



GW I United Nations Representative Advocacy Report Vienna 2025



UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) 34th Session Vienna, 19-23/05/2025

Subject of meeting:

The 34th Session of the CCPCJ took place 19-23/5 in Vienna. More than 120 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 34th Session, GWI co-sponsored these side events:

- 1) Emerging Threats Against Women and Girls in the Digital Era: Artificial Intelligence and Gaslighting
- 2) Climate Crimes & GBV: Strategies to Raise Awareness, Prevent, and Combat Climate-Induced Gender-Based Violence
- 3) Guardianship Risks: How to Prevent Abuse
- 4) Family and Non-Family Non-State Torture, Human Trafficking, Femicidal Risks: A Victim-Centred Approach

Please see the separate report on these important side-events and others in which GWI participated.

The Thematic Discussion of the 34th Session was on 'Addressing new, emerging and evolving forms of crime, including crimes that affect the environment, smuggling of commercial goods and trafficking in cultural property and other crimes targeting cultural property.' There was much discussion on developments, challenges and good practices on emerging crimes and on organized fraud and cyber-crime.

Other points of focus included review of the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration; approval of preparations for the 15th Crime Congress in Abu Dhabi in April 2026; and taking forward the global agenda on cybercrime, environmental crime, human trafficking, and corruption. The UN Convention against Cybercrime was adopted by the General Assembly in Dec 2024.

Seven draft resolutions were considered:

- Advancing the global crime prevention agenda (Finland)
- Follow-up to the Fourteenth - and preparations for the Fifteenth - UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Chair, Japan and United Arab Emirates)
- Strengthening International efforts to disrupt the smuggling of migrants (United States of America)
- United Nations Model Strategies on Reducing Reoffending (the Kyoto Model Strategies) (Japan)
- Countering the smuggling of commercial goods in cases falling within the scope of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Colombia)
- Celebrating the Bangkok Rules and the Nelson Mandela Rules: a call for continued action in the field of prison and offender management (Thailand)
- Tackling crimes that affect the environment, in particular illicit trafficking in species of wild fauna and flora, and the illegal mining of and illicit trafficking in precious metals (Brazil)



L – CCPCJ in Session, C – Ghada Waly, Executive Director UNODC, Head of UN Vienna; R – Jose Antonio Zabalgoitia, CCPCJ Chair

Keynote speakers at the High-Level Opening included:

- Philemon Yang, Cameroon, President of the UN General Assembly
- Bob Rae, Canada, President of ECOSOC
- Ghada Waly, Executive Director of UNODC, Director General UN Vienna
- José Antonio Zabalgoitia, Mexico, CCPCJ Chair

Ghada Waly called on Member States to confront rising criminal threats with stronger cooperation and renewed investment. She highlighted surges in cybercrime, synthetic drugs, and crimes that affect the environment. ‘This is not the time to scale back global investment in crime prevention and criminal justice – both politically and financially,’ she stated. ‘We need our Member States to step up – with words, with actions, and with financing.’

Documentation for the 34th Session is available under the following link. In addition to the guide for the Thematic Discussion, it includes interesting papers on wildlife crime, reducing reoffending, preventing firearms-related GBV against women, the recommendations of the Global Youth Forum for a culture of lawfulness, online abuse or exploitation of children, world crime trends.

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/34_Session_2025/documentation.html

Refers to SDG no #: (please reference)

All with particular reference to 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17.

Relevant treaties/conventions/resolutions:

Many, including the Kyoto Declaration, UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; the UN Convention against Corruption; the Bangkok Rules, the Nelson Mandela Rules, the Firearms Control Act; the international instruments to prevent, combat terrorism; the Basel Convention, etc

Intervention by GWI rep:

Please see my separate report on the side events that GWI co-sponsored and various others that I attended. I also participated in the Informal Dialogue with the UNODC Executive Director and various other NGO related events and attended the opening of two exhibitions: on 'Silence' (Silent Violence) and on '15 years of the Bangkok Rules and the Nelson Mandela Rules'.

Personal observations:

1) Crime is evolving in unprecedented ways – crime prevention is a fast-moving target that is stressing law enforcement authorities, justice systems and international co-operation. These stresses are accentuated by cutbacks in funding, both nationally and internationally. The consequences of these new and emerging forms of crime are significant – and they impact women and girls badly.

2) Crimes that are not properly addressed have significant consequences for the rule of law, governance, national security and social / human health. Criminal networks take advantage of the lack of clear legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to operate with impunity. They are aided by corruption and lack of international co-operation. This is an issue in all countries. Again, it is women who suffer disproportionately – people trafficking, sexual abuse, cybercrime, environmental crime.



L – Philemon Yang, President of the General Assembly C – Speakers R – CCPCJ in Plenary Session

3) Education – and capacity building - continues all important in improving crime prevention. This is well recognized by young people themselves. Decision makers should actively listen to young people – they can become real agents of change. The Govt of Japan has been funding 'Global Youth Forums for a culture of lawfulness'. The recommendations from these Forums – with stress on the importance of education, the need to enhance digital literacy, inclusive and equitable access to AI and Digital Technologies – are well worth reading.

https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_34/ECN152025_CRP3_e.pdf

4) CCPCJ covers so many issues of importance for women and girls, and for all civil society. At this CCPCJ, for instance, side events covered such diverse subjects as: trafficking in persons (often women for sexual abuse); smuggling of migrants; victim-centred and human rights-based policies; scamming / fraud; gender-based violence, use of lethal weapons; crimes against vulnerable populations; the role of civil society in criminal justice and crime prevention; crimes that affect the environment; cybercrime; transnational and organized crime; corruption; illegal waste trafficking; terrorism; strengthening international cooperation and technical assistance; contamination of medicines; capacity-building in criminal justice systems, including leveraging AI; restorative justice; reducing reoffending; abuse of older persons. No wonder it is difficult for governments to get on top of all these issues, where criminals are so much more flexible, ruthless and faster moving.

5) The data on femicide continues to be shocking. Approx 51,000 women and girls were killed by their intimate partners or other family members in 2023 – in other words, an average of 140 women and girls lose their lives each day at the hands of those close to them.

<https://docs.un.org/en/E/CN.15/2025/11>

Next steps:

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

NFAs or individuals with particular interest in crime and justice related issues are encouraged to be in contact.

This was another busy CCPCJ for GWI, with our co-sponsorships of successful side events and where issues of great importance to women and girls globally continued to be handled and taken forward.

Please also refer to the report on side events.

Elisabeth Francis
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