

**Thirteenth United Nations Congress on
Crime Prevention and
Criminal Justice**

High-Level Segment

Statement by
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Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is an honour and pleasure for me to address the United Nations Crime Congress again and have the opportunity to discuss with so many of you the important topics surrounding crime prevention and criminal justice, the Rule of Law, human rights, and consequently, their impact on sustainable development for all of our societies.

Let me start by extending my sincere gratitude to the people and government of Qatar for generously hosting us here in Doha.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this year will mark a key date for international policy efforts for sustainable development as we transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals. Our discussions over the next few days will play a key role in shaping and sharpening the integration of crime prevention and criminal justice, including the fight against corruption, in order to address social, political, and economic challenges, and also to foster and enhance human and societal development, progress, and prosperity.

As the United Nations Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, outlined in his opening address to this Congress, “development and human rights depend on solid legal frameworks”. Crime prevention and criminal justice, along with a strong anti-corruption and Rule of Law component, are therefore essential ingredients and *conditiones sine quae non* towards greater equality and equity, fair and just societies, as well as peace and security.

The sustainable development agenda is ambitious yet achievable so long as we work together to turn the tide towards this common understanding, these common denominators.

It was at the 11th session of this Congress in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2005, that the first idea of a global anti-corruption institution arose; an institution that eventually became known as IACA, the International Anti-Corruption Academy; an institution to address deficiencies in anti-corruption and compliance regimes and to provide help for stakeholders seeking to strengthen them. The idea arose from an international Experts Group on Corruption (IGEC). Five years later, in 2010, I had the privilege to appear before this forum in Salvador, Brazil, to introduce its vision and the agreed way forward to implement it.

In March 2011 the vision turned into reality. IACA became an intergovernmental organization and has since managed to assert itself as a leading global player. Our commitment to the transformative command of anti-corruption education and empowerment as well as focus on areas in demand has already empowered hundreds of professionals and alumni from 125 countries.

We stand here today with 64 Parties and 53 Signatories, bringing together over 5 billion people. IACA's broad membership is not only an achievement in its own right but also an indication of the energetic dynamism of this organization. Let me thus renew our invitation to all UN Member States, which have not yet done so, to join our growing constituency and become Parties to the organization.

We are an observer to the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). Apart from these bodies and our own Assembly of Parties, our work has been recognized by the United Nations, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Organization of American States (OAS), and many more.

Since IACA's establishment, we have paid close attention to the implementation of the Salvador Declaration and the recommendations adopted by the Twelfth UN Crime Congress.

Advancing the goals of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and other international and regional legal instruments in training and empowering experts entrusted with upholding the Rule of Law has been, and remains, the cornerstone of our work.

Our present flagship Master in Anti-Corruption Studies (MACS), the first such programme in the field, will enter its third cycle this year. On 9 December of last year, International Anti-Corruption Day, we saw our first cohort of working professionals, coming from 13 different countries, ceremonially graduate.

Our Summer Academy and thematic capacity-building programmes continue to attract high numbers of participants from all over the world. We have successfully worked on public-private partnership projects with UNODC as well as on strengthening civil society with regard to the implementation of the UNCAC and its Review Mechanism.

We also offer tailor-made trainings in response to the unique challenges that stakeholders face in preventing and fighting corruption. What is more, we are preparing to launch a Master's programme on private sector anti-corruption, compliance, and collective action.

Nelson Mandela once said “education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Sustainable development begins with education. At IACA, we believe in bringing together professionals and experts of various backgrounds and empowering them so that they pass these lessons on through their work and act as multipliers in our common cause.

The capacity-building activities provided by IACA will subsequently contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This was *inter alia* also emphasized in a resolution unanimously adopted by our Assembly of Parties in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2014.

For detailed information, we invite you to join us at our side-event on Thursday, 16 April at 13:00, where we will present our capacity-building programmes, research, and networking projects in the fields of anti-corruption, compliance, and collective action.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates, I encourage you to contribute to our joint efforts to empower professionals in order to better prevent and combat corruption. The “Let crime pay principle”, endorsed in a resolution unanimously adopted by our Assembly of Parties in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2013 and first recognized by the UNCAC in its Article 62, can be one of the options for contributions to this effect. Member States may give special consideration to allotting a percentage of the money or a corresponding value of proceeds of crime or property confiscated to this cause.

Investing in anti-corruption education and empowerment is the smart and bright way towards sustainable development, safeguarding human rights, and strengthening the Rule of Law.

We could not be meeting at a more important time as we move to create a new, strong, responsive framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

I look at the vision of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the proposed Sustainable Development Goals with hope, in particular Goal 16. But I must also confess my concerns: *All* the universal goals run the risk of being severely undermined by corruption. Let us not forget: Corruption is the antithesis vis-à-vis human rights, the venom vis-à-vis the Rule of Law, the poison for prosperity and development, the reverse of equity and equality.

Anti-corruption, as a consequence, is the hallmark of any effective Rule of Law. I am positive that this Crime Congress stays committed in emphasizing the crucial role of crime prevention and criminal justice for combatting corruption, which affects all aspects of

development and seriously impairs sustainability. Specialized trainings, technical assistance, and academic research to this effect thus need to be understood as a core aspect of an effective and efficient crime prevention and criminal justice system, capable of upholding and promoting the Rule of Law and human rights in support of sustainable development and societal prosperity for all.

In conclusion, I pledge my full support to the Crime Congress and the UN Summit on the Sustainable Development Goals in New York in September and look forward to inspiring discussions over the next few days.

Thank you.