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REPORT ON THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY
MEETING OF GOVERNMENTS ON THE PREVENTION OF
CRIME AND THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General circulates herewith the report on the European Regional Preparatory Meeting of Governments on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which was held at Budapest, Hungary, from 28 to 31 May 1974. The report is circulated to provide participants at the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders with a full account of the proceedings of the preparatory meeting.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The European Regional Preparatory Meeting of Governments on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders was the third of a series of regional meetings convened to discuss the provisional agenda and make appropriate recommendations concerning the preparations for the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, to be held at Toronto, Canada, from 1 to 12 September 1975, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 415 (V), annex, paragraph (d). It, therefore, adopted as its agenda the same one for the Congress as approved by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its second session held in May 1973 (E/CN.5/494, para. 62). A preliminary and informal meeting of European experts had been convened in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 17 August 1973 to discuss the Congress agenda. Participants at the Copenhagen meeting had felt the need for a larger meeting to give fuller consideration to the agenda of the Fifth Congress and the Government of Hungary had extended an invitation to the European Governments to meet in Budapest. A background paper summarizing the discussions at Copenhagen was included in the documentation for the Budapest meeting.

2. The meeting of the representatives of European Governments was held in Budapest from 28 to 31 May 1974. It was attended by a majority of European countries, both East and West. Dr. Szakács Odön, President of the Supreme Court of Hungary, was elected Chairman of the meeting. Mr. B. A. Viktorov, Deputy Minister of the Interior of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and Mr. H. H. Brydensholt, Director-General of Prisons and Probation, Denmark, were elected Deputy Chairmen.

3. The opening session was attended by Dr. Szénási Géza, Chief Prosecutor of Hungary, Dr. Korom Mihály, Minister of Justice of Hungary, Dr. Benkei András, Minister of the Interior of Hungary, representatives of the Government of Hungary responsible for different aspects of social policy and Hungarian criminologists and sociologists.

4. Dr. Korom Mihály, Minister of Justice of Hungary, greeted the delegations with an opening statement. He emphasized the complex character of crime which was fundamentally determined by the prevailing social conditions and stressed the quite dissimilar facets which crime could present in different historical periods and in countries with different social systems. The analysis and comparison of the development of criminality occurring in various countries, alongside the results of law enforcement, provide data and experience that can be useful for the whole community of nations.

5. Many aspects of modern development - such as technical progress and increased communications (nationally and internationally) as well as improvements in the international political atmosphere - had produced many positive changes in the contemporary world. However, it was a matter of international concern that all these improvements had not been able so far to restrain a certain growth of criminality. Moreover, new and dangerous types of crime, sometimes crossing national frontiers, have emerged during recent years.

6. The Minister noted that the significant and rapid changes in the world also had an impact on the shaping of criminality to be controlled successfully only by a common understanding between nations and by more co-ordinated attitudes.

7. He noted the great professional and public interest in the problems reflected by the agenda items of the Fifth Congress and expressed the hope that discussions in Budapest would serve as a useful background for a further exchange of opinions in Toronto in September 1975 which, hopefully, would lead to some joint international agreement on law and practice to deal with the challenges and threats of crime.

I. DISCUSSION OF THE AGENDA ITEMS

A. Changes in forms and dimensions of criminality - transnational and national

8. The meeting took into account the proceedings of the previous discussions of this subject at the preparatory meetings already held in Asia and Latin America and at the preliminary meeting at Copenhagen and it considered that substantial progress had been made in outlining the main issues for the Fifth Congress. The meeting was of the opinion that it now remained for the industrial countries of Europe to come to grips with these fairly clear issues so as to provide as much practical guidance as possible to the delegations that would attend the Fifth United Nations Congress in Toronto in 1975. It was a subject of interest and great importance but fraught with difficulty and complexity when it came to its presentation and handling at Toronto.

9. To begin with, the meeting sought to define the term "transnational", as distinguished from "national", crime. It endorsed the classification which had been adopted by the Asian Preparatory Meeting as being a useful way to approach the subject, i.e., crimes could be divided for the purpose of this agenda item into:

(a) Purely national crimes. These depend upon the national philosophies or political ideologies; e.g. the amassing of wealth might be a crime in one country and a civic virtue in another. With this category there was little scope for international co-operation on preventive measures:

(b) National crimes on which countries might well benefit from an exchange of ideas on their experiences, e.g. corruption, consumer fraud, and black marketing;

(c) National crimes which lent themselves to crime prevention by more direct international co-operation. Smuggling and drug trafficking were obvious examples, but the stealing of works of art or currency offences could be made more difficult to commit and easier to detect and control if nations would co-operate professionally to tighten controls and promote prevention:

(d) Transnational crimes. These were sometimes political but often

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non-political. Even if one were to exclude delicate political questions, there was the need for international collaboration on such subjects as extradition, limits of jurisdiction etc., to remove some of the obstacles to effective crime prevention.

10. Any broad conceptualization of this kind needed to take into account the changing concepts of deviancy which were prevalent within different patterns of modern culture. In Europe, especially, there was evidence of such changes of values and basic concepts which were bound to affect any notion of the nature of crime. Reference was made to the increase in violent crimes and bank robberies with the use of hostages, the great changes in deviancy brought about by increased traffic and the expansion of white collar crime. One country had established a special commission to find ways of combating white collar criminality and everywhere there was a new concern with environmental protection. Mention was made of the criminal characteristics of the situation created by the energy crisis, the protein deficiency and the devaluation or revaluation of currencies. The activities of transnational corporations were thought to need special study in this connexion. Representatives of socialist countries gave examples of the elimination of professional criminality by way of long-term social policies and measures of social control. Organized crime was difficult to sustain in a socialized system but in these countries as elsewhere it was observed that there were new types of criminals emerging as well as new types of crimes.

11. In the specific area of transnational crime the kinds of offences committed outside or across national boundaries and which affected thousands of innocent people - outraging populations with different value systems and social structures - were obviously more readily definable in terms of the violations of essential human rights and basic human values. These were crimes which flourished from the lack of agreement on concepts and joint action by the different countries.

12. The meeting expressed the hope that the nations of Europe would be able at Toronto to transcend any political differences and rise to a level of unity in professional and technical co-operation to prevent the kinds of offences which, however complicated to define and classify, were violating the consciences of societies and individuals of many different persuasions and value orientations. Internationally a situation prevailed which required a new and unprecedented effort by the nations of Europe to reach agreement on action to protect the innocent against violence and exploitation. The meeting at Budapest was united in the view that there must be more meaningful and effective action taken both nationally and internationally to prevent all the offences listed in the working documents of this meeting, e.g. international violence, counterfeiting, illegal dealings in negotiable securities and stealing of works of art.

13. However, this left the method of approach to the problems of transnational crime at Toronto still rather open. The representatives of the Governments of Europe felt prepared to go further and to state that whilst there would always be political considerations that should be taken into account, the scope for technical and professional collaboration to prevent such crimes was very great and had not yet been adequately developed. Participants felt that all Governments should work closely with the United Nations to bring together the professional and technical interests of their countries to find common ground for collaboration to prevent

transnational crimes, especially where this was necessary to protect the general public.

14. The hope was expressed that between this meeting and the 1975 Congress in Toronto there would be an attempt to identify the practical measures which might be taken. One participant called for more co-operation in preventing tax evasion by people moving to other countries and he gave examples of collaboration between his country and a neighbouring country in preventing the manufacture, processing and sale of drugs. By contrast, the countries in the south of Europe had not yet established such close collaboration that they could prevent the movement and manufacture of drugs. Participants from socialist countries pointed to the very close collaboration which had developed within the socialist region at all levels - political, professional and technical - to co-ordinate national efforts and to share experiences in the prevention of crime. They had succeeded and they believed that a system of intergovernmental co-operation of this type which had worked for them could work for countries outside the socialist orbit if they would provide for the same types of regular contact. The United Nations provided a special way of helping both socialist and non-socialist countries in this respect.

15. Mass tourism was mentioned as creating new and special problems and the immigration of workers was a phenomenon in Europe giving rise to many difficulties, not only of an economic but also of a social and criminogenic nature. Whether better technical equipment reduced crime or created new methods was an issue open to discussion. The technological progress of society permeated the whole area of transnational and changing national crimes.

16. First, the meeting expressed a desire to approach this subject at Toronto with an identification of some very practical methods for interstate and international co-operation. Obviously there were the United Nations and a variety of other international bodies with an interest in this field and the relationship between them needed to be considered. The first need was to identify carefully the areas in which co-operation existed and the areas in which it was obstructed.

17. Secondly, there was the serious question of collecting and disseminating data on an international scale. This service was grossly inadequate at present.

18. Thirdly, measures often used, such as international treaties and conventions, did not always produce satisfactory results. Sometimes these treaties and conventions were not ratified even by the countries drafting them. These served to criminalize the activities, but they often lacked the follow-up machinery of law enforcement to make them effective.

19. Fourthly, there was the need for more meetings of specialists for training and studies at the professional and technical levels. These should be possible both interregionally and regionally. They were vital to dovetail the existing methods of crime prevention and control and they were even more important for the development of better international co-operation.

B. Improvements in criminal legislation, law enforcement, judicial administration and correctional systems with a view to the prevention of crime and the treatment of the offender in the community

20. As had other regional preparatory meetings, the European meeting found a problem in trying to encompass the wide range of subjects subsumed by this title. It accepted the need for a narrower delimitation suggested by the preliminary meeting at Copenhagen in trying to achieve greater clarification of the subject of criminal legislation and judicial administration. As at the Copenhagen meeting, the relevance of this subject for the reform of legal codes was emphasized and several participants described the systems in their own countries, giving examples of recent changes, reviews and reformulations of their law and its administration.

21. The relegation of the penal law as a measure of last resort received full support of the participants. It was thought that it should be invoked only where all other measures to guide or control behaviour in the public interest had failed. It was necessary to develop a wide range of alternatives to legal action and to devise a variety of procedures, administrative or social in character, which could be more effective than the criminal justice system in dealing with behavioural problems. At the same time, special concern was expressed that the shift to informal controls should not result in any loss or diminution of the legal safeguards which had been the foundation of so many legal systems. One participant proposed that in reformulating the title of this subject the expression "legal safeguards and personal integrity" should be included.

22. At the Copenhagen meeting, the need for this item to be considered within a context broad enough to include appropriate educational and cultural aspects had been mentioned. Taking up this point, participants at the Budapest meeting underlined the importance of ensuring an understanding by the public of the laws with which it is supposed to co-operate. Participants referred to the crucial role of the mass media in disseminating the kind of information necessary to encourage and promote public participation in ensuring conformity with the law.

23. Attention was drawn to the differences between the regional meetings already held in their conceptualization of the community. Participants believed that some parts of the world were concerned to protect existing communities from the detrimental effects of industrialization and modernization; but in other parts of the world (including some parts of Europe), there was less concern because, in fact, such traditional, integrated communities no longer existed so that the problem of social control presented itself in a very different way. It was thought that there could be a very lively and profitable discussion at Toronto where representatives of these different areas and cultures would be brought together for an exchange of ideas and experiences.

24. Participants representing diverse legal and social systems agreed that offenders should be dealt with by the legal system in ways adapted to their needs socially and individually; in any case, alternatives to imprisonment should be developed by all legal systems so as to make imprisonment the last resort of the courts in dealing with crime. At the same time, one participant detected in the

presentations of representatives a kind of ambivalence between the concepts of treatment and deterrence.

25. The integration of the administration of the law with the general social system in socialist countries seemed to merge some of the ideas which were separately conceived in the non-socialist States. For example, the distinction between formal and informal controls had a distinct meaning where a State planned the use of the system of government and the use of the social structure to develop informal controls - as part of its legal system. It was therefore necessary to relate the terms "formal" and "informal" to the system of society within which they were to be understood.

C. The emerging roles of the police and other law enforcement agencies, with special reference to changing expectations and minimum standards of performance

26. The participants singled out three major types of police in Europe: (a) the Anglo-Saxon type of police, (b) the civil law type of police and (c) the police in a socialist country where there was integration with the socio-economic structure. Though there were great differences among them, there was also much common ground. The discussions at Toronto should aim at the exploration of this common ground and the development of the means for co-operation.

27. The participants felt that the police or law enforcement functions had reached a stage where changes were increasingly necessary to adapt these functions more effectively to the demands of changing societies. This presupposed studies of the past and future roles of the police and the improvement of police performance to achieve a balance between the authoritative and social roles of the police. The police needed to know exactly what the public expected of its performance, i.e. what was the underlying philosophy. This was fundamental to certain standards considered professionally basic for any police service. In all this the role of the mass media was important. Examples were given of presentations by biased writers of a lack of public confidence in the police at a time when independent and reliable surveys of public attitudes had shown that the great majority of the public were in support of the police. Misleading information could therefore create problems where none existed, just as more accuracy in the mass media could help to solve problems by informing the public about the police performance in an unbiased way.

28. Regarding the minimum standards of performance of the police, participants followed closely the lines of discussion developed by the previous preparatory meetings in Latin America and Asia. It was agreed that such standards should include a provision for personal security of the citizens - the protection of life, property and the right to use streets, public places and parks. The dominant values of any society guided the police in the performance of its duties. The work was inevitably affected by the clashes and interplay of interests displayed by different social groups in a society. Therefore observance of democratic principles, respect for law and individual freedom should be a basic

guide for police performance. Professional training and the proper civil education of policemen had a great deal to contribute to the better performance of the police.

29. Co-operation between international and national police organizations was firmly endorsed. It was considered desirable that this co-operation should extend beyond the exchange of information and be directed at identification of common problems and the definition of the new role of the police reflecting the diversification of modern European society. Police could in fact serve as one of the major instruments of social change and could facilitate the social reorientations that were becoming necessary for many European nations.

30. Throughout the discussion there was a special emphasis placed on the preventive aspects of police work. It was argued that the test of a good police force was a law-abiding society rather than a mass of criminal statistics showing numbers of criminal elements apprehended by the police.

31. On the European continent there were many cultural and historical similarities among the European countries, though the objectives of social development were sometimes quite different. This presupposed a differentiation of patterns of police performance. However, it was observed that the major trend was from a repressive function to a preventive and protective role for the police. This trend should be supported by all the resources society normally used for the development of its social policy, including the benefits of technological development. Technology could revolutionize the detection of crime and the processing of cases, thus saving resources for more profitable application. No country had enough manpower for a total application of the law, nor would a country need it if technology and the voluntary efforts of the public could be mobilized. It was recognized that public support was crucial for the successful performance of police duties. Therefore a continuing campaign by the police to inform the public was always indispensable.

32. Training of police personnel was recognized as being an essential part of any police reform. Particular attention should be given to ensuring the regular flow of new and adequate human resources into the police. Training programmes should reflect not only the new demands for improved police performance but also correspond to social needs and public expectations under conditions of rapid change. The objectives of police training should be attuned to the standards of performance expected. The specialization of such training was highly desirable.

33. Throughout the discussion of this item participants noted a general tendency towards involving the whole society in dealing with criminal problems. With reference to the police this meant an emphasis on the police officer as a major public servant and as a selected representative of the community it served. This could help to break the isolation within which the police sometimes found itself in some areas or under some circumstances. Technological equipment was useful but increased rather than decreased the separateness of the police. Social education and sophistication improved community links and the development of proper police ethics could better serve to integrate police and public in controlling crime.

On the side of the public there must be awareness and understanding of police problems and the support for the police officer performing his duties. Police officers should be prepared to go beyond their conventional role and develop better functional co-operation with other social institutions (schools, hospitals, public organizations etc.).

34. The delegates discussed the need for a clearer definition of the limits of safeguards for an individual citizen, the appropriateness of the division of labour between the police and the courts, the specific sphere of police responsibilities and the possible inclusion in it of a set of new social functions such as the supervision of persons released from custody, more preventive work with "special risk groups" in society as well as other aspects. Such a review of definition of functions of the police could become a prerequisite for further co-operation among the police and the social agencies. However, it was stressed that the primary criterion of police efficiency should always be reduced crime.

35. Many European countries had faced a growth of a "private security industry" (private detectives, security officers of stores, banks and public buildings). In some countries this army of private police was counted in tens of thousands of personnel and there were places where these private forces outnumbered the official police. Co-operation with accredited private operators of this kind could further strengthen the social role of the police. The search for ways and means of developing such co-operation could evolve into an interesting debate at Toronto. It was felt that at the Fifth Congress care should be taken to avoid a situation where the stress on the need for good police/public relations would alienate the police from other groups within the criminal justice system.x

36. Some delegates noted that what was sometimes referred to as a conflict of roles of the police and differences between public expectations and actual police performance was slightly exaggerated. However, it was evident that there was a heightened awareness on the part of the individual citizens of their democratic privileges and legal rights and there existed a need for greater flexibility on the part of policemen while performing their duties for the maintenance of public order. Policemen were entitled to know what the public needed from them but the general public must be better informed as to the limitations and problems of the police. The public must be aware that the police have a difficult function to enforce many unpopular laws and it should not forget that in modern society there was really no alternative to the police.

D. The treatment of offenders in custody, with special reference to the implementation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners adopted by the United Nations

37. The meeting agreed with the conclusion reached at the preliminary meeting at Copenhagen that in the campaign for a more enlightened and humanitarian approach to the problem of institutionalized offenders, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners marked an important advance. In the great variety of conditions, values, customs, traditions and levels of living throughout

the world, the Rules protect human dignity, exclude cruelty, neglect and degradation and, in general, aim at minimizing the effects of segregation from the community.

38. The meeting believed that the efficiency of long prison terms was low in rehabilitative content and ultimately destructive to human personality. Therefore, throughout Europe participants noted and welcomed a gradual tendency to introduce shorter prison sentences with more complete rehabilitation programmes. Several countries had an average of four to six months of imprisonment, which meant that preparation for release from prison was very important. Scandinavian countries referred to prison terms of not longer than three to six months for most offences as the most desirable.

39. Participants took note of the report of the Working Group of Experts on the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (E/AC.57/8), which met in September 1972 and examined the extent to which the Rules were applied. They agreed with the recommendations in the report, in particular, the need for a more effective system of reporting so as to identify areas in which the Rules might be defective or outdated and where improvements could be made. They welcomed the work being done to develop a commentary on the Rules for the guidance of Governments. However, the movement towards making less and less use of prison and the effects this would have not only on the significance of imprisonment as a penal measure, but also on the character of imprisonment for a more difficult and harder core of offenders who could not be released, would affect the relevance of the Rules commensurately.

40. One participant suggested that whenever the question of revising the Rules might be considered it might be wise to draft two or more variants of the Rules for countries at different stages of development to consider different Rules being more appropriate to different levels. It was appreciated, however, that these and other similar considerations had been before the Working Group on the Rules and would be reviewed again at a proposed meeting of the Working Group in November 1974. As to the alternatives to imprisonment, it was recognized that more needed to be done. One country had applied the penalty of a period of community service in lieu of imprisonment and other countries had greatly extended probation and parole systems. Nevertheless, much remained to be done.

41. Reordering any criminal justice system was a slow and sometimes painful process, during which time the evolution of the prison system could be supplemented more and more by different forms of treatment of offenders by and in the community. This was a period during which the Rules were particularly significant, however. The question of their proper implementation in relation to prison labour, vocational training, classification, segregation, family contacts, furloughs etc., remained of considerable importance to the authorities in every country.

42. "Conditional sentencing" without incarceration was being tried in many countries, with the offender being given the chance to retain his employment or to be sent to a type of "open settlement" for offenders where he could live and work in a restricted area but without armed surveillance. Such a prison régime was reported by some socialist countries as being a humane and efficient institution to rehabilitate those given relatively short prison sentences for minor offences.

43. The United Nations was requested to undertake a broader exchange of information on correctional practices in Member States in order to analyse their experience in search of better alternatives to imprisonment.

44. Some participants stressed the importance of the Standard Minimum Rules not only for the treatment but, particularly, for the rehabilitation of prisoners. It was agreed that while a major objective of the rehabilitation policies should always be the reintegration of the ex-offender in the society, the reintegration itself should be considered not as a policy of returning the offender to his "pre-delinquent" stage, but raising him to better human standards, thus making recidivism less probable. It was noticed that in this respect much depended upon the offender and his ability to mobilize his individual resources to bring himself back into the society.

45. Certain reservations were expressed regarding the rehabilitative potential of many offenders. It was noted that prisons alone will not be successful in rehabilitation of offenders. They only create preliminary conditions for the re-integration of ex-offenders. Active rehabilitative work should continue long after the offender was released from custody.

46. The meeting noted with satisfaction the decrease of prison populations in many European countries. It was considered to be due mainly to improved probation systems and more active community involvement in the practices of rehabilitation of offenders. While the concept of "normalizing" every prisoner was considered doubtful, participants felt that there was scope for "normalizing" prison régimes, prison staffs and prison-community relations. A recent conference held in London had stressed the need for ordinary wages to be paid to prisoners for the support of their families.

47. Some participants (Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, the German Democratic Republic) spoke of the elaborate system of economic remuneration for prison labour which was, in their experience, a powerful factor in the rehabilitation of criminals. In this respect the importance of work in prison for every prisoner was strongly emphasized. In some socialist countries prisons received requests for prison labour from large enterprises. When properly regulated and financially remunerated, this labour was a very effective means of re-socialization of prisoners. An example was given of one large factory in Bulgaria jointly undertaking the development of a small industrial unit for prisoners in its workshops.

48. The need for broader contacts between prisons and the outside world in terms of mobilizing public understanding and support for prisons was acknowledged and it was felt that the Rules could be more emphatic on this aspect. The use of prisoners in social work (with retarded children, disabled persons etc.) was reported by one country as being beneficial both to the community and the prisoners themselves. Public support should not be limited to co-operation with penal institutions. It should also mean society accepting the responsibility for the offender after he had been released. Society should view the imprisonment of criminals as a temporary isolation of "problem individuals" from the society to which they would sooner or later return.

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49. The differential use of imprisonment received special attention. Figures were given by several countries. One participant from Scandinavia reported that only one third of all criminal sentences pronounced in his country represented prison terms. Yugoslavia had prison sentences in only 10 per cent of all the court sentences pronounced. On the other hand, some countries with small populations had high rates of imprisonment but in general these were being reduced. The Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia had rates of about 80 per 100,000, but the Netherlands had reduced this number to less than 30 despite the fact that rising rates of crime in that country remained a problem. This underlined again the need for a search for alternatives to prison sentences. A more intensive international exchange of information on this issue was thought to be essential. Imprisonment itself could be preceded by rehabilitative activity starting immediately after sentencing in court. For example, the offender could be asked what time would be suitable for him to begin serving his prison sentence and, within reasonable limits, some delay might be allowed. If the offender's behaviour during his delay was good, his prison sentence could be shortened or conditions of his imprisonment eased. It was remarked that most European countries had abandoned life-long sentences and that these were now limited to a maximum of 15 years of imprisonment.

E. Economic and social consequences of crime: new challenges for research and planning

50. In dealing with this subject, the meeting endorsed the views of the preliminary meeting at Copenhagen and welcomed this subject as an agenda item.

51. Crime was a problem for the whole society, touching upon political, economic and social aspects of its functioning. It claims the attention of policy-makers, economic and social planners and those concerned with the research necessary for providing the data and the models for better socio-economic engineering. The professional approach to crime could hardly afford, at this time and at this stage of world development, to ignore the profound and widespread economic and social consequences of crime phenomena.

52. It was noted that the full social and economic costs of crime had never been adequately measured. One of the reasons might be that such costs were exceedingly difficult to calculate and their significance and value depended upon some very basic decisions as to the interpretation of expenditures not directly related to crime but with unquestionable effects (e.g., in mental health, child care, remedial education or in the relief of indigence) and on decisions as to the portions of police, court and administrative man-hours properly chargeable to the crime-prevention account. Apart from a few case studies and seminars organized in several countries, no general effort had ever been made to assess the real costs of crime in terms of damage: social, individual and economic.

53. The participants shared the view of the preliminary meeting at Copenhagen that behind the economically-minded calculators, there were sociologically-oriented interests seeking to set such goals for any society as:

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- (a) Minimizing the harm, damage and costs of crime in the widest sense of these terms and controlling them,
- (b) Equalizing within a society the distribution of responsibility for this harm and these costs, and
- (c) Developing agencies to collect the necessary indicators.

54. There was general agreement that evaluating the wider costs of crime was a relatively novel approach to the phenomenon of criminality and that it had to be studied more in depth so that discussion of this item at Toronto could be more meaningful. Participants felt that so far even the economic costs of crime had never been accurately assessed. Some studies and experiments recently made in Scandinavia had only managed to establish the fact that the economic costs of reported crime were probably higher than those of crimes unreported. The social consequences of crime were, of course, even more difficult to assess and could be extremely harmful. A definition of the concept of social and economic costs of crime was considered necessary so that it could establish certain criteria for the selection of the problems to consider. Some European countries have modified their laws to give a better account of the costs of crime. It was agreed that assessing the social and economic consequences of crime should become a new trend of criminal policy.

55. Some countries reported the use of computers to calculate the significance of crimes economically and demographically. Later the results obtained could be used for the better planning of criminal policy. Examples of such work were given. The distinction between macro- and micro-perspectives in viewing this problem, made in the discussion guide prepared by the Secretariat for this meeting, was generally acknowledged as valid. The participants felt that the European countries, most of them highly industrialized and developed, had a special responsibility towards the developing countries in this respect. By more accurately assessing the costs of crime, both economically and socially for society, they could give the developing countries an opportunity to learn from their experience and to benefit from their mistakes. The micro-aspects of careful evaluation could be particularly valuable and the difference of approaches to the costing of criminality in countries with different socio-economic systems could be explored profitably.

56. It was thought that research into the scope of the damage caused by crime could well be expanded. However, it was acknowledged that certain imponderables were involved, such as how the moral damage caused by crime could be assessed. Many crimes had consequences which were difficult to identify by methods of quantification alone. Obviously different types of crime needed to be assessed differently; crimes committed by first offenders and those committed by recidivists called for different criteria of measurement. The costs of crime would also need to be assessed, not only in terms of damage to society, but also in terms of personal damage to the criminals. Crime, in so far as it is a mass phenomenon, requires analysis and assessment by differentiated and highly specific techniques. Costing should be made with regard to planning prevention policy, improvement of methods of control and inventing new instruments of rehabilitation. All these forms of research should be co-ordinated.

Annex

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Title</u>
A/CONF.56/Misc.1	Discussion guide for regional preparatory meetings for the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
A/CONF.56/BP/1	Report of the Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting of Experts on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
A/CONF.56/BP/2	Report of the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting of Experts on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
ESA/SDHA/CPCJ/BP.1	Background paper for the European Preparatory Meeting of Governments on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

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