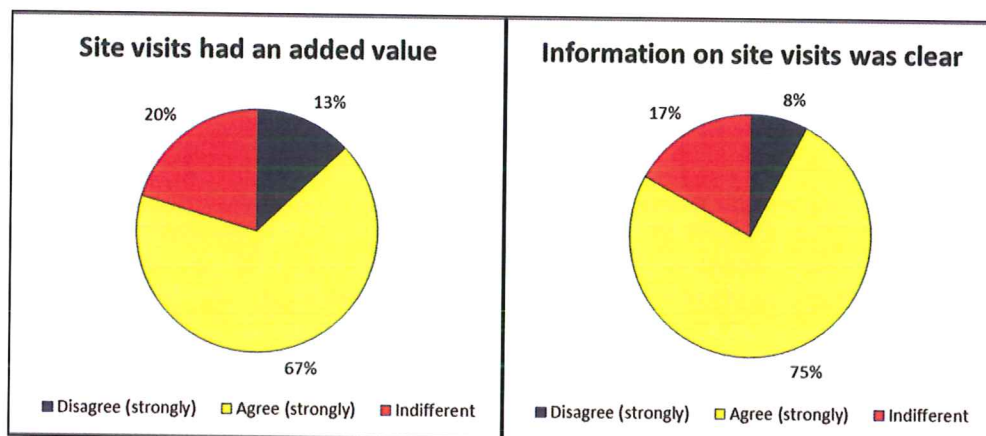
### 3.4 Site visits

The site visits (group excursions to victim-related facilities in The Hague) took place on Wednesday afternoon and offered participants four different sites with the intended purpose of giving them a deeper understanding of Dutch and international victim-related policies. The offered site visits were:

- 1) the International Criminal Court;
- 2) the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia;
- 3) the Victim Service Point at the Criminal Court;
- 4) the Regional Office of Victim Support Netherlands.

The capacity for each of the sites was between 20 and 45 participants, and seats were filled on a first come first served basis. As soon as the maximum capacity of a visit was reached the lists were closed, although waiting lists were kept count.

Each site visit was accompanied by a student staff member. Participants and accompanying staff were transported to the different sites by buses chartered by the organisers. Free bottled water was offered at the entrance of the busses, offered by Earth Water, one of the symposium supporters.



#### 4. Symposium Programme – Other

##### 4.1 Grants

With financial support from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (15 grants) and the WSV (7 grants), the SOC was able to offer a financial grant to 22 participants coming from Lower Income, Lower-middle Income en Upper-middle Income Economies (classification of countries according to the World Bank). The expenses covered by the grant were:

- Hotel accommodation from Sunday, May 20 till Friday May, 25
- Symposium registration fee
- Closing dinner
- Meals during the symposium
- Expenses for visa costs (with a maximum of € 125).

Participants needed to pay their own ticket and travel costs to and in The Hague.

Applicants needed to submit an abstract and curriculum vitae by sending an email to the ad hoc committee distributing the grants (the ad hoc committee consisted of two members of the SOC). After the abstract was accepted, the applicant had to confirm his/her presence by showing a valid travel ticket and copy of visa. Only after a copy of the ticket and (if applicable) the visa were delivered, a hotel reservation was made by the organisers and the participant concerned registered.

##### 4.2 Course Introduction to Victimology

The first course 'Introduction to Victimology', an initiative of the SOC, was held as a joint event with the 14<sup>th</sup> WSV Symposium and took place one week prior to the symposium on Tuesday, May 15 and Wednesday, May 16. The course consisted of daily lectures from invited lecturers. The symposium website was used to distribute course information, schedules, and to hold the online course registration. Outstanding course accommodation was offered by The Hague Institute of Global Justice. In total, 60 people attended the course.

#### 5. Communication Strategy

##### 5.1 Programme Brochure and Book of Abstracts

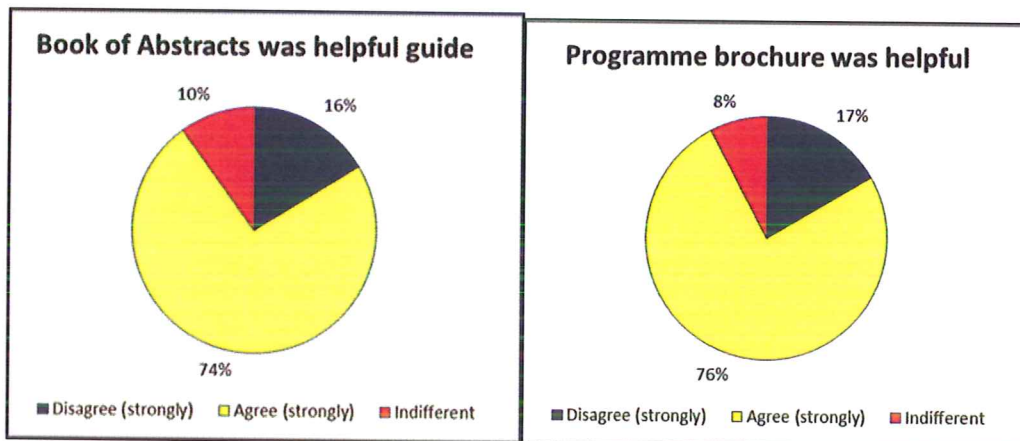
A separate programme brochure and a Book of Abstracts were published, both developed by the organisers in coordination with the Scientific Programme Committee. Both documents were distributed to all participants during the symposium registration.

The Book of Abstracts was composed on the basis of the received and approved abstracts, and structured by day. A considerable amount of work was invested in editing the abstracts,

before they could be included in the Book of Abstracts. All abstracts were accompanied by the names of the presenters and their institutional affiliation.

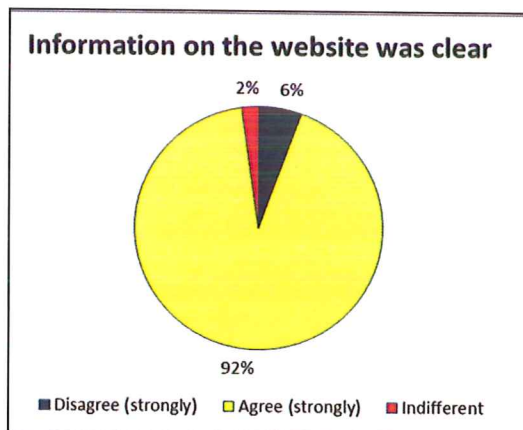
The Book of Abstracts contained a short overview of the symposium theme, the profiles for all of the keynote speakers and rapporteurs, the abstracts for every scheduled presentation ranged per day that they were scheduled for (including 117 Parallel Session abstracts and 33 Poster Session abstracts), and an alphabetical index of all of the presenters showing what page(s) their abstract(s) could be found on.

The so-called 'programme brochure' contained 28 pages with a detailed description of the symposium programme (and the individual sessions such as the various ceremonies, rapporteur session, etc.) and a user's guide for participants that included a range of information to help them make the most out of the symposium.



## 5.2 Website

The symposium website was launched in October 2011 and was regularly updated with the latest information about the symposium until the conference in May 2012. The website served as the primary source of information to the public about the symposium and contained information about online registration, abstract submission, the scientific and social programmes, local accommodation options, and other information important to participants. The information was categorised into the following sections: Home / Programme / Speakers / Call of Abstracts / Introduction to Victimology / Registration Information/ Registration / Accommodation/ Venue / Practical Information / Información en Español / Información en Français / Contact. The website was built and managed by Event Sites, although the organisers were given total control over the content of the site.

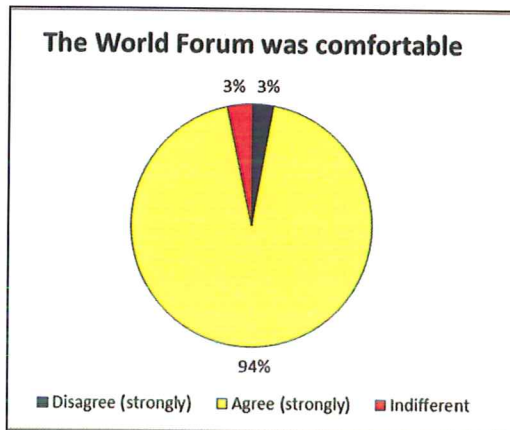


## 6. Logistics



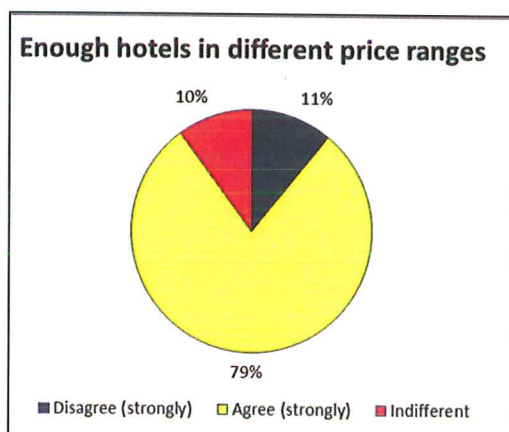
## 6.1 The conference venue

The 14<sup>th</sup> WSV Symposium was held at the World Forum, centrally located in The Hague. The venue offered all facilities to host an international conference such as this one. The registration area was set up broad enough to handle large groups of registrants, who were guided to the three help desk and five registration desk terminals by hostesses. The venue offered a wireless network that provided internet access, except for the workshop rooms. It did not facilitate computer use, printing or photocopying for participants. Technical assistance in the workshop rooms was available on demand. A duty manager was available for all kind of questions during the meeting and in build-up and dismantling.



## 6.2 Accommodation

Reservations for participant accommodation were managed by an outsourced consultancy company – Joustra Congress Consultancy (JCC). Participants could select from 7 different hotels located in The Hague or the adjacent town Scheveningen and priced between €69 and €150 per night.



## 7. Conference Management

### 7.1 Budget and Fundraising

A financial report on the symposium will be delivered separately from this Final Report.

In July 2010, a first budget was drafted. The main difficulty when drafting this budget was the estimation of the number of participants that could be expected. In Mito there were about 250 participants, it was expected that a symposium in Europe could draw more participants, but how many more? The 1997 WSV symposium in The Netherlands counted 1.000

participants. This seemed too optimistic, but what was a realistic estimation? The first draft budget was based on 500 full time participants and 200 one day participants. Finally there were about 500 participants in total, of which about 40 didn't have to pay the registration fee for various reasons (e.g. representatives of sponsors). About 100 of the 500 participants registered for one day only.

When it became clear in July 2010 that substantial fundraising was necessary to balance the budget, the SOC undertook a number of activities in this respect. It was not until May 2011 that these initiatives were successful. At that stage, the Dutch Department of Security and Justice and the City of The Hague decided to award grants. From then on, numerous other organisations (publishers, insurance companies, charities) were contacted and asked if they wanted to support the symposium in cash or in kind.

## **7.2 Organisation**

See annex for the Organisational Structure

Next to the committee members stated in this organisation chart, 11 student hosts were hired to assist during the symposium. These student hosts primarily helped with the on-site registration, guidance at the venue, session-room support, and other miscellaneous support work. The organisers went to great lengths to prepare student staff for the event by creating detailed job-specific work manuals and organising three briefing sessions before the symposium started. Brightly coloured lanyards and symposium badges were used for all staff members to help participants easily identify them.

## **Annex Organisational Structure**

### **Symposium Organising Committee (SOC)**

Victor Jammers (chair)  
Member Executive Board Victim Support Europe

Prof. Rianne Letschert (vice-chair)  
Professor of International Law and Victimology at INTERVICT.

Prof. Stephan Parmentier (vice-chair)  
Professor of Criminology at LINC

Prof. Ivo Aertsen  
Professor of Criminology at LINC

Danique Gudders  
LINC

Dr. Sonja Leferink  
Victim Support Netherlands

Dr. Antony Pemberton  
INTERVICT

Miriam Sessink  
Victim Support Netherlands

Birgit Vanderstraeten  
LINC

Dr. Inge Vanfraechem  
LINC

### **Scientific Programme Committee (SPC)**

Prof. Ivo Aertsen (chair)  
Professor of Criminology at LINC

Dr. Sonja Leferink (vice-chair)  
Victim Support Netherlands

Dr. Felix Ndahinda (vice-chair)  
INTERVICT

Dr. Inge Vanfraechem (vice-chair)  
LINC

Danique Gudders  
LINC

Birgit Vanderstraeten  
LINC

## **Review Committee**

Prof. Dr. Robert Cario  
Unité Jean Pinatel de Sciences criminelles comparées (UJP/CRAJ)  
Université de Pau, France

Prof. Dr. John P.J. Dussich  
California State University, USA  
Tokiwa International Victimology Institute (TIVI), Japan

Prof. Dr. Sam Garkawe  
School of Law  
Southern Cross University, Australia

Prof. Dr. Carolyn Hoyle  
Centre for Criminology  
University of Oxford, UK

Prof. Dr. Gerd Ferdinand Kirchhoff  
Tokiwa International Victimology Institute (TIVI)  
Tokiwa University, Japan

Prof. Dr. Katrien Lauwaert  
Department of Criminology  
University of Liège, Belgium

Prof. Dr. Robert Peacock  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa

Dr. Annette E. Pearson  
International Consultant, Colombia

Prof. Dr. Josep Tamarit  
Faculty of Law  
University of Lleida, Spain