

**Opening Remarks by  
H.E. Ms. Paula Narváez, President of ECOSOC**

**Side event on the substantive preparations for the 15th  
UN congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

**7 November 2023, 1:15 – 2:45 p.m.**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Crime, in all its forms, undermines the very foundations of sustainable development, hampers economic growth, erodes social cohesion, and perpetuates inequality. We must confront crime head-on and integrate crime prevention, criminal justice, and the rule of law into the broader sustainable development agenda.

Crime prevention and criminal justice are cross-cutting issues that require multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaboration. Governments, civil society, the private sector, and international organizations must join forces to develop effective policies, invest in prevention, and promote inclusive and participatory approaches. These efforts must also ensure that in a context of rapid digital growth, the responsible use of technologies in crime prevention and criminal justice is prioritized.

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice – one of the subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC and follow-up body for the UN crime congresses – plays a significant role in shaping international policy and promoting multistakeholder debate on crime prevention and criminal justice. It has a crucial task to reiterate the importance of the rule of law in achieving the SDGs. At the same time, the Congress will enable the international community to work towards promoting economic prosperity, social well-being, and environmental sustainability.

The challenges of political governance in developing states highlight how the values sustained in SDG16 have become more relevant than ever. We have to take advantage of the upcoming 12th session of the HLPF Forum, in which we will undergo an in-depth review of Goal 16. We must push for stronger commitments towards promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice for all and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. During these challenging times in which conflict continues to prevail, the HLPF will place a spotlight in this cross-cutting goal. We invite all stakeholders to take this opportunity as a call to action to strengthening the rule of law and protecting human rights, paving the way for the achievement of all SDG's.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The 15th Congress, with its theme of "Accelerating crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: protecting people and planet and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the digital age," aligns perfectly with our aspirations for a just, inclusive, and sustainable world, presenting an invaluable opportunity to strengthen collective efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

I look forward to working with you all in strengthening our commitment to crime prevention, criminal justice and sustainable development.

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