



20 May 2015 – Running until 22 May, the [24th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice](#) (CCPCJ) is addressing migrant smuggling, the challenges of foreign terrorist fighters and violence against women.

Taking place in Vienna, the 24th Session attracts around 1,000 representatives of Member States and civil society and includes around nine draft resolutions, more than 30 side events and a series of exhibitions.

Urging action to prevent migrant smuggling

In his opening speech to the Commission, Mr Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\)](#), stated that [migrant smuggling](#) is a tragedy that cannot continue.

He emphasized that since he heard the original news about migrants dying when their boats sank in the Mediterranean, “thousands more migrants and refugees have died all over the world, on treacherous journeys to reach their destinations, often at the hands of criminal smuggling groups.”

In tackling this, he noted the importance of the [UN Organized Crime Convention](#) , in particular its Protocol dealing with migrant smuggling. This instrument, he noted, “seeks to prevent and combat migrant smuggling, promote cooperation to this end and protect the rights of smuggled migrants. In order to achieve this, the Protocol requires States Parties to make migrant smuggling a criminal offence.”

Violence against women and girls ‘shames every society’

Mr Fedotov also voiced concern over the continued killing of women and girls, issuing a strong call to end such acts.

“Violence against women and girls, in all its many forms, shames us all,” he said.

According to UNODC, women and girls continue to be killed in large numbers worldwide. In 2012, for example, at least 43,000 women were murdered by their intimate partners or family members.

In addition to this, hidden from our view, are the dreadful daily experiences of violence that blight the lives of women and girls.

UNODC is working to unravel the gender bias that has been woven into many legislations and criminal justice systems, and which perpetuates impunity for these violent acts.

Addressing the challenges of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF)

The Commission is also engaging with the extent of the involvement of FTF in [conflicts and acts of terrorism](#) today, which is unparalleled.

With a variety of terrorist groups recruiting foreign nationals, the threat posed by terrorism now includes not only end-target countries, but also countries of origin and transit.

UNODC reports that it is assisting countries in strengthening their criminal justice systems and enhancing international cooperation to address the transnational dimension of the FTF phenomenon. This is underpinned by a [new global initiative](#) , launched last March.

Noting the challenges to be confronted – e.g. terrorist recruitment, financing and training – Mr Fedotov emphasized: "In this way we can seek to disrupt terrorist plans and operations before they happen."

More information

Consult UNODC's website to learn more about [various types of crime](#) as well as [crime prevention and criminal justice](#)

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