



## **Contribution by the Chair of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

### **to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**

#### **2021 Theme:**

**“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”**

#### **I. Introduction**

This contribution is submitted by **H.E. Alessandro CORTESE (Italy), the Chair of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) at its thirtieth session**, in response to a letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council of 2 December 2020, inviting the Commission to provide an input to the 2021 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which will meet under the auspices of ECOSOC at the UN headquarters in New York from 6 to 15 July 2021, on the theme **“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”**. The input aims to highlight the views and guidance of CCPCJ with regard to the response to the pandemic and some of the measures and policies that contribute from a crime prevention and criminal justice perspective to putting the world back on track to achieve the SDGs by 2030, in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.

As the principal policymaking body of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice and the preparatory body for the United Nations Congresses on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Commission supports Member States’ efforts to

implement the 2030 Agenda, touching upon several specific goals and targets. The CCPCJ works to strengthen the capacity of Member States to detect, prevent, prosecute and combat all types of crime, to provide access to justice for all and to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. It also plays a major role in strengthening international cooperation in addressing global challenges and threats. The issues addressed in this document do not reflect the work of the Commission in a comprehensive manner, but represent examples illustrating its contribution to the 2021 theme.

The work of the Commission, as has been the case with other intergovernmental entities, has been heavily impacted by the pandemic. The twenty-ninth session of the Commission, scheduled for May 2020, was postponed and held, back to back with its reconvened session, in a scaled-down, hybrid format in December 2020. All items that were contained in the provisional agenda for the twenty-ninth session will be included in the provisional agenda for the thirtieth session to be held on 17-21 May 2021. The Fourteenth United Nations Crime Congress was also postponed due to the pandemic. Despite these setbacks, the Kyoto Congress was held successfully in a hybrid format on 7-12 March 2021, bringing together both in-person and online participants who otherwise could not have taken part in the Congress. The Kyoto Congress gathered the largest number of registered participants in the history of the UN Congresses.

## **II. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the SDGs under review in the 2021 HLPF from the vantage point of CCPCJ, bearing in mind the interlinkages with other SDGs**

The Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice adopted on 7 March 2021 the Kyoto Declaration, which will represent in the years to come the key political commitment on crime prevention and criminal justice for all United Nations Member States. The Declaration was negotiated since 2019 under the auspices of the CCPCJ in its capacity as the preparatory body for the Congress. It is firmly built on the commitments of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, “with the firm recognition that sustainable development and the rule of law are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, that crime is an impediment to sustainable development and that achieving sustainable development is an enabling factor for States to effectively prevent and combat crime” (para. 3).

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is duly taken into account in the Kyoto Declaration.

In the Kyoto Declaration, Member States expressed their “grave concern about the situation arising from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and its social and economic implications, which have created new opportunities for and transformed the *modi operandi* of criminals and

organized criminal groups in different forms and to different extents, as well as posed challenges to criminal justice in multiple aspects” (para. 13).

This statement of grave concern finds support in the recent research addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on crime. The strained social and economic conditions resulting from the pandemic have exacerbated the vulnerabilities of the most disadvantaged groups, and lockdowns have offered opportunities for new illicit markets to thrive, while others have been disrupted. The present chapter summarizes some of the recent research on the impacts of the pandemic on the implementation of the SDGs from the point of view of crime prevention and criminal justice. In the spotlight is SDG 16, which is at the heart of the Commission’s work. However, SDG 16 has close interlinkages with the other SDGs, and the pandemic hits the poor disproportionately, thereby making some of these interlinkages even more visible.

Target 16.1: *Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere*

Recent studies by UNODC show that changes in homicide figures were observed when restrictive measures were in place, with pre-lockdown trends re-emerging once they were relaxed. However, figures were heterogeneous across regions, supposedly depending on the level of restrictive measures imposed by Governments, the pre-existing socioeconomic conditions, and the overall predominance of a particular typology of homicide - for example, whether cases are predominantly related to organized crime and gangs, or to interpersonal and family-related violence.<sup>1</sup> These findings are relevant in particular for indicator 16.1.1 (*number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age*).

Many have shared the concern about a possible increase of gender-based and domestic violence against women and girls during lockdown measures. However, it may be too early to ascertain whether such measures had indeed a significant impact on the level of sexual and domestic violence. Recent helpline data from 36 countries, collected by UNODC<sup>2</sup> point to two trends: on the one hand, the reporting of rape and sexual assault to authorities decreased during lockdown measures, suggesting a possible decline in incidents outside the domestic sphere; on the other hand, more women reached out to helplines – the more stringent the measures imposed by Governments, the greater was the increase. This suggests that the apparent decrease in the reporting of rape and sexual assault could be attributable to the decrease in the accessibility of women to institutions for reporting incidents, as well as in the capacity of authorities to record those incidents. These figures may be relevant for indicators 16.1.3, *Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the*

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<sup>1</sup> UNODC: “Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions on homicide and property crime”, Research Brief (December 2020).

<sup>2</sup> UNODC: “What crime and helpline data say about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on reported violence against women and girls”, Research Brief (2020).

*previous 12 months, as well as 16.2.3: Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18, and 16.3.1: Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms.*

*Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children*

Also before the pandemic, most victims of human trafficking reportedly found themselves in conditions of dire economic need. Time series data on victims detected in destination countries and rate of employment in origin countries show a clear association.<sup>3</sup> While children comprised one third of the trafficking victims detected globally in 2018, they comprised almost 50 per cent of the victims detected in low-income countries.<sup>4</sup> An overall rise in unemployment rates in origin countries as a result of the pandemic may increase the number of people willing to take risks for better economic opportunities, thereby increasing their vulnerability to trafficking. This could have a negative impact on indicator 16.2.2, *number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation*. In the field of trafficking in persons, especially in children, direct interlinkages exist between SDG 16 and SDGs 1 (*no poverty*), 8 (*decent work and economic growth*) and 10 (*reduce inequality*).

*Target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all*

Prison settings have been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. Compared to the general population, prisoners are not only more likely to become infected with COVID-19, but also more likely to die from it.<sup>5</sup> Many countries have therefore adopted release plans in prisons to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Challenges in prison management and overcrowding underline the interlinkages between target 16.3 and SDGs 1 (*no poverty*), 2 (*zero hunger*), 3 (*good health and well-being*), 4 (*quality education*), 5 (*gender equality*), 6 (*clean water and sanitation*), 8 (*decent work and economic growth*) and 10 (*reducing inequalities*).

*Target 16.4: Significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime*

The COVID-19 crisis has forced organized criminal groups to innovate with regards to their traditional areas of operation. For example some evidence suggests traffickers are changing the

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3 UNODC, “How COVID-19 restrictions and the economic consequences are likely to impact migrant smuggling and cross-border trafficking in persons to Europe and North America”, Research Brief (May 2020).

4 UNODC, Elaboration based on national data, and World Bank.

5 United Nations Common Position on Incarceration (forthcoming).

types of drugs they smuggle and, in some cases, resort to using young children to deliver the merchandise. Drug trafficking routes have diversified to avoid strict controls on movement.

The pandemic has brought demand for new products, but also restrictions on movement and access to markets. Organized criminal groups have profited by providing goods and services outside the law. In these circumstances, the manufacturing of and trafficking in falsified medical products could pose a particular challenge. Aid destined for distressed companies, medical and pharmaceutical goods, public works such as improvements to hospitals, and waste disposal services are considered particularly at risk to be diverted by criminal organizations, thereby creating a link to SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), especially target 12.4 (*achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment*).<sup>6</sup>

Target 16.5 (substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms)

Governments around the world have responded to the pandemic with fiscal stimulus measures and emergency rescue packages and disbursed them at a speed that made them vulnerable to corrupt practices such as embezzlement, bribes and price gouging and the manipulation of procurement processes. Anti-corruption safeguards are frequently eased in such emergency frameworks, limiting opportunities for oversight and accountability.<sup>7</sup> This can be relevant for indicators 16.5.1, *proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months*, and 16.5.2, *proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months*. These observations also underscore the interlinkages between SDG 16 and SDG 1 (*no poverty*). Corruption in the health sector, including in the distribution of manufacture, allocation and distribution of vaccines, point to the interlinkage between SDG 16 and SDG 3 (*good health and well-being*).

### **III. Actions, policy guidance, progress, challenges and areas requiring urgent attention in relation to the SDGs and to the theme under the purview of CCPCJ**

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<sup>6</sup> UNODC, “The impact of COVID-19 on organized crime”, Research Brief (July 2020).

<sup>7</sup> UNODC, COVID-19 fiscal response and the prevention of corruption (July 2020).

In the Kyoto Declaration, States committed to contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through their efforts in crime prevention and criminal justice. They recognized that sustainable development and the rule of law are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, that crime is an impediment to sustainable development and that achieving sustainable development is an enabling factor for States to effectively prevent and combat crime.

This is the spirit in which the Commission regularly facilitates, at its regular sessions held in spring of each year, an interactive exchange of views among Member States and other relevant stakeholders on the ways to best contribute, within the Commission's mandate, to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, to ensure a follow-up to the 2030 Agenda and to support the review of its implementation during consideration of a dedicated agenda item entitled "*Contributions by the Commission to the work of the Economic and Social Council, in line with General Assembly resolution 72/305, including follow-up to and review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*".

With reference to SDG 16 as a whole, the General Assembly in 2019 adopted resolution A/RES/74/177, entitled "Strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity".

In the Kyoto Declaration, Member States committed to undertaking multidisciplinary efforts as well as engaging in and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve their objectives in crime prevention and criminal justice.

The present chapter presents some of the examples how this approach translates into practical policy guidance provided by the Crime Congress and by the Commission during its most recent session. With regard to the SDGs under review this year, starting from SDG 16 as above, the following actions, policy guidance, progress, challenges and areas requiring urgent attention have been highlighted:

Target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

In the Kyoto Declaration, States expressed a strong commitment to tailor-made crime prevention initiatives. They highlighted the need to take into account local contexts, foster among the general public a culture of lawfulness, cognizant of cultural diversity and based on respect for the rule of law, and cooperate with local stakeholders. Crime prevention could thereby lead to positive conflict resolution in the community, cooperation with the police, such as community-oriented policing, and prevention of gangs and urban crime.

Other relevant parts of the Kyoto Declaration that can contribute to the achievement of target 16.1 include those on international cooperation in criminal matters and the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

The CCPCJ has repeatedly given policy guidance regarding the prevention of crime and violence, most recently in its resolution 28/1, entitled “Strengthening the engagement of all members of society in crime prevention”.

This is particularly relevant for the achievement of indicators 16.1.1 (*Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age*), 16.1.3 (*Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months*) and 16.1.4 (*Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live*).

Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

The Kyoto Declaration contains, inter alia, the commitment to addressing the needs and protecting the rights of children and youth from crime, violence, abuse and exploitation both online and offline, such as sexual abuse and exploitation of children and trafficking in persons. It points to the particular vulnerabilities of children in the context of smuggling of migrants, as well as recruitment by organized criminal groups including gangs, as well as terrorist groups (see para. 29). States took the commitment to “take more effective measures to prevent and end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children, including child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse online and offline, by criminalizing such acts, supporting victims and fostering international cooperation to combat these crimes.” (para. 86). Further specific measures regarding children in the Declaration include youth empowerment in crime prevention, measures to establish or strengthen juvenile justice systems, and measures to assist the rehabilitation and reintegration of children and youth who have been involved in all forms of organized criminal groups.

Further policy guidance on trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children is contained in General Assembly resolutions that had been recommended by the CCPCJ to the Economic and Social Council, for approval by the General Assembly:

- A/RES/74/176, entitled “Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons”,
- A/RES/74/174, entitled “Countering child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse online”,  
and

- A/RES/74/173, entitled “Promoting technical assistance and capacity-building to strengthen national measures and international cooperation to combat cybercrime, including information-sharing”.

Relevant indicators supported by the policy guidance in this regard include indicators 16.2.2 (*Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation*) and 16.2.3 (*Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18*).

In February 2021, the Commission held a special event for the launch of the 2020 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons.

On a closely related topic, the Commission will hold its thematic discussion during its thirtieth session on 17-21 May 2021, with the title “effective measures to prevent and counter the smuggling of migrants, while protecting the rights of smuggled migrants, particularly women and children, and those of unaccompanied migrant children.” A workshop will be organized by the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network during the thirtieth session, on a theme related to the title of the thematic discussion.

Target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all

The Kyoto Declaration contains the commitment to ensure the integrity and impartiality of law enforcement and other institutions comprising the criminal justice system as well as the independence of the judiciary and ensure the fair, effective, accountable, transparent and appropriate administration and delivery of justice (para 51). Member States also committed in the Kyoto Declaration to taking “effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other relevant measures to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish all forms of torture and end impunity in this regard, and to prevent other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” (para. 52).

The General Assembly in 2019 provided more policy guidance on the rule of law in the following resolutions, both recommended by the CCPCJ to the Economic and Social Council, for approval by the General Assembly:

- A/RES/74/170, entitled “Integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies”, and
- A/RES/74/172, entitled “Education for Justice and the rule of law in the context of sustainable development”.



The ECOSOC also adopted resolution E/RES/2019/22, entitled “Enhancing transparency in the judicial process”, on the recommendation of the CCPCJ.

Target 16.4: *By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime*

In the Kyoto Declaration, Member States agreed to develop and implement effective measures to address the economic dimension of crime. They committed to enhancing their efforts to “deprive criminals and criminal organizations of any illicit gains through, inter alia, identifying, tracing, seizing, confiscating, recovering and returning proceeds of crime, as well as establishing robust domestic frameworks for financial investigations, and to develop strategies to prevent and combat money laundering and illicit financial flows” (para. 24). Further commitments in this regard relate to the international cooperation to deprive criminals of their proceeds of crime, the disruption of the existing links between organized criminal groups and corruption, the fight against bribery.

Member States also committed to “enhance coordination and international cooperation to effectively prevent and combat the growing threat of cybercrime” (para. 93) and “promote, at the national, regional and international levels, with due respect for domestic legal frameworks and the principles of international law, public-private partnerships with the digital industry, the financial sector and communication service providers to enhance international cooperation to combat cybercrime” (para. 95). These commitments are important contributions to addressing the threat posed by cybercrime, in particular in the context of transnational organized crime.

The ECOSOC further, in 2019, adopted resolution E/RES/2019/23, entitled “Combating transnational organized crime and its links to illicit trafficking in precious metals and illegal mining, including by enhancing the security of supply chains of precious metals”, on recommendation of the CCPCJ.

These commitments have the potential to further the achievement of both indicators of target 16.4 (16.4.1, *Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows*, and 16.4.2, *Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments*).

Target 16.8: Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance, and Sustainable Development Goal 17 (partnerships).

COVID-19 related restrictions, inducing travel impediments, quarantine requirements and limitations to the numbers of meeting participants, have put intergovernmental processes at

risk – processes that have been established to allow for inclusive decision-making and the exchange of views and to ensure that all voices are heard.

Ensuring business continuity and providing for an inclusive environment for multilateral deliberations during the pandemic has been the top priority of the Vienna-based Commissions. While remote participation and a certain degree of digitalization was not novel, the COVID-19 pandemic set this process on a fast track, forcing the Commissions to adapt to new working methods and communication almost overnight. Since March 2020, the CCPCJ held in online or hybrid formats its yearly reconvened session, nine meetings of the Extended Bureau, three intersessional meetings, two special events and a number of briefings. Further, the negotiations of the Kyoto Declaration continued despite the pandemic in hybrid and online formats, including line-by-line negotiations on draft text. Lessons learnt include experiences with challenges posed by the online and hybrid formats and with difficulties to access certain virtual platforms faced by some delegations. Hybrid and online formats should not be considered a substitute to in-person meetings but remain a complementary solution. The meetings conducted in such formats showed an increase of Member States' experts and stakeholders participating from around the world.

#### **IV. An assessment of the situation regarding the principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind” at the global, regional and national levels against of background of the COVID-19 pandemic in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs**

The principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind”, as the central promise of the 2030 Agenda, represents the commitment of all Member States to end poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind. Some examples how the CCPCJ addresses the principle of “leaving no one behind” are listed below.

##### Support for victims of crime

It is essential to provide support to victims of crime so that they are not left behind. In this regard, Member States, in the Kyoto Declaration, committed to support victims of crime by protecting their rights and make efforts to assist them at every stage of criminal justice proceedings, as well as provide adequate support to encourage them to report crime. Member States further committed to provide resources and training to practitioners in this regard.

##### Offender rehabilitation and reintegration

Reintegrating offenders into societies that they belong is a key element in realizing the principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind”. In this connection, Member States made a commitment in the Kyoto Declaration to promote a rehabilitative environment in both prisons and in communities, with a view to support their social reintegration.

### Gender-based discrimination

The Vienna-based Commissions have in recent years increasingly devoted attention to the issue of gender equality. They addressed the issues of gender mainstreaming and gender-inclusive communication, including through the informal “Let’s Talk Gender” meetings and the establishment of a dedicated webpage on the implementation of SDG 5.

The Kyoto Declaration also identified the need for gender-mainstreaming in crime prevention and into criminal justice systems. States committed to mainstreaming a gender perspective into crime prevention policies, programmes, legislation, and other actions to prevent all forms of gender-related violence, crime and victimization. They also committed to promoting “gender-responsive measures that address the gender specific needs of both offenders and victims, including the protection of women and girls from revictimization in criminal justice proceedings” (para. 44).

The CND and the CCPCJ also work with their brother and sister functional commissions of the ECOSOC, in particular the Commission on the Status of Women, to jointly further the implementation of SDG 5. In June 2020, the Vienna-based Commissions hosted a joint virtual high-level special event in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

### Prisons

Prisons will remain a major area of concern for many criminal justice systems during the pandemic, and a key factor for the principle of “leaving no one behind”. Member States have in the Kyoto Declaration expressed their “grave concern about the vulnerability of prisons, especially in terms of health, safety and security, to the real risk of a rapid spread of the virus in closed settings, which can be further aggravated by long-standing challenges such as prison overcrowding and poor prison conditions” (para. 14). They also made the commitment to “improve the detention conditions for both pretrial and post-trial detainees and the capacities of prison, correction and other relevant officers in this regard including by promoting the practical application of relevant provisions of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) as well as the United Nations Rules for

the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules)” (para. 35).

#### Governance and access to services

Recognizing that poor governance and inequality in the access to services is one of the drivers of inequality, the Commission has consistently placed emphasis on the integrity of public services and the judicial system. The Kyoto Declaration contains a chapter on promoting the rule of law, which contains sub-chapters on, inter alia, access to justice and equal treatment before the law, access to legal aid, effective, accountable, impartial and inclusive institutions and social, educational and other measures.

### **V. Cooperation and technical assistance, measures and commitments at all levels in promoting sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic**

In the Kyoto Declaration, Member States committed to “take decisive actions and action-oriented measures to address challenges and remove international impediments posed and aggravated by COVID-19 to crime prevention and criminal justice” (para. 15). The Declaration’s overarching political message and chapter on promoting international cooperation address various levels of international cooperation, including with a view to promoting sustainable and resilient recovery from the pandemic.

#### International cooperation in criminal matters

International cooperation in criminal matters is at the heart of the work of the Commission. The Kyoto Declaration contains commitments to a broad range of forms of cooperation, including by taking measures to:

- Intensify concerted global efforts to prevent and combat crime by facilitating and strengthening international cooperation in criminal matters (para. 5)
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of central authorities and other competent authorities responsible for facilitating international cooperation such as mutual legal assistance and extradition (para. 61),
- Strengthen effective international cooperation in criminal matters, including in the areas of extradition and mutual legal assistance, while effectively addressing existing challenges and difficulties, especially with regard to requests, and promoting good practices, facilitate the use of existing regional and international instruments, including the Convention against Corruption and the Organized Crime Convention, as a legal

basis for extradition and mutual legal assistance cooperation, and implement and conclude, as necessary, agreements or arrangements to enhance international cooperation in this regard (para 62),

- Establish or strengthen regional and cross-regional cooperation networks of law enforcement and other criminal justice practitioners, and facilitate the formal and informal exchange of information (para. 63 and 64).

The Commission regularly discusses international cooperation in criminal matters during its agenda items “Integration and coordination of efforts by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and by Member States in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice” and “Use and application of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice”. It also regularly takes action on proposals made in this area, for example by adopting resolutions 28/2, entitled “Countering the smuggling of commercial goods in cases falling within the scope of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime”, and Resolution 28/3, entitled “Strengthening regional and international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice responses to illicit trafficking in wildlife.”

#### Technical assistance

Member States in the Kyoto Declaration also committed to

- actively participate in and contribute to the recently-launched Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, as well as the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, in order to assist States Parties in the implementation of those instruments, identify and substantiate specific needs for technical assistance, share best practices and promote effective international cooperation (para. 60),
- Continue to enhance international cooperation through technical assistance and capacity-building including with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and build upon ongoing initiatives and good practices such as the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration (para. 65), and
- Promote, facilitate and support the widest measures of technical assistance, including material support and training, with a view to enabling law enforcement authorities and criminal justice institutions to effectively prevent and combat crimes, taking into account the specific challenges faced by and the particular needs of developing countries (para. 66).

The Commission also regularly takes specific action on proposals regarding technical assistance in crime prevention and criminal justice matters, for example when recommending

to the Council, for adoption by the General Assembly, the text of resolutions A/RES/74/173, entitled “Promoting technical assistance and capacity-building to strengthen national measures and international cooperation to combat cybercrime, including information-sharing”, and A/RES/74/175, entitled “Technical assistance provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime related to counter-terrorism”.

#### Financing development

The Kyoto Declaration places great emphasis on measures to address the economic dimension of crime and deprive criminals and criminal organizations of any illicit gains through international cooperation. States committed to “consider, review and implement efficient measures to regulate the management of seized and confiscated proceeds of crime, bearing in mind the study prepared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on effective management and disposal of seized and confiscated assets, with a view to efficiently preserving and managing such proceeds of crime” (para 25). Further, Member States addressed international cooperation in this regard.

#### Inclusive multilateralism

With the lessons learnt and experience gained over the past months, it is important to consider further how the opportunities presented by the special conditions arising from COVID-19 can be captured in order to “build back stronger” after the pandemic in terms of inclusive and accessible intergovernmental meetings.

Experience further showed that with mobility restrictions and sanitary measures further inhibiting in-person meetings, there is even a stronger need for a comprehensive meeting architecture that facilitates meaningful online participation of all countries on equal footing, while also ensuring, to the extent possible, an in-person component.

### **VII. Various measures and policy recommendations on building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and key policies and measures to ensure “accelerated action and transformative pathways” for realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development**

The following recommendations may be considered by the HLPF, with a view to building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and to realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development:

- Encourage States to mainstream crime prevention and criminal justice into their COVID recovery plans, with a view to “building back better” and ensure that no one is left behind;
- Reiterate that the rule of law and development are strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing and that the advancement of the rule of law at the national and international levels, including through crime prevention and criminal justice mechanisms, is essential for sustained and inclusive economic growth and sustainable development;
- Reiterate the importance of promoting peaceful, corruption-free and inclusive societies for sustainable development during and after the pandemic, with a specific focus on effective, accountable and inclusive institutions and equitable access to services and justice for all;
- Stress the importance of strengthened international cooperation in criminal matters to effectively dismantle criminal networks and counter transnational organized crime, with a view also to raising funds to achieve sustainable development, including securing urgently needed funds for COVID recovery and development.
- Invest in international dialogue, exchange of good practices and lessons learnt, as well as technical assistance for more effective crime prevention and responses to crime during recovery from the pandemic, including through the CCPCJ, UNODC and other United Nations entities, international and regional organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, within their respective mandates.