



## **INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION**

### **STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL, Ms JAN BEAGLE**

#### **14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

7 - 12 March 2021

Kyoto, Japan

Mr. President,  
Executive Director Waly,  
Excellencies,  
Colleagues and Friends,

It is an honour to address the Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on behalf of the International Development Law Organization.

As the only international intergovernmental organisation dedicated to promoting the rule of law and access to justice, IDLO was an early advocate for SDG 16.

We work to promote its essential contribution to sustaining both peace and development in over forty countries globally, including in some of the most fragile and challenging environments.

Mr. President,

The current session is dedicated to “advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law” and their contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

Allow me to share three insights from IDLO’s work relevant to your deliberations.

First, we have seen in complex contexts, such as the Sahel and Somalia, that effective laws and justice institutions can play an important role in preventing conflict and sustaining peace.

Research from the World Bank and other sources shows that insecurity exacts a heavy toll on development, and that poverty is becoming increasingly concentrated in fragile and conflict affected settings.

By fairly resolving disputes, promoting peaceful collaboration, and reducing crime and violence, justice systems can help break the cycle of violence that holds back the development potential of countries and individuals.

Supporting effective, accountable and accessible criminal justice institutions in such contexts, is therefore critical to the achievement of the SDGs.

My second point is that the criminal justice system is key in tackling corruption, which diverts funds from essential services and initiatives, undermines confidence in public institutions, and is a major impediment to sustainable development.

IDLO works in countries as diverse as Armenia, Bahamas, the Philippines and Ukraine to promote integrity and transparency of justice institutions and strengthen their ability to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate offenses related to corruption.

COVID-19 has dramatically aggravated both the scale and impact of corruption, as countries mobilize and disburse significant emergency relief and recovery funding.

Ensuring that this support is put to its intended use, and benefits those who need it most, will be essential in rebuilding people's trust in governance and laying the foundations for a more just, equitable and sustainable recovery.

My third and final point is that while COVID-19 has dramatically exposed underinvestment and weaknesses in the functioning of the justice sector, it also inspired adaptations and innovations.

Over the past year, IDLO has supported its partners to mitigate the impact of the crisis on justice systems and justice seekers through approaches including virtual legal aid hotlines, digitized case management systems, leveraging Alternative Dispute Resolution and customary and informal systems, and adopting restorative approaches to corrections.

Applied equitably, these and other "justice innovations" have the potential to transform criminal justice systems, increasing transparency and efficiency, while expanding access to previously excluded groups.

Mr. President,

IDLO welcomes and endorses the Kyoto Declaration.

We look forward to further expanding on our cooperation with member states, the UN system, and other partners towards its implementation, as part of our shared commitment to realise the 2030 Agenda.

Building a culture of justice requires time, effort and sustained commitment. It is the best investment we can make in our collective future.

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