

14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice  
(Kyoto Congress)

Opening Statement by Prime Minister Suga

It is my great honor to address the Kyoto Congress in the gracious presence of Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado and to greet all the distinguished delegates from all over the world.

Excellencies, distinguished participants, I would like to warmly welcome you all to Kyoto.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to UN Secretary-General Guterres for joining us virtually, live from New York, as well as to all other online participants.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to Executive Director Waly and to the staff of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for their dedication and effort towards holding this Congress despite various difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The unprecedented crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused serious problems, including the grave threat of cyber-attacks and online fraud around the world. We will never tolerate these crimes as they dishearten those who have been enduring the crisis and prevent the world from overcoming the pandemic and moving toward recovery.

A “safe and secure society” is a precondition for achieving social and economic recovery. The international community needs to work together to strengthen efforts in crime prevention and ensure a criminal justice system that is fully functional even amidst the COVID-19 crisis.

Japan values multilateralism and is determined to demonstrate its strong leadership in building a post-COVID-19 international order. Japan will actively contribute to resolving challenges the world is facing in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.

The rule of law is the bedrock needed for us to build a “safe and secure society.” Over the years, Japan has been making advances in international cooperation towards the promotion of the rule of law.

Let me give an example. As part of the “Judicial Affairs Diplomacy (Shiho Gaiko)” initiative, Japan has supported the capacity building of criminal justice professionals in 139 countries and regions around the world through the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI), jointly operated by Japan and the UN.

In addition, Japan has been supporting developing countries in drafting basic laws and establishing foundations for effective operations of their legal systems, all the while respecting each country’s own initiatives and autonomy.

The “Kyoto Declaration” has just been adopted, and it advocates the promotion of the rule of law for sustainable development and international cooperation for the realization of a society free from crime. We must steadily implement this declaration starting today.

Building on its previous efforts and continuing its partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Japan will play a leading role in the implementation of the “Kyoto Declaration” and strongly support Member States in this regard. We will spare no effort to achieve inclusive, “safe and secure societies” with “no one is left behind”.

I would like to conclude my remarks by expressing my sincere hope that this Kyoto Congress will contribute to further strengthening international cooperation in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. I also strongly believe that this Congress will contribute to laying the foundations for the “building back better” of our economies and societies.