

Concept Note for Ancillary Meeting at the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

World Congress for Community Volunteers Supporting Offender Reintegration

Organisers: Rehabilitation Bureau, Ministry of Justice, Japan
United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI)

Date: Sunday 7 March 2021

Time: 2:30pm - 6:00pm

Location: Room B-2, the Kyoto International Conference Centre

Background: Community support and partnerships involving the public and private sectors and civil society are critical to the prevention of reoffending and promotion of community reintegration. Notably, the importance of community volunteers providing support to offenders, particularly by means of regular dialogues and provision of advice as peer members of the community, is increasingly recognised.

The Volunteer Probation Officer (VPO) system in Japan is one of the most successful and practical models of such volunteers. This scheme has been adopted and developed under different legal and criminal justice systems throughout the world, particularly in Asia and Eastern Africa.

The concept of the VPO system, has however, been neither so well-known nor properly evaluated at the wider international level. Therefore, this World Congress at the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice offers a tremendous opportunity to highlight the growing importance of community volunteers and their role in the reintegration of offenders and the prevention of recidivism.

Furthermore, sharing and discussing the potential of the VPO and similar systems will also stimulate active discussion in the international community in future years about the essential role of community support in work with offenders.

Objective: The main objective of this World Congress is to provide participants with a platform to exchange views on the following:

- i) What is the core value of VPO system? What has contributed to the introduction and development of the system?
- ii) In countries which have not so far implemented a VPO system, how can they interpret the value of the VPO concept? What would be the pre- and current conditions to introduce a VPO system? How can they adapt the recognized value of the VPO concept to their

respective criminal justice systems? Is the VPO system applicable to those countries?

- iii) What are the differences between jurisdictions in the tasks and organisation of VPOs (and other volunteers or community-based support initiatives)? For example, the relationship with professional probation officers, extent of volunteers' participation in the probation system, motives for volunteering, and legal basis among other considerations.
- iv) How are questions like recruitment, selection, health and safety, training, and evaluation managed? Is there more scope to learn from each other? If so on what topics and how?
- v) In what direction should community volunteers be developed? Although each participating country has a different legal system and cultural background, are there any particular directions in the development of volunteers that can be identified?

By sharing the background and experience as well as the effectiveness and challenges of adopting the VPO or similar systems, participants can obtain a more profound understanding of the VPO concept and reflect on what the VPO concept can contribute to the development of their respective criminal justice systems. Furthermore, the World Congress will offer additional options, values and points of view regarding building an effective probation system on the basis of collaboration of both professionals and volunteers.

Format:

The World Congress for Community Volunteers Supporting Offender Reintegration consists of keynote speech and panel discussion followed by the adoption of the World Congress statement ("KYOTO Declaration on Community Volunteers Supporting Offender Reintegration").

After the **guest speech** by Dr. Nathee Chitsawang, Deputy Executive Director, Thailand Institute of Justice, Dr Frank J Porporino, Senior Partner, T3 Associates Training and Consulting Inc./ Former President, International Association for Correctional & Forensic Psychology presents the **keynote speech** on the future scope of community volunteers for reintegration of offenders (TBC).

Mr. Imafuku Shoji, Director General of the Rehabilitation Bureau of the Ministry of Justice, Japan, delivers an **introductory presentation** of a draft proposed World Congress statement, which is expected to be adopted based on discussions during the World Congress, in order to facilitate panellists' and participants' understanding of the concept of the World Congress.

The panel discusses the items listed in the objective above including re-evaluation of community volunteers, emerging trends and new challenges etc.

The **World Congress statement** is adopted after the panel discussion.

Outcome:

The World Congress statement scheduled to be adopted at the end of the meeting will be expected to make an impact on the legacy of the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The statement will initiate the concept “People can be rehabilitated but cannot be rehabilitated only by themselves. They need a community to support and accept their rehabilitation.” at the heart of an awareness of the problem. The statement will also reaffirm that community volunteers play significant roles in developing a supportive community which is understanding and hopeful for offender rehabilitation.



Room B-2

Programme (TBD)

2:30 pm - 2:35 pm	Welcome Remarks: Ms. Kamikawa Yoko (Minister of Justice of Japan)
2:35 pm - 2:40 pm	Opening Remarks: Ms. Ghada Fathy Ismail Waly (Executive Director, UNODC)
2:40 pm - 2:45 pm	Opening Video Message: Mr. Tanigaki Sadakazu (President of the National Federation of Volunteer Probation Officers of Japan)
2:45 pm - 3:00 pm	Guest Speech: Dr. Nathee Chitsawang (Deputy Executive Director, Thailand Institute of Justice)
3:00 pm - 3:15 pm	Keynote Speech: Dr. Frank J. Porporino , T3 Associates Training and Consulting Inc./ Former President, International Association for Correctional & Forensic Psychology (Video Message / Online)
3:15 pm - 3:30 pm	Introductory presentation on the proposal of a draft World Congress statement, "The Declaration on Community Volunteers Supporting Offender Reintegration": Mr. Imafuku Shoji (Director General of the Rehabilitation Bureau, Ministry of Justice, Japan)
Break	
4:30 pm - 5:55 pm	<p>Panel Discussion :</p> <p>Government officials or community volunteers of</p> <p>Canada , Ms. Jennifer Oades (Chairperson of the Parole Board of Canada)</p> <p>Japan, Mr. Imafuku Shoji (Director General of the Rehabilitation Bureau, Ministry of Justice) and Ms. Ando Ryoko (Volunteer Probation Officer)</p> <p>Kenya, Ms. Mary W. Mbau (Director, State Department for Correctional Services, Probation and Aftercare Service)</p> <p>The Philippines, Dr. Manuel G. Co (Former Administrator, Parole and Probation Administration, Department of Justice)</p> <p>Thailand, Mr. Vittawan Sunthornkajit (Director General of the Department of Probation)</p> <p>UK, Mr. Steve Pitts (Ambassador of the CEP)</p> <p>Presentation (6x10 minutes, 60 minutes in total) Discussion (30 minutes)</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Mai Naoko (Volunteer Probation Officer, Japan)</p> <p>Adoption of the World Congress Statement</p>
5:55 pm - 6:00 pm	Closing Remarks: Ms. Valérie Lebaux (Chief, Justice Section, UNODC)