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Social and human rights questions: crime prevention and criminal justice

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 22 July 2021

[on the recommendation of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice ([E/2021/30](#))]

2021/22. Integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies

The Economic and Social Council

Recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹ and reaffirming also the cross-cutting nature of crime prevention and criminal justice issues and the consequent need to better integrate those issues into the wider agenda of the United Nations in order to enhance system-wide coordination,

Recalling the relevant United Nations standards and norms in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, including the Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime,² the guidelines for cooperation and technical assistance in the field of urban crime prevention,³ the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines),⁴ the updated Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,⁵ the United

¹ General Assembly resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

² Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/13, annex.

³ Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/9, annex.

⁴ General Assembly resolution [45/112](#), annex.

⁵ General Assembly resolution [65/228](#), annex.



Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,⁶ the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules)⁷ and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules),⁸

Recalling also its resolutions [74/16](#) of 9 December 2019, entitled “Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal”, [74/170](#) of 18 December 2019, entitled “Integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies”, and [75/18](#) of 1 December 2020, entitled “Sport as an enabler of sustainable development”, in which it recognized the role of sport in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁹

Recalling further the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Kyoto, Japan, from 7 to 12 March 2021,¹⁰ in which Member States committed to empowering youth to become active agents of positive change in their communities to support crime prevention efforts, including by organizing social, educational, cultural, recreational, sports-related youth programmes and youth forums, and recalling the outcome of workshop 3 of the Fourteenth Congress, on education and youth engagement as key to making societies resilient to crime,¹¹

Recognizing that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has affected youth, especially those who are in vulnerable situations, and that many of the hardships faced during the COVID-19 crisis in the fields of formal and non-formal education and well-being and health, including mental health, in addition to economic dislocations, are also known risk factors associated with crime, violence and illicit drug-related activities and are likely to expose youth to increased victimization and involvement with crime during and after the pandemic,

Acknowledging that the recovery from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lessons learned provide an opportunity for Member States to design strategies to overcome the crisis, to accelerate progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to foster economic growth and build back better, including by promoting a socially just transition to sustainable development and by supporting inclusive, multisectoral and coordinated approaches to youth well-being,

Noting that the shared challenges that States face in strengthening their economies amid a global pandemic present an opportunity for transformative approaches to crime prevention and renewed efforts involving the youth, sport and education sectors, in particular working with a range of relevant stakeholders, including, where appropriate, with the support of efforts to engage and foster partnerships with multiple stakeholders, including partnerships involving the private sector, bearing in mind the primary role and responsibility of Member States in that regard,

⁶ General Assembly resolution [69/194](#), annex.

⁷ General Assembly resolution [40/33](#), annex.

⁸ General Assembly resolution [70/175](#), annex.

⁹ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#).

¹⁰ [A/CONF.234/16](#), chap. I, resolution 1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, chap. VII, sect. C.

Recognizing the role that sport can play in building back better and in engaging youth during and after the pandemic, as highlighted in the joint United Nations advocacy brief entitled “Recovering better: sport for development and peace – reopening, recovery and resilience post-COVID-19”, published in 2020,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Sport: a global accelerator of peace and sustainable development for all”,¹² in which the progress made towards the implementation of the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace¹³ is reviewed and the role of sport as a catalyst of social and economic development, health and societal change in the post-COVID-19 landscape is highlighted,

Noting the memorandum of understanding between the Fédération Internationale de Football Association and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime signed on 14 September 2020, which provides a framework for cooperation between the two entities in the fields of using sport for youth development, preventing youth involvement in crime and illicit drug-related activities, and preventing and fighting corruption and crime in sport,

Recalling article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹⁴ in which States parties recognize the right of the child to leisure and to engage in play and in recreational activities, and convinced of the importance of preventing the involvement of children and youth in criminal activities by supporting their development and strengthening their resilience to antisocial and delinquent behaviour, and of supporting the rehabilitation of children and youth in conflict with the law and their reintegration into society, taking into account human rights and the best interests of the child,

Underscoring the role of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as the principal policymaking body of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention,

Acknowledging the Olympic Charter and that any form of discrimination is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic movement,

Taking note of the Kazan Action Plan, adopted at the sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport, convened by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in Kazan, Russian Federation, in July 2017, in which the educational, cultural and social dimensions of sport and physical education are promoted, including in the context of the 2030 Agenda,

1. *Reaffirms* that sport is an important enabler of sustainable development, and recognizes the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development, justice and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities, as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives, in line with the relevant Sustainable Development Goals;

2. *Expresses its gratitude and appreciation* to the Government of Thailand for hosting the expert group meeting on integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies, convened by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Bangkok from 16 to 18 December 2019;

¹² A/75/155/Rev.1.

¹³ See A/61/373.

¹⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

3. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretariat on the outcome of that expert group meeting,¹⁵ at which good practices were identified and recommendations made on the effective use of sport to reduce youth crime and violence;

4. *Encourages* Member States to ensure that the necessary safeguards for participants are included in the design and implementation of sports-based crime prevention initiatives in order to prevent and combat sexual harassment, abuse and violence against children and youth in sport;

5. *Calls upon* Member States, as well as relevant stakeholders, to support and encourage relevant domestic authorities at all levels, including in local contexts, in the creation of safe spaces for sports and physical activities and in the provision of equal access to sports facilities for all youth;

6. *Emphasizes* the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective into sports-based crime prevention programmes and the need to provide a wide range of safe and accessible sports programmes for women and girls that reinforce their empowerment and gender equality;

7. *Also emphasizes* the importance of respecting cultural diversity in implementing sports-based crime prevention programmes;

8. *Welcomes* the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, particularly its efforts to support Member States in integrating sport into crime prevention and criminal justice strategies promoting a multisectoral and holistic approach to crime prevention, including through the development of tools and the provision of technical assistance in the context of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration: Towards the Promotion of a Culture of Lawfulness, and in disseminating information and good practices on the use of sport for youth crime and violence prevention, building on global research and on lessons learned;

9. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue promoting sports-based interventions in the context of youth-oriented, multisectoral and holistic approaches to the prevention of crime and violence, including by formulating strategies aimed at comprehensively addressing the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of all types of crime and violence and by supporting Member States' efforts in this regard, also in partnership with other relevant United Nations entities;

10. *Also requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue supporting Member States, through technical assistance and the development of tailored guidance materials, with regard to the effective use of sport in the context of the rehabilitation and social reintegration of offenders, in prison and community settings, the empowerment of girls, the prevention of gender-based violence, and the safeguarding of participants in sports and sports-based interventions, in particular individuals in vulnerable situations, including children and women, from violence and abuse;

11. *Encourages* Member States to integrate sports-based interventions into crime prevention and criminal justice strategies and programmes with a view to addressing risk factors of crime and victimization, including during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, when possible and with adaptations such as proactive programme elements providing learning and social support for youth, particularly in schools and educational institutions, investing in capacity-

¹⁵ [A/CONF.234/14](#).

building of trainers and facilitators, promoting an inclusive and participatory approach, ensuring safeguards for participants in sporting activities and maintaining the sustainability of such activities by engaging partners from multiple sectors;

12. *Calls upon* Member States, with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to strengthen community-based support measures for youth to address risk factors of crime and violence, and encourages Member States to provide sports and recreational facilities and programmes so as to promote the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of youth crime and the social reintegration of young offenders, also in the context of public safety strategies, enhancing the use of sport as a tool for the development of safe public spaces for young people and local communities to positively interact and develop;

13. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in line with its mandate, in consultation with Member States and in collaboration with other relevant organizations and agencies, including relevant civil society organizations, to develop a compilation of best practices in relation to sports-based crime prevention programmes, as well as to provide, upon request, advice and support to policymakers and practitioners, including on research, monitoring and evaluation;

14. *Invites* Member States to consider the development of clear policy frameworks within which sports-based initiatives can be integrated into crime prevention and criminal justice strategies and programmes, and to operate to effect positive change in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, to prevent recidivism through sports and, in this regard, to promote and facilitate effective research, monitoring and evaluation of their own national initiatives and relevant international initiatives, including gang-related initiatives, to assess their impact;

15. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, within its mandate, to strengthen its cooperation and coordination with relevant United Nations entities that have sports-based programmes and interventions, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and with the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, and, in close consultation with Member States, to strengthen its cooperation with relevant international, regional and national sports organizations such as the International Olympic Committee and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, so as to continue to support activities enhancing the contributions of sport to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on youth and community development aimed at addressing the risk factors of youth violence, crime and illicit drug-related activities and promoting a healthy lifestyle to prevent risky behaviour while facilitating access to comprehensive drug demand reduction services and related measures, as appropriate, and at fostering social inclusion, peace and just societies, also through joint programmes and awareness-raising campaigns in the context of major sporting events, and to keep the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs updated about the progress made in this regard;

16. *Invites* the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, within their mandates, to consider including in their work programmes the issue of integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice in order to contribute to building the knowledge base in this regard, as well as to provide, upon request, advice and support to policymakers and practitioners, including on research, monitoring and evaluation, while noting the efforts of Member States to achieve the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets;

17. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to provide information on the implementation of the present resolution as a contribution to the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session on the implementation of its resolution [75/18](#) on sport as an enabler of sustainable development;

18. *Invites* Member States and other donors to provide extrabudgetary resources for these purposes in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations.

*13th plenary meeting
22 July 2021*