
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

It is with pride that the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI) offers to the international community the Resource Material Series No. 100. This volume contains the work product of the 163rd International Training Course, conducted from 18 May to 23 June 2016. The main theme of the 163rd International Training Course was *Children as Victims and Witnesses*.

For over 25 years, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has set global standards to ensure the protection and safety of children by requiring that States Parties, when taking actions that impact children, do so in the best interests of the child. Although these principles are universally accepted, violence against children remains a worldwide problem. When children are victimized, it is all too common that they experience secondary victimization through participation as victims and witnesses in legal systems that are designed for adults. To fully implement the standards set forth by the Convention and to protect the best interests of child victims and witnesses, criminal justice practitioners should become familiar with the global issues and trends of violence against children. Moreover, practitioners should develop strategies for improved detection and reporting of violence against children, enhance skills in child-sensitive forensic investigation techniques and identify channels for international cooperation in the fight against child abuse, trafficking and violence of all forms.

UNAFEI, as one of the institutes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network, held this Course to explore various issues that relate to children as victims and witnesses. This issue of the *Resource Material Series* contains papers contributed by one of the visiting experts, selected individual-presentation papers from among the participants, and the Reports of the Course. I regret that not all the papers submitted by the participants of the Course could be published.

I would like to pay tribute to the contributions of the government of Japan, particularly the Ministry of Justice, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, and the Asia Crime Prevention Foundation for providing indispensable and unwavering support to UNAFEI's international training programmes. Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all who so unselfishly assisted in the publication of this series.

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