United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network: Providing Information to and from Developing Countries

A Resource Book

Richard Scherpenzeel and Gerald Quirchmayr, Editors

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FOREWORD

To the extent that the modern age may be called the era of telecommunication, the management and exchange of information, including the establishment of databases, have become essential to work in this field.

The United Nations has attempted to keep abreast of these developments by offering assistance to Governments in adapting the criminal justice system to the changing information environment. The establishment of the United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network (UNCJIN) and the United Nations On-line Crime and Justice Clearing-House (UNOJUST) have assisted Governments and related agencies with the dissemination of information, and have helped to link interested entities into one community in the field of criminal justice administration.

I am truly honoured that the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea hosted the United Nations Interregional Training Course entitled "United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network: Providing Information to and from Developing Countries", organised in cooperation with the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division, United Nations Office at Vienna, and held at the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office, Seoul, 9 - 13 September 1996.

We are confident that the Training Course conveyed to the participants the importance of improving national level information management and of sharing information outside national boundaries. In addition, I am confident that the Training Course offered an important opportunity for strengthening international cooperation in the field of criminal justice management. Further, it was a great opportunity to introduce the recent developments of the Republic of Korea in criminal justice information networking.

Still, what is most significant is that the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea , in cooperation with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division, publishes this Resource Book, which contains the lectures and the course material presented at the Training Course.

I am sure that this Resource Book will act as a small catalyst for relevant officials from all over the world and as a basis for suggesting directions for them to go. Furthermore, I have no doubt that these efforts will be a momentous step for "justice through information".

On behalf of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, Mr. Eduardo Vetere, Officer-in-Charge of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division, and the officers of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division. I also wish to thank the lecturers who instructed the trainees despite their busy schedules, and the officials of the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office for their contribution to the preparation of the Training Course. Lastly, I thank Mr. Richard Scherpenzeel and Mr. Gerald Quirchmayr for their extra-ordinary cooperation in the publication of this Resource Book.

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Seoul, Summer 1997

PREFACE

This Resource Book, edited by Dr. Richard Scherpenzeel and Prof. Gerald Quirchmayr, is the result of the Interregional Training Course "United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network: Providing Information to and from Developing Countries" (Seoul, Republic of Korea, 9 - 13 September 1996).

The offer to host this course was made by the Government of the Republic of Korea at the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (Cairo, Egypt, 29 April - 8 May 1995)[1].

At that Congress, five demonstration and research workshops were held, including one on "International Cooperation and Assistance in the Management of the Criminal Justice System: Computerisation of Criminal Justice Operations and the Development, Analysis and Policy Use of Criminal Justice Information", organised, in collaboration with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division, United Nations Office at Vienna, by the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations, HEUNI (Helsinki, Finland), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, UNICRI (Rome, Italy), the Office of International Criminal Justice, University of Illinois at Chicago, OICJ (USA), and the Ministry of Justice of the Netherlands.

This Congress workshop represented the long standing interest of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme in the question of computerisation of criminal justice information. As a result, many successful initiatives at both the international and domestic level have been undertaken. Serious effort has been made to take advantage of newly available information technology to strengthen the capacities of governments to collect, process and exchange information and data on crime and justice developments.

In this technological age, the strategies and initiatives implemented by governments are heavily influenced by four concerns:

• increased economic interdependence within a global market economy;

I. a demand for increased participation in international activities;

I. increased emphasis on issues of social justice, and;

I. increased communication, including the exchange of information and data.

One of the primary objectives of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme is to narrow the information gap between the developed and developing world in an attempt to allow all governments to address the concerns noted above.

To this end, the United Nations is in, perhaps, a unique position to assist Governments in

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[1] Report of the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, doc. A/CONF.169/Rev. 1, chapter IV, para. 64.

developing their capacity to collate, manage and disseminate information at both the national and international levels. However, as stated during the Twelfth Meeting of the Group of Experts on Public Administration and Finance, which convened at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 31 July to 11 August 1995, "there has been universal acceptance that the basic capacity of Governments to absorb development assistance and to integrate such assistance into ongoing government activities is very much dependent upon the management capability of government institutions and personnel."

In 1995, a special session of the United Nations General Assembly was devoted to the question of public administration in the world.

More recently, in July 1996, the Economic and Social Council, dealt with the similar question in its resolution on "International Cooperation in the Field of Informatics: The Need to Harmonise and Improve United Nations Informatics Systems for Optimal Utilisation and Accessibility by all States". In that resolution the Council reiterated "the high priority it attaches to easy, economical, uncomplicated and unhindered access for Member States of the United Nations and for observers, (...) to the growing number of computerised database and information systems and services of the United Nations". The Council stressed also "the continuing need for representatives of States to be closely consulted and actively associated with the respective executive and governing bodies of United Nations institutions dealing with informatics within the United Nations system, so that the specific needs of States as internal end-users can be given due priority".

In the same month, on the recommendation of the fifth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Vienna, 21-31 may 1996), the Council adopted resolution 1996/11 of 23 July 1996, entitled "International Cooperation and Assistance in the Management of the Criminal Justice System: Computerisation of Criminal Justice Operations and the Development, Analysis and Policy Use of Crime and Criminal Justice Information". In that resolution, the Council, emphasising the common problems faced by all Member States in the administration and computerisation of criminal justice, urged them and other entities involved in this question to establish an advisory steering group to assist Member States, at their request, in developing mechanisms for the "establishment of a platform for the exchange of information between distinct entities able to provide information and experience useful for the management of the criminal justice system".

Most recently, at the recommendation of the sixth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Vienna, 28 April-9 May 1997), the Economic and Social Council adopted a resolution entitled "Strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme with regard to the development of crime statistics and the operations of criminal justice systems". This resolution, inter alia, notes with appreciation the training course on which this Resource Book is based and welcomes the offer of the Governments of Argentina and the Netherlands to support the formation of the advisory steering group by offering to host regional and/or interregional meetings on the above subject.

As noted in that resolution, the United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network (UNCJIN) and the United Nations On-line Crime and Justice Clearing-House (UNOJUST) are essential to the implementation of related projects and are discussed in the text that follows. In addition, strategies for the management of information are described while acknowledging the legal, social, and cultural implications of information technology in the criminal justice system.

For the first time in the history of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, due to the generosity of the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Programme had the opportunity to offer direct training to several criminal justice officials from the developing world who are entrusted by their governments to implement the use of computerisation in the management of their respective criminal justice systems.

This Resource Book is based on the contributions of several experts, who at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Korea and the United Nations Secretariat, originally served as resource persons and lecturers at the training course. Those individuals include Dr. Richard Scherpenzeel (Ministry of Justice, The Netherlands), Professor Gerald Quirchmayr (University of Vienna, Austria), Professor Graeme Newman (University at Albany, USA), Dr. Andrej Adamski (Nicholas Copernicus University, Poland), and Mr. G. Martin Lively (National Institute of Justice, United States Department of Justice). We are grateful to them for their continued support of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme.

I hope that the managers will draw on this resource and find it useful in helping to establish humane and efficient criminal justice systems.

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Vienna, Summer
1997

Editors' Notes

presented at the Interregional Training Course "United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network: Providing Information to and from Developing Countries", held at Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 9 - 13 September 1996.

We are grateful to the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Korea for hosting the course and providing us with a state-of-the-art computing facility, to the Crime Prevention and Criminal justice Division, United Nations Office at Vienna for organizing the course and having the faith in us to edit this important Resource Book, and to the colleagues who acted as resource persons and lecturers at the Training Course for their contributions to this publication. The views expressed by t he authors of chapters of this Resource Book do not necessarily represent the positions of institutions with which they are affiliated. Finally, allow us to thank Ms. Dena Patterson, University of Michigan, for her assistance in editing the text.

The purpose of this volume is twofold:

I. To present the results of the Interregional Training Course to the international community, in the hope that it will be used as a reference source;

II. To allow the Training Course to serve as a model for similar endeavours to be undertaken in other interested Member States.

The text has been written in a user-friendly format, which presumes that the audience has only a basic awareness of the application of computers in the administration of criminal justice. Where applicable, technical and specific terms that have been introduced in the text are explained in the Glossary of Selected Terms.

This Resource Book draws on United Nations publications and documents related to computerisation of criminal justice information, in particular, the "Background Paper for the Workshop on International Cooperation and Assistance in the Management of the Criminal Justice System: Computerisation of Criminal Justice Operations and the Development and Policy Use of Criminal Justice Information"[1], and the "Guide to Computerisation of Information Systems in Criminal Justice"[2].

Richard Scherpenzeel   Gerald Quirchmayr
The Hague   Vienna

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[1] Report of the Secretariat, A/Conf.169/13, Rapporteur R. Scherpenzeel.

[2] United Nations publication, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/58, Sales No. E.92.XVII.6.