

**COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT
(CSTD)**

**Twenty-fourth session
Geneva, 17 to 21 May 2021**

**Submissions from entities in the United Nations system, international
organizations and other stakeholders on their efforts in 2020 to
implement the outcomes of the WSIS**

Submission by

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 24th session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

UNODC inputs to the Secretary-General's report on progress made in 2020 in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

Part One

Education for Justice (E4J) initiative

Under UNODC's Education for Justice (E4J) initiative, a component of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, the Office, in 2020, diversified educational resources and continued to develop and disseminate tools in different parts of the world. These resources and tools support children and youth to learn about challenges they might encounter while using ICT. As such, the material developed helps children and youth understand the risks they may face online and how they could use ICT to advance peace, justice and sustainable development.

Judicial Integrity component of the Global Programme on the Implementation of the Doha Declaration

The Judicial Integrity component, in the context of its leading outcome - the Global Judicial Integrity Network, has continued to produce significant amounts of judicial-integrity content and use all possible channels of communication to disseminate it, such as the Network's dedicated website, websites or newsletters of partner organizations, social media, online events, e-learning platforms or podcast platforms. In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the need for the use of ICT-based solutions has been intensified and the component has been extensively engaged in the organization of webinars and other formats of online meetings and consultations. The substantive content of the work of the Network also touches upon numerous relevant issues, such as the use of social media by judges, the ethical considerations of the use of artificial intelligence in judiciaries or open justice and transparency.

Counter-terrorism:

UNODC delivers capacity-building assistance that varies from the provision of legal assistance to training on highly specialized technical aspects regarding the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of terrorism-related cases, including how to utilize digitization and other technologies to facilitate their work, in order to prevent radicalization, recruitment and training of terrorists through the Internet. While countering terrorists' use of the Internet has always been prominent on the counterterrorism agenda, it has re-surfaced as one of the top priorities by way of COVID-19. This is due to Member States' increased vulnerability to cybercrime and cyber-attacks. Considerable emphasis must be placed on practical measures to counter terrorist narratives and disrupting terrorism incitement, recruitment and radicalization online.

Organized Crime

UNODC continues to develop and expand the [SHERLOC knowledge management portal](#). In 2020, SHERLOC has grown to include more than 3,000 case summaries of organized crime and terrorism prosecutions and more than 10,000 annotated extracts of legislative provisions. SHERLOC also contains databases of treaties, national and regional strategies, bibliographic extracts as well as competent national authorities for international cooperation. Cybercrime resources are included among the 15 different crime types covered by SHERLOC, and these resources are rapidly expanding. SHERLOC also hosts UNODC's Practical Guide for Requesting Electronic Evidence Across Borders, a password protected publication which provides practitioners with best practices, information about legal procedures, and contact points to assist with requesting and producing electronic evidence needed for trial.

The Office is also developing an issue paper on the role of online intermediaries in preventing and combating illicit trafficking, with a focus on online trafficking in wildlife, falsified medical products and cultural property. Additionally, UNODC is producing a case digest of prosecutions of cyber organized crime, which will provide an overview of cyber organized crime threats and examples of law enforcement, prosecutorial and judicial responses thereto from around the world. Both publications build on, and contribute to, legal materials contained in SHERLOC.

The Conference of the States parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto adopted at its tenth session, held from 12 to 16 October 2020, resolution 10/1 that launches the review mechanism of the Convention and its Protocols. The secretariat was tasked with developing a new browser-based software that allows States parties to carry out country reviews

completely through the use of the platform. The software is at its final stage of development and is expected to be available to users in December 2020.

[Research on trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and technology](#)

UNODC is currently working on a research paper on trafficking in persons and technology which will be presented in connection with the 2020 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons. The research is based on court cases of trafficking in persons, which has been shared with UNODC by Member States and addresses how traffickers apply information and communications technologies to perpetrate their crime, and assesses the volume, trends and patterns of the crime. Furthermore, in continuation of the Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants, launched in June 2018, UNODC has continued to work on a real-time observatory on smuggling of migrants that will gather information on technology usage among smugglers and smuggled migrants.

[Research on illicit crop cultivation and alternative development projects](#)

UNODC has been working on a number of initiatives related to monitoring illicit crop cultivation and alternative development, including impact assessments of alternative development projects using remote sensing imagery; research on global estimates of the number of households cultivating illicit crops worldwide, including through the use of machine learning for calculating yields of illicit crops; and use of strategic maps for decision-making of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and uses of data collection software for socio-economic field surveys.

Part Two

[Education for Justice \(E4J\) initiative](#)

Bearing in mind the interconnected nature of the Sustainable Development Agenda, and the reinforcing relationship between Goal 16 and the other Goals, the Education for Justice (E4J) initiative of UNODC's Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration has been addressing, through its activities and its various resources and tools, some of the Goals and their related Targets. Goals 4,5, 8, 16 and 17 are reflected in several of the educational resources of the E4J initiative, as well as in its ongoing work and activities. The resources and tools developed under the E4J initiative were enhanced by the knowledge and input of a wide array of stakeholders from governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, as well as, children and youth.

[Judicial Integrity component of the Global Programme on the Implementation of the Doha Declaration](#)

The Judicial Integrity component embeds all its work in the SDGs, in particular goals 5, 9, 16 and 17. Through its work on the Global Judicial Integrity Network, it continuously strives to improve channels of communication, create meaningful partnerships and engage the Network participants through online consultations, events and the creation of widely applicable and thought-provoking content, such as podcast episodes, videos or written opinion pieces.

[Counter-terrorism](#)

The legal assistance and technical capacity-building delivered by UNODC on countering the use of the Internet by terrorist groups for recruiting, financing or promoting the violent extremist ideology leading to terrorist acts, as well as on preventing terrorist attacks on digital infrastructure, supports the progress towards achieving SDG 16. To that end, UNODC, along with other relevant UN entities, undertakes targeted assistance projects and actively contributes to the work of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, where a 'one-UN' approach to countering terrorist narratives on social media and in the Internet at large, as well as on preventing terrorist attacks on digital infrastructure, are addressed.

COVID-19 restrictions have also increased the urgency in many States to transition to new technologies to support the continuation of criminal justice processes and to build their efficiency in the long term. UNODC has been actively supporting Member States with these efforts which include the digitization of case files, case management systems, the use of remote hearings or witness testimony, and upgrading their capacity to submit and track mutual legal assistance requests.

[Research on trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and technology](#)

The research on trafficking in persons and technology gathers information from over 30 Member States. In connection with the preparation of the research, one Expert Group Meeting, gathering leading global experts on technology and trafficking in persons, was held in Vienna in 2019 to review emerging findings and verify the main conclusions. The research contributes to the implementation of SDG targets related to trafficking in persons (5.2, 8.7 and 16.2).

The Observatory on Smuggling of Migrants involves primary data collection in West Africa, North Africa and Europe. One of the data collection methods involves interviews with migrants and law enforcement professionals to understand recruitment practices by smugglers in their use of ICTs. Moreover, one Expert Group Meeting is scheduled for 2021, which will gather global experts on data science, criminology and migrant smuggling to explore applications of big data analytics in the further study of migrant smuggling in digital contexts.

[Research on illicit crop cultivation and alternative development projects](#)

With regard to impact assessments of alternative development projects using remote sensing imagery, UNODC has been, since 2017, annually monitoring the changes in opium poppy areas (using remote sensing) and socio-economic conditions (using socio-economic questionnaires) in communities targeted by alternative development projects of UNDP in Afghanistan. Alternative development projects aim to provide legal sources of livelihood to farmers to voluntarily cease illicit crop cultivation. The impact assessment constitutes a collaboration between UN agencies to improve the evidence of the efficacy of alternative development.

The Office has also been conducting research on global estimates of the number of households cultivating illicit crops worldwide and has used machine learning for calculating yields of illicit crops. UNODC has used a combination of remote sensing, field socio-economic surveys and national agricultural and non-agricultural census to estimate the number of households cultivating illicit crops at national level and worldwide. This information helps stakeholders to understand the number of households who need support to transit from an illicit to a licit economy. UNODC has also started to use a combination of remote sensing and machine learning methods to enhance the calculation of yields of illicit crops, which are used for the estimation of the production of illicit crop drugs (e.g. opiates and cocaine).

Part Three

[Education for Justice \(E4J\) initiative](#)

The E4J initiative continued to involve youth, as well as other relevant stakeholders, in utilizing the benefits of ICT to propose innovative ideas for educational resources and materials through organizing various hackathons for secondary level students (aged 13-18). This culminated in the launch of an innovative pilot programme, called Justice Accelerators, which seeks to promote the use of ICTs to promote the rule of law, integrating entrepreneurship training for youth. Another example is UNODC's 'Lockdown Learners', a special series of free-of-cost, interactive dialogues with students and educators in India on topics pertaining to the SDGs, peace and the rule of law. With a special focus on engaging economically disadvantaged students and educators from rural and low-income groups, the series has applied innovative approaches to reach students with limited internet access, for instance by interacting with groups of students through WhatsApp, using voice notes, other audio recordings and images.

Moreover, peer-reviewed material to support lecturers teaching at higher education institutions on issues related to ICT, ethical use of ICT, rule of law and prevention of cybercrime, have been developed. Furthermore, an online knowledge portal, the E4J Library of Resources was populated with additional material using ICT to increase access to relevant educational resources on the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 4, 5 and 16. On the E4J online portal, material to support educators to teach on rule of law related issues can be downloaded free of charge and is also included in the E4J online library. Various educational videos targeting primary and secondary level students have been developed and disseminated by E4J using ICT. These videos are preventive in nature and aimed at raising awareness and fostering critical thinking of children and youth on issues related to the rule of law, as well as on promoting the safe use of

the Internet. Finally, E4J developed a mobile telephone application to educate secondary level students on rule of law issues, as well as additional animations for secondary and primary students.

Judicial Integrity component of the Global Programme on the Implementation of the Doha Declaration

The Judicial Integrity component has continued to maintain and populate the dedicated website of the Global Judicial Integrity Network with new materials. The website features an extensive pool of resources on judicial integrity, including several knowledge products and tools developed by the Network on important integrity-related issues, such as the use of social media by judges or gender-related issues.

The package of Judicial Ethics Training Tools continues to be a popular tool among judiciaries, with currently over 60 jurisdictions committed to rolling out training activities based on the package as the official training sites. The e-learning course of the package is also available on UNODC's Global e-Learning Platform, and has been increasingly popular among judges, particularly during the ongoing pandemic.

One of the key purposes of the Global Judicial Integrity Network is to create networking and experience-sharing opportunities for judges and judiciaries. In 2020, in light of COVID-19, the component has increased the number of events organized in a virtual format, such as a series of webinars on various aspects of judicial integrity, with a focus on new challenges for judges and jurisdictions worldwide. In order to promote multilingualism, these webinars are organized in a number of UN languages, often with the possibility of various language breakout rooms. The Network also continues to collect resources and address topics that are of relevance to the present report, such as the ethical considerations of the use of artificial intelligence in the judiciary, the use of social media by judges or open justice and transparency.

Counter-terrorism

In 2011, UNODC launched the Counter-Terrorism Learning Platform (CTLP) – an interactive tool designed to provide tailor-made online training to counter-terrorism practitioners, as well as strengthen cooperation between law enforcement and criminal justice actors worldwide. With the help of the Platform, a global community of counter-terrorism practitioners has been created, exceeding 3,070 members from 135 countries. The tool has also been used extensively for capacity-building purposes, with UNODC having trained 2,192 practitioners through 36 online training courses and 133 real-time online discussions on a variety of counter-terrorism issues. In light of COVID-19, UNODC transferred, where possible and appropriate, the delivery of its counter-terrorism technical assistance to its CTLP. As part of these efforts, UNODC developed new tools to offer tailored services to better accommodate to Member States' counter-terrorism needs.

UNODC also delivers, through targeted projects, capacity-building assistance on specific technical aspects of the investigation of terrorist activity in the digital space. One example of this is cross-border access to electronic evidence in terrorism cases. The Office sought to tackle this challenge through building the capacity of Central Authorities in preserving and obtaining electronic evidence in cross-border investigations for counterterrorism and related organized crime. This resulted in the production, together with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the International Association of Prosecutors, of the Practical Guide for Requesting Electronic Evidence Across Borders, as well as the delivery of a series of activities on mutual legal assistance and electronic evidence. In 2020, UNODC initiated efforts to update the Practical Guide through a virtual Expert Group Meeting. Another project, focusing more broadly on the prevention and investigation of terrorist crimes involving the use of Internet, is currently implemented by UNODC in Sahel and North Africa, with similar activities implemented in Southeast Asia, and builds the capacity of practitioners to investigate and prosecute Internet-related terrorist offences in the aforementioned regions.

Research on trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and technology: Both research activities have the potential to broaden the understanding of how crime and technology overlap in global societies. Further action centres on expanding the research agenda on these types of crime and technology and deepening the analysis. In addition, both research activities promise to provide evidence-based guidance for national, regional and global policies aimed at curbing smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.