

GWI United Nations Representative Advocacy Report Vienna 2024

Meeting attended: (place, date, time, name of meeting)



Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) 33rd Session Vienna, 13-17/05/2024

Subject of meeting:

The 33rd Session of the CCPCJ took place 13-17/5 in Vienna. 128 member states, 1400 people, and 75 NGOs participated. More than 90 side-events were held. Elisabeth Francis represented GWI.

As the main policymaking body of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, CCPCJ plays a critical role in advancing collective efforts against national and transnational crime, while strengthening fair and effective criminal justice institutions.

At the 33rd Session, GWI co-sponsored two side events:

- 1) New forms of criminal acts against (and abuse of) older persons – a rapidly growing threat to vulnerable persons using ordinary and advanced communication.
- 2) The Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive for building a sustainable economy and society – challenges and opportunities.

Please see the separate report on these two events and others in which GWI participated.

The Thematic Discussion of the 33rd Session was on 'Promoting international cooperation and technical assistance to prevent and address organized crime, corruption, terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and other forms of crime, including in the areas of extradition, mutual legal assistance and asset recovery.' There was much discussion on developments, trends, challenges and good practices related to legal and operational aspects of international cooperation in criminal matters. Other points of focus included reviewing the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration; approving preparations for the 15th Crime Congress in Abu Dhabi in 2025; and taking forward the global agenda on cybercrime, environmental crime, human trafficking, and corruption.

4 resolutions were adopted:

- countering trafficking in persons in the context of rapid technological change;
- treatment of children associated with terrorist groups, including children who are recruited and exploited by those groups;

- reducing reoffending through rehabilitation and reintegration;
- preventing and countering violence against children by organized criminal groups and terrorist groups in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.



L – The CCPCJ Chair addresses the 33rd Session; C – Elisabeth Francis, right, at the CCPCJ with Ingeborg Geyer, the Chair of the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development and a UN Rep for Zonta International; R – Screenshot – International Co-operation in the Criminal Justice chain.

Keynote speakers at the High-Level Opening included:

- Dennis Francis, President of the UN General Assembly
- Ghada Waly, Executive Director of UNODC, Director General UN Vienna
- Ivo Šrámek, CCPCJ Chair

Ghada Waly said that ‘responding to the obstacles facing justice today is a challenge that no country can meet alone. At the operational level, cooperation across borders is crucial at every stage - from intelligence sharing for stronger detection, to law enforcement cooperation during investigations, to mutual legal assistance and informal judicial cooperation.’

The UNODC published a guide for the Thematic Discussion that gives good background on the legal bases for promoting international cooperation and illustrates the challenges in issues such as bringing perpetrators to justice / extradition, mutual legal assistance, targeting the proceeds of crime, involvement of the private sector, capacity building and the value and usage of regional and global cooperation networks.

Documentation for the 33rd Session is available under the following link. In addition to the guide for the Thematic Discussion, it includes interesting papers on wildlife crime, the high-level debate on ‘Equal Justice for All’ and multiple reports by the Secretary-General on related subjects including transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism.

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/33_Session_2024/documentation.html

Refers to SDG no #: (please reference)

All with particular reference to 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17. There was considerable focus at this Session on SDG 16.

Relevant treaties/conventions/resolutions:

Many, including the Kyoto Declaration, UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime; the UN Convention against Corruption; the international instruments to prevent and combat terrorism, Cites, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), etc.

Intervention by GWI rep: (what you did)

Please see my separate report on the side events that GWI co-sponsored and various others that I attended. GWI also participated in the Informal Dialogue with the UNODC Executive Director and other NGO related events.



L – A CCPCJ panel; R – UN General Assembly President, Dennis Francis, addresses CCPCJ

Personal observations:

- 1) Current international priorities are the fight against human trafficking / smuggling, renewed focus on criminal asset recovery, the need for additional investment in crime prevention (including environmental crime which is increasing 5-7% per year).
- 2) There was much emphasis on the need for the inclusion of youth in decision making. This is not just an option but a necessity. Decision makers should actively listen to young people – they can become real agents of change. Education continues all important in improving crime prevention – it can serve as a shield against crime / terrorism.
- 3) It is easy to say that there should be more international cooperation in criminal matters but in practice there is much difficulty and complexity as criminal actors and networks become increasingly adept at exploiting borders and jurisdictional gaps. The UNODC Guide for the Thematic Discussion is well worth reading.
- 4) CCPCJ covers so many issues of importance for GWI, for women and girls, and for all civil society. At this CCPCJ, side events covered subjects such as trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants; victim-centered and human rights-based policies; gender-based violence; crimes against vulnerable populations; women and youth empowerment and the role of civil society in criminal justice and crime prevention; crimes that affect the environment; cybercrime; transnational and organized crime; financial crimes; corruption; terrorism; strengthening international cooperation and technical assistance; capacity-building in criminal justice systems, including leveraging artificial intelligence; restorative justice; and reducing reoffending. Practically all governments are stressed in dealing with these issues, where criminal actors are more flexible, adroit and fast moving.
- 5) UNODC's Report on World Crime Trends and Emerging Issues illustrates current criminal challenges particularly with regard to homicide – defined as intentional killing, including murder, honour killing, serious assault leading to death, death as a result of terrorist activities, femicide, infanticide and extrajudicial killing – and where the latest data shows 'alarming levels'.
 - In 2021 there were about 458,000 victims of intentional homicide, or an average of 52 victims per hour – nearly one killing every minute. The highest number was recorded in Africa with an estimated 176,000, followed by the Americas with over 154,000; Asia with 109,000; Europe with 17,000; and Oceania with 1,000.
 - More violent deaths result from homicide than armed conflict (valid for last year of data i.e. 2021).
 - Women continue to be the population most at risk of deadly domestic violence, but men, mostly young men, remain the most likely victims and perpetrators of homicide.

- Most organized crime-related homicides worldwide are committed in Latin America and the Caribbean but evidence suggests that such homicides are increasing in Europe, largely as a result of the boom in illicit drug markets.
- A large young population, an increasing number of hot days and persisting inequality in Africa could exacerbate lethal violence.
- A depressingly high number of women continue not to feel safe in the areas where they live.
- Corruption is a key facilitator of crimes that affect the environment. Effective strategies to prevent, detect and disrupt corruption cannot be designed without accounting for the potential infiltration of corrupt actors everywhere in the supply chains and within industries. (Also see relevant side event)
- Existing data indicate minimal or no advancement since 2015 towards the achievement of Goal 16. Without intensified efforts, the global community is likely to fall short of attaining SDG 16, on peace, justice and strong institutions.

Next steps:(what needs to be done, who can we contact? Who did you network with?)

We will continue to follow up on crime / criminal justice issues of interest and relevance to GWI at various upcoming meetings.

NFAs or individuals with particular interest in crime and justice related issues are encouraged to be in contact – I would love to hear your views.

This was another busy CCPCJ for GWI, with our co-sponsorships of two successful side events and where gender related issues of importance to us continued to be in focus.

Elisabeth Francis
GWI UN Representative, Vienna