

THE CURRENT SITUATION OF CRIME ASSOCIATED WITH URBANIZATION: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED AND COUNTERMEASURES INITIATED IN THE PHILIPPINES

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the Philippines, urbanity is viewed with the combined concept of size, density and the presence of certain institutions associated with an urban lifestyle like a town hall, church or chapel, public plaza, park or cemetery, market place, buildings for trade activities and public buildings like schools, *puericulture* and a health centre and library.

Demographic studies reveal some common characteristics of urban communities: (1) a heterogeneity of cultures with concomitant differences in beliefs and behaviours; (2) differences among group members, with relationships between persons restricted to specific needs; (3) increased mobility, impersonality and anonymity; and (4) people who vary in age, race, ethnicity, norms and values. These are predisposing factors that breed urban criminality.

Comparatively, crime rates are higher in poorer neighbourhoods and in areas with higher population density, deteriorated living conditions and many unemployed members of the labour force.

Following the pattern of other countries, rapid urbanization, industrialization and migration to the cities are major factors that contribute to higher crime rates in Philippine urban centres. Urban blight in the country is essentially a result of the sudden unprecedented exodus of people from rural to urban areas. Progressively increasing difficulties in rural areas, exacerbated by the natural and man-made calamities that the country continues to experience have resulted in massive migration to the cities. In-migration, alongside natural population increase, accounts for the burgeoning urban population and the disparate rise of primate cities like Metro Manila.

This unplanned urbanization likewise heightens the observable rural-urban disparities in growth. This strains resources and creates problems in the internal city and metropolitan area. With the development of the economy through industrial investments and with infrastructure support concentrated in big cities like Manila, Cebu and Davao, labour, capital and entrepreneurial talents from the peripheries have been attracted to the centres.

These inequalities in resources, opportunities, power and access to social status rewards create alienation and frustration, and develop into pockets or subcultures of violence, which lead to crime. Most criminologists, rightly or wrongly, also attribute urban crimes to the lack of sound crime prevention planning and the apathy of the community towards involvement in anti-crime campaigns.

Urbanization in the country has affected the structure and functions of the various social institutions - the family, economy, polity, religion and education. Industrialization and modernization have led to the diminished functions of the family. Economically, urbanization has worsened poverty. This is further aggravated by unemployment, underemployment, a decrease in real wages due to persistent inflation and uncontrolled migration. The labour market remains unable to fully absorb fresh graduates and migrants. The lack of job opportunities have forced many to work abroad, leaving many children and youths under the care and guidance of a single parent or a relative.

Uncontrolled migration has led to the proliferation of slums, squatter areas and sidewalk shops. It is

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estimated that in Metro Manila alone, 5.48 million or 61.2% of the eight million population are squatters. The urban poor are also beset with high cost of living, financial difficulties, unstable jobs, lack of capital, limited educational opportunities, inadequate health and sanitation, and shortage of housing. National and local government planners and implementers therefore face increasing demands for urban services like public transportation, garbage collection, piped water, electricity, schools and health facilities.

Deterioration of living conditions in urban areas has produced its share of juvenile delinquency, drug dependency, prostitution, mental illness, physical disability, suicides, family and personal disorganization, environmental degradation, pollution, garbage and sewerage disposals, traffic jams and congestion, conditions that create fertile breeding grounds for crime.

It is also interesting to mention the nature and pattern of urban crimes in the Philippines culled from statistics and victimization studies. The most recent of which is the 1996 International Crime (Victim) Survey conducted by the United Nations International Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the Crime Prevention and Coordination Service of the National Police Commission in Manila from February 1996 to May 1996. The study shows that the bulk of urban crimes are crimes against property. Crime statistics from 1990 to 1995 showed that among index crimes, crimes against property or econogenic crimes (e.g. robbery and theft) were most common.

Noteworthy, too is the fact that the recent victimization survey reveals crimes against property have the highest rate of victimization. Victimization rates for the last five years yielded that the most number of victimization is recorded under personal theft, followed by robbery, then by burglary. Most of the thefts were committed elsewhere in the city or within the local community. The majority of robbery cases were committed in the homes of the victim's and several near their residences. About half of the victims do not know the offender(s). The most common items taken by burglars are cash, cell phones, appliances (audio and video equipment), pieces of jewellery, wristwatches, and clothing.

II. PHILIPPINE CRIME SITUATION

Before governments are able to respond fully to threats of crime, they must first have a firm grasp of the situation. Government, particularly crime prevention planners, must be informed of concomitant factors in the commission of crimes and other important data for them to responsively address the problem.

A. National Crime Situation

Crime volume is the number of crime incidents per 100,000 population. Total Crime volume for the last four years has been fluctuating. It registered 80,108 in 2000, 76,991 in 2001, 85,776 in 2002 and 83,704 in 2003. For the period January to November 2004, the total crime volume registered is 8.5% lower compared with the same period last year. Out of the total crime volume, 55% are index crimes and the rest are non-index crimes.

In terms of crime rate, the 7.84 crime rate per 100,000 population for January to November 2004 reflected a decrease of 10.2% compared with the 8.73 crime rate for the same period in 2003. There is also a decrease of 1.3% in the overall crime solution efficiency, from 91.19% in January to November 2003 to 90% in January to November of 2004. Total crime volume was highest in the National Capital Region (NCR) comprising 23.2% of the total crime volume nationwide. Crimes in the metropolitan area were prevalent in the highly urbanized cities of Quezon, Manila and Caloocan.

Index crime volume from January to November of 2004 was recorded at 39,400. This year it is 39,126 which shows a 0.70% reduction. Among the classification of index crimes, 57% are crimes against persons and 43% are crimes against property. Among the 17 regions, NCR registered the highest index crime volume. Index crimes (murder, homicide, physical injuries, rape, robbery and theft) were widespread in Quezon City, Manila and Caloocan City.

The theft volume last year was figured at 9,033, while this year it exhibited an upsurge to 9,892 incidents of an increase of 9.5%. For the same period, non-index crimes reduced by 16.5% compared with last year. Among the regions NCR registered the highest in Quezon City, Caloocan and Manila.

B. Crimes Associated with Urbanization

In the Philippines, there are a number of crimes directly related to urbanization that pose serious concern for the government and civil society, foremost of these are street crimes, illegal drug trafficking, robbery and theft, violent crimes against women and children, and terrorism.

1. Street Crimes

The phenomenon of street crimes seem to include almost all acts punishable by law that are committed on the streets. These seem to cover all types of crimes such as a person gunned down due to a traffic altercation, which constitutes murder; peddling of illicit drugs on the streets or using them as in the case of wayward youth sniffing solvents in open view of people; rape in vacant lots or dark alleys; kidnapping while walking or travelling by car; highway robbery of armoured vans and similar vehicles; theft of parked cars; assault/threat; swindling; vagrancy; and prostitution.

From March to November 2004, street crime volume declined by 32.12% as it registered a total of 11,336 against 16,699 of the previous year. The NCR remained the highest nationwide with 3,979 or 35.10%.

In Metropolitan Manila, illegal drugs incidents were highest in Caloocan City, Ermita and Pasay City. Physical injury cases were notable in Manila particularly in the commercial areas of Raxa Bago and Ermita. Robbery cases were rampant in Pasay, Ermita and Tondo. Theft incidents were widespread in Manila and Quezon City.

For CY 2003, a total of 17,337 crimes against property were recorded. This figure decreased by 4% compared with 18,054 incidents in the previous year. Crimes against property account for 40.5% of the index crime volume nationwide and 20.7% of the total crime volume. Theft cases comprise 57% of the total crime against property for the 4th quarter of 2003 while robbery incidents account for 43%. For 2003, NCR recorded the highest number of crimes against property with 6,580 followed by Region 7 then by Region 4-A.

Statistical reports gathered from police stations show that Robbery cases recorded in CY 2003 decreased by 2.2% from 7,708 cases in CY 2002 to 7,536 cases in CY 2003. Robbery comprises 17.7% of the index crime volume nationwide and 9% of the total crime volume. The highest number of robbery cases was reported in the National Capital Region with 2,978 cases, with Region 7 coming in next with 1,562 and Region 13 with 68 cases.

There were 9,801 theft cases recorded. The figure reflects a decrease of 5.3% compared with the previous year. Theft constitutes 23% of the index crime volume nationwide and 11.7% of the total crime volume. Among the regions NCR recorded the highest number of incidents followed by Regions 7 then 10.

Countermeasures

The Philippine National Police (PNP) is exerting every effort to reduce the incidence of street crimes such as robbery, hold-ups and theft, particularly in Metro Manila and other highly urbanized areas, through heightened police visibility and patrols, vigilance activities in cooperation with the community including increased community relations activities. The Police presence on the ground was intensified through the implementation of the Community-Oriented Policing System (COPS).

The concept of the Community Oriented Policing System was launched in 1993 by the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) and the Philippine National Police through the project Police-Patrol Lingkod Bayan. It was institutionalized in 1994 through a PNP Memorandum by making it one of the key result areas of their National Strategic Action Plan. The passage of Republic Act 8551, otherwise known as the PNP Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998 further strengthened the COPS as it mandates the PNP to be a community and service-oriented agency.

In order to ensure uniform appreciation and implementation of COPS the Law Enforcement Pillar of the NAPOLCOM Technical Committee on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice formulated a Manual of Operation. Also, a series of training sessions and dialogue for COPS implementors were conducted at the regional level in all of the regions nationwide from the years 2000-2003. At the end of 2003, there were more than 4,310 COPS-Kababayan Centres established nationwide.

Through the COPS, police conduct day and night mobile and foot patrols especially in crime prone areas

like shopping malls, market places, public utility vehicles including the Light Railway Transit (LRT) and the Metropolitan Railway Transit (MRT), banks and parks.

In the last semester of 2004, the NAPOLCOM through the Law Enforcement Pillar conducted a Monitoring and Evaluation Survey/Study on the Implementation of COPS and randomly selected 1st class cities and municipalities in the NCR and in the representative regions of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The survey/study will attempt to find out the efficiency, effectiveness and equity of the COPS.

Police action has also been targeted at crimes of priority concern through the creation of elite Task Forces. The National Anti-Kidnap-for-Ransom Task Force (NAKTF) was activated to combat kidnap-for-ransom gangs with the Police Anti-Criminality Emergency Response (PACER) providing main operational support. The drive against car-napping was quite successful with the implementation of LOI SANTUGIS along with the combined operations of the Traffic Management Group (TMG) and other regional and operating units. Meanwhile, LOI ROULETTE Milenyo and OPLAN JERICHO were implemented to fight illegal gambling.

Oplan PAGLALANSAG was implemented to address the problems of loose/unregistered firearms. At the same time, there is a proposal to create the Inter-Agency Task Force on Small Arms and Light Weapons (TF-SAWL) to respond to crimes of arms smuggling. Bank robberies decreased with the implementation of LOI ABR-SOTF (Anti-Bank Robbery Special Operations Task Force) and the strengthening of the Joint Anti-Bank Robbery Action Committee (JABRAC).

The Department of Interior and Local Government, the NAPOLCOM and the PNP, through the assistance of the Foundation for Crime Prevention, an NGO, established a national police hotline for emergency calls. *Emergency 117* is a centrally managed and secured telephone central monitoring station provided by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) and operated by qualified well-trained personnel from the PNP, Bureau of Fire (BFP), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and PLDT. Telephones used by EMERGENCY HOTLINE 117 are equipped with the caller ID system to prevent prank calls and ensure quick confirmation and response to emergency calls.

All emergency calls are reported by dialling 117. An *emergency call* is a call that refers to an incident or a situation where a person's life or property is in danger or threatened. *In-progress calls* are where crimes are being committed at the time of the report. Incidents to be reported include accidents with injuries; attempted suicides; rescue calls; ambulance calls; persons injured or bleeding; fire calls; strangers forcibly entering a house; strangers carrying household articles; someone trying to gain entrance to homes; a group of persons with weapons preparing to fight; vehicles stopping to pick up a person under protest, especially children; shooting incidents; stabbing incidents; armed robberies; and rape.

The *PNP SMS (Text) Hotline* makes use of the penchant of the Filipino to use the technology of the short message sending (SMS) or text messaging. The PNP text Hotline was initially focused on marketing itself as an avenue for citizens to report erring police personnel. Presently, people can also report through SMS any police, fire and public safety emergency.

Likewise, as part of the PNP's forward thinking, the *Satellite Police Stations* were introduced in 2003. There are a total of 395 Satellite Police Stations established nationwide which serve as flexible tactical units for responding to calls for assistance. The most number of SPS are activated in highly urban areas like Region 7 with 218, Region 1 with 45 and Region 8 (Tacloban) with 43. A total of 9,830 police officers and personnel have been trained and deployed for these quick-response units.

2. Illegal Drug Trafficking

The illicit drug trade now poses a grave threat to national security. The Philippines has become a manufacturing centre, processing *shabu* in clandestine and not-so-clandestine drug laboratories, even in Metro Manila. Not only have illegal drugs been linked to the commission of violent crimes, but they have also been strongly connected to the continued existence of threat groups in the country today. Illegal drugs have spawned other big-time crimes such as money laundering and kidnapping-for-ransom.

It was observed that foreign nationals are involved in almost all the big-volume seizures of illegal drugs

by government law enforcement authorities. For the first quarter of 2004, seventeen foreign nationals were arrested. Confiscated from them were 297.53 kilograms of Methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu, 7.60 grams of marijuana resin, 7.21 grams of marijuana fruiting tops, 4 pieces of ecstasy tablets and 392 capsules of Bangkok pills. Nine transnational and 164 local drugs groups were identified to be operating in the country. Out of the 164 local drug groups identified, 16 groups were already neutralized thus, 148 local drug groups and 9 transnational drug groups remain as a target for neutralization.

Countermeasures

Republic Act No. 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, was signed into law on June 7, 2002 and took effect on July 4, 2002. The new law signals an intensive and unrelenting campaign against the trafficking and use of dangerous drugs and other similar substances through an integrated system of planning, implementation, and enforcement of anti-drug policies, programmes and projects. It defines more concrete courses of action for the anti-drug campaign and imposes heavier penalties on offenders. It likewise reorganized the Philippine drug law enforcement system, with the Dangerous Drugs Board as the policy-making and strategy-formulating body on drug prevention and control and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) as the implementing arm of the Board.

To complement such structural reforms in the area of drug law enforcement, equal focus was given to the effective prosecution and disposition of cases, rehabilitation of drug offenders, and the mobilization of the community as active partners of the four pillars of the Criminal Justice System in the prevention and control of illegal drugs. Pursuant to the Presidential Directive to consolidate the nation behind the war against illegal drugs, a series of Conference-Workshops on Coordinating and Integrating the Criminal Justice System Towards Effective Drug Prevention and Control was conducted to coordinate and integrate the efforts of government, especially practitioners of agencies under the newly enacted Comprehensive Drug Law of 2002, in the criminal justice system including law enforcers, prosecutors, members of the judiciary, correctional officers and the private sector, for a more effective anti-drug campaign.

Problems relating to the government's campaign against illegal drugs include, among others, the increasing number of drug and drug-related cases at the level of the prosecution and the courts and the resultant further clogging of dockets, the congested jails due to the growing intake or admission rate of drug offenders, and the growing pressure on the part of the rehabilitation centres to provide treatment and after-care programmes and services were discussed during the conference.

The DDB prepared a "*National Drug Abuse and Control Strategy*". The plan presented a diagnosis of the problem and discussed the chain linking production, processing, trafficking, financing, retailing and consumption of drugs. It also recommended government strategic concepts which focused on supply reduction and demand reduction.

3. Violent Crimes against Women and Children

Women and children are vulnerable segments of the population in almost all parts of the world. Incidences of violence committed against these sectors of the population impede the achievement of objectives of development and peace. Violations committed against women and children both infringe the enjoyment of basic human rights and fundamental freedom. The most pervasive form of gender-based violence against women is reported to be abuse by husbands or intimate partners. Sexual assault is also common, but only a small fraction of rapes are reported to the police.

Based on police records physical abuse is the most common violation committed against women. Incidences of sexual abuse and emotional abuse likewise are increasing. Statistics also showed that sexual abuse, specifically attempted rape, constituted the bulk of cases of violence against children that were reported to the PNP. Physical injuries came in second.

Meanwhile, children in especially difficult circumstances or those needing special protection are estimated at 2.9 million. Children in this situation are either physically, sexually or emotionally abused; exploited sexually and in hazardous labour conditions; in conflict with the law; and victims of other forms of abuse like drug abuse, drug sales, child trafficking and abduction. A total of 5,692 incidents were reported to the WCCD categorized as crimes committed against children in 2004.

Countermeasures

The Philippine government is a signatory to all United Nations declarations and conventions that pertain to women, particularly violence against women, and has gone much ahead of other countries in coming up with very specific measures to address it. Since 1986, it has been actively and consciously promoting issues concerning women including gender equality, a policy that aims to eradicate gender-based inequalities and enable women and men to equally contribute to and benefit from development.

On the legislative front, the passage of laws relating to violence against women, the Anti-Rape Law of 1997 or R. A. No. 8353, and the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 or R. A. No. 7877, and most recently, the law against violence inflicted on women in intimate relations, constitute some of the landmark achievements in the advancement of women rights in the Philippines. To some extent, this legislation redefined the view of the justice system on gender-based violence thereby freeing women and children from the fear of injustice. There are still other pending bills in Congress against trafficking in human beings, particularly women and children, domestic violence and prostitution.

In addition to legal reforms, institutional reforms and new programmes were undertaken by the government to prevent violence against women and children. An Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) on Violence against Women has been organized by the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) to better protect the rights of women especially the most vulnerable, such as women in detention, women in situations of trafficking and prostitution, women workers, as well as victims and survivors of violent incidences. Aside from the NCRFW, agencies included in the IAC are the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Civil Service Commission (CSC), Department of Budget Management (DBM), Department of Education (DepEd), DILG, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), NAPOLCOM, PNP, Department of Health (DOH), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of National Defence (DND), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), National Statistics Coordinating Board (NSCB), and the Philippine Information Agency (PIA).

The PNP has also established the Women and Children Concerns Desks in police stations nationwide to provide specialized services to victims of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC). The Department of Health has 44 hospitals with Women's and Children's Protection Units. The DSWD created Crisis Intervention Units and implemented regular programmes for women and children in especially difficult circumstances in all regions in the country. The NBI has set up one-stop-shop VAW desks. Community-based programmes have been strengthened to respond to the needs of the victims and their families. These include providing psychosocial interventions and various forms of educational, legal, and medical assistance, as well as extending support services including livelihood programmes to families, and strengthening the family system and values education.

Despite these initiatives, violence against women and children continues unabated because of the weakness in addressing the root causes, as well as lapses in the response mechanism. A more concerted effort and a sustained campaign and advocacy programme on women and children's rights should be organized. There is a need to exercise more political will to enforce and implement existing laws on women and children and for the government to build up stronger cases against their abusers. Likewise, there is the urgency of training law enforcers, judges, prosecutors and media practitioners in handling cases of women and children.

4. Terrorism

Prior to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the US, the Philippines has been actively involved in various moves to combat terrorism. As early as 1996, when the country hosted an international anti-terrorism conference, the Philippines had already emphasized the importance of information exchange as well as the need for enhancing legislation against terrorism. In a subsequent policy statement on terrorism made on September 26, 2001, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo declared the Philippine government's intention to work closely with the US on intelligence and security matters concerning terrorism and prevent the flow of funds to terrorist groups through the Philippines.

The President likewise directed the National Security Council (NSC) to undertake a special intelligence coordinating project to consolidate all overt and covert, domestic and international, sources of information

relevant to the country's response in the war against terrorism. Currently, there is no specific law on terrorism in the country. While there are, at present, two pending bills on terrorism in the Philippine Congress, the immediate passage of a law on terrorism is the most urgent concern at the moment.

Countermeasures

The *Three-Tiered Defence System* is the PNP's basic action framework against terrorism, with three distinct phases or components: *Intelligence*, *Target Hardening* and *Incident Management*. This Three-Tiered Defence System rests solidly on community partnership and the involvement of the entire society. Local Government Executives (Mayors, Governors) take the lead role. A *Legal Offensive* boosts the three-tiered defence system, wherein the Department of National Defence/Armed Forces of the Philippines, Department of Justice and the Commission on Human Rights shall assist in the investigation, documentation and prosecution of all terrorism-related cases. Terrorism is a criminal act in all its stages and during its life. As such a legal offensive cuts across the entire Three-Tiered Defence System. Aside from preventing the incident from happening and arresting suspects, putting the terrorist behind bars requires more elaborate profiling, documentation, scientific examination, and building a criminal case that can withstand judicial scrutiny and pass the standards of due observance of human rights. The Three-Tiered Defence System utilizes the synergy of partnerships involving people, police, local government leaders and all other concerned sectors.

C. Causes of Crimes Associated with Urbanity

The phenomenon of urban crimes could be attributed to a host of factors that are economic, social, political and even moral or spiritual in nature. Among these are:

1. Poverty

Many authorities in the field of criminal justice say that poverty is a major cause of crime. This is not of course to say that it follows that a person who wallows in wealth cannot be a criminal. Many crimes are committed even by the rich. Furthermore, many people mired in poverty, have remained respectable and exemplary citizens. It is evident that poverty *Per Se* is not the only reason or cause but it is a major predispositive factor.

Nonetheless, the problem of massive poverty is the primary breeding ground or root cause of crime in countries similarly situated as the Philippines. Its concomitant deprivations and hardships are unemployment, underemployment, low income and productivity, malnutrition, big families, rapid population growth rates, and low standard of living. Crime rate appears to be notably higher in poorer neighbourhoods and in areas with high population density, deteriorated living conditions and unemployment problems. People resort to crimes on the street to alleviate or escape from their miseries and frustrations or to answer a need. Illustrative examples are parents who sell their children to paedophiles or a father who resorts to robbery just so he could buy medicine for his sick son.

The urban poor are also plagued by among others, the high cost of living, financial difficulties, unstable jobs, lack of capital, limited educational opportunities, inadequate health and sanitation, and inadequate housing. National and local government planners and implementers therefore face increasing demands for urban services like public transportation, garbage collection, piped water, electricity, schools, health and transportation. A deterioration of living conditions in urban areas has produced its share of crime, juvenile delinquency, drug addiction, prostitution, mental illness, physical disability, suicides, family and personal disorganization, environmental degradation, pollution, garbage and sewerage disposals, and traffic jams and congestion.

2. Lost Family Values

Today as the country becomes more and more industrialized, there is an evident loosening of family ties - the family gets together less and less as a group, with all members present, except during special events. Each member of the family has his own schedule of activities, his own interests, his own friends. All these factors prevent family members from having opportunities for cooperative activity, preventing the development of strong personal relationships.

Several family values that promote and nurture solidarity and love within the family, such as respect for and obedience to parents, have been eroded and polluted by modernization. The Western culture is making

widespread and deep-seated inroads into Philippine society through modern communications and the mass media. These lost family values result in many broken homes or families. As children are separated from their parents or reared by single parents, they go wayward and become misguided. Many become addicted to prohibited drugs, unwed and/or separated parents and eventually become criminals or victims of crime.

3. Working Mothers

The employment and exodus of women from the home where mothers like me have to be employed, some out of necessity others to augment the family income, have somehow contributed directly or indirectly to the commission of crimes.

At times, the frequent absence of the mother weakens the fundamental relationship with children resulting sometimes in feelings of insecurity and rejection that lead to maladjustments.

4. Ignorance

The majority of our population do not know many of our laws and the repercussions they face once they commit violations thereof. They do not know many of their rights, the due process of law and many other related matters. In fact, many of our hapless folks do not know what democracy is all about and how they can make it work. This results in a "crisis" of citizenship characterized by widespread apathy, indifference, "spoon-feeding" syndrome, or lack of discipline and self-restraint. This affects both the criminals and victims alike in many ways. Because of their scanty legal knowledge and lack of awareness of its repercussions, many criminals, especially first offenders, readily perpetrate crimes based on a mistaken notion and false belief.

Many become victims of crime because they are not aware of the modus operandi of crime syndicates and are not crime prevention-conscious. Often times, instances of miscarriage of justice on the part of either the offender or the victim, could be blamed on their ignorance.

5. Injustices/Abuses

These constitute the powerful motives for most of the crime against persons perpetrated either by the victims or their loved ones as cases of revenge or vendetta. Worse yet, these could serve also as the reason for the same criminals to yet perform some more crime as a way of pre-empting a vendetta or silencing the victims and/or their witnesses. The high propensity to avenge injustices/abuses among Filipinos makes this factor abet crime in a very potent and violent manner.

6. Soft State

Non-enforcement of several laws and ordinances, massive graft and corruption, absenteeism on the part of government officials or lack of basic services give rise to the lack of discipline and low regard for the laws by the citizenry, which spawn lawlessness and crime.

For monetary considerations or plain laziness, traffic laws and ordinances are not enforced by traffic policemen or aides. Consequently, drivers, passengers and pedestrians alike violate traffic rules and regulations left and right. From minor violations, gradually these offenders commit more and more serious infractions of the laws, thereby abetting crime.

7. Fear

This problem is so pervasive that it affects practically the entire society, whether rich or poor. People are afraid, not only while they are on the streets; but also right inside their homes. Kidnapping for ransom, bank robberies/hold ups, murders, homicides, crime against chastity and other heinous crimes instil so much fear among the citizenry.

Fear is an unseen force that breeds crime in many ways. Victims of kidnap for ransom are easily paralyzed into inaction by the kidnapers; such that they will give in to the demands of kidnapers, including that of not reporting the incident to the police. Victims of crime and their witnesses are easily threatened to keep silent and not to file charges and testify in court. Even when not actually threatened, many victims and witnesses refuse to cooperate with the police in solving and prosecuting crimes. As a result, many criminals go scot-free and are emboldened to perpetrate more crimes. As aptly stated by Edmund Burke, "For evil to

triumph, it needs only good men to do nothing"; like victims and witnesses keeping quiet about crime.

8. Others

There are many other breeding grounds of crime.

- (i) Movies that glorify criminals and show a lot of violence and tabloids that depict lewd scenes contribute to the rise in crime;
- (ii) Modern technology that tends to increase the capabilities of crime syndicates to perpetrate more crimes that are becoming more difficult to bust and/or solve; and
- (iii) Lack of sound crime prevention planning and the apathy of the community towards involvement in anti-crime campaigns.

III. URBAN CRIME PREVENTION

To effectively combat crime, it is imperative to look first into it and understand its nature and dynamics. For any crime to happen, there are three elements that are always present. These are: *Motive*, which refers to the reason or cause why a person or group of persons perpetuate a crime; *Instrumentality*, which is the means or implement used in the commission of a crime; and *Opportunity*, which consists of the acts of omission and/or commission by a person (the victim) which enables another (criminal/s) to perpetrate the crime.

Influencing and interacting with these three elements of crime are the environmental factors. For purposes of crime prevention and control, there are two elements in the environment to consider. The first element is the situation or circumstance that is inherent or beyond the control of man such as weather, time, season, terrain, etc. The second element is the situation which can be influenced by man such as poverty, ignorance, injustices, fear, etc. With these elements to consider, crime is therefore everybody's business. Prevention and control of crime need the cooperation of the community with the law enforcers.

Admittedly, crime prevention means different things to different people. For the police, crime prevention has to do with deterrent roles like roadblocks, and visible policing through active patrolling both on foot and vehicle. For a social worker, it might mean setting up projects to re-integrate a young offender back to society. These are very different activities, but they all contribute towards preventing crime. In effect, crime prevention means stopping crime from happening rather than waiting to respond once offences have been committed. Crime prevention is the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of action to remove or reduce it.

Criminologists consider prevention in two senses. The first concerns the ability of criminal law enforcement to make citizens law-abiding by deterring potential offenders and preventing further law-breaking by apprehending criminals. The second refers to the efforts to correct fundamental social conditions and personal maladjustments which are assumed to be the "seed bed" of crime.

As distinguished from crime suppression which is the traditional approach in crime control that deals with the apprehension, investigation, trial, correction and/or punishment of the criminal, crime prevention is the modern approach applied through the reduction of criminal opportunity and criminal victimization. It is the prevention of both the existence of crime and the criminal using social and situational prevention measures by the community at large and by all sectors of society.

Basically, crime prevention measures can be divided into two, namely social crime prevention and situational crime prevention. *Social Crime Prevention* measures are that intended to deal with the fundamental causes of crime or the criminogenic factors of crime like unemployment, poor education, extreme poverty, inadequate job skills, lack of recreational activities, lack of appropriate role models for the youth and diminishing effectiveness, of the traditional system of social control. *Situational Crime Prevention* measures which are sometimes called defensive prevention are those intended to reduce the opportunities for committing crime. It operates by attempting to increase the risk and difficulties of crime through environmental design and management like putting more locks on doors and iron grills on windows.

A. Characteristics of a Good Crime Prevention Programme

A good crime prevention programme has several distinct characteristics. It must be set in motion before the crime is committed and not after. It must focus on direct controls over behaviour, and not on indirect

controls. It must focus on the environment in which crimes are committed, and on the interaction of the people with their environment and not on the individual offender. It must be an interdisciplinary effort, based on all disciplines dealing with human behaviour. It must be less costly and more effective than punishment or treatment. This means that crime prevention is a more just and humane system.

B. Levels of Crime Prevention

It should be noted that prevention replaces treatment and punishment as goals of the criminal justice system. In the realm of criminal justice, primary crime prevention identifies conditions of the physical and social environment that provide opportunities for deviant behaviour. Included here are crime prevention techniques which are aimed at making crime more difficult for the offender, surveillance easier for residents, and feelings of safety more widespread. It is the use of environmental design like building plans that are conducive to visibility, locks, lights, marking of property for ease of identification, neighbourhood watch, ronda, etc.

The activities of the criminal justice system also fall within the realm of primary prevention - visibility of the police, increasing the perceived risk of getting apprehended, and getting swift justice. Primary prevention behaviours are implemented with the intent of avoiding initial/continued victimization or lowering fear of crime. Secondary prevention engages in early identification of potential offenders with criminally deviant behaviour and seeks to intervene prior to the commission of illegal activity. A secondary approach entails the identification of high crime areas and other areas predisposed to fostering criminal activity.

The distinction rests on whether the programmes are aimed at keeping problems that lead to criminal activity from arising (primary prevention) or if efforts are focused on problems that already exist and are fostering deviant behaviour (secondary prevention). Tertiary prevention is directed towards the offenders themselves.

IV. COST OF URBANIZATION

Urbanization in the Philippines, whether planned or unplanned, is a reality which has to be faced and lived with. True, it has given rise to the influx of newer and more advanced technology which is valuable for the economy. But as with anything, it also has its advantages and disadvantages. One of the negative effects of urbanization, is the proliferation of crimes, particularly, crimes against property. The rapid development of technology and with the higher cost of living in urban areas, theft or robbery has become the fastest and easiest way to obtain these new gadgets or accessories in order to sustain one's living conditions. This is a sad reality which the country has to deal with. Moreover, it is also imperative that the country has to come up with measures to counter or prevent these occurrences. As the old adage goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". There really is no better way to minimize crime than to prevent it at the first instance or, better yet, eliminate the conditions where it can flourish.

It is a Herculean task, but it has to be done. As long as there are people willing to help, there is hope. This is very similar to the man who was seen picking something up from the seashore and throwing it back to the sea. Another man approached the first man and asked what he was doing. It appears that the starfish had been washed across the seashore. The first man replied that he was putting the starfish back into the sea. The second man exclaimed: "but there are millions of starfish there, how can you make any difference?" The first man bent to pick up a starfish and threw it into the sea, looked at the second man and said: "Made a difference to that one".

And that is what we endeavour to do - to make a difference to the life of even just one person.

**TOPIC 2: EFFECTIVE MEASURES FOR PREVENTION OF CRIME
ASSOCIATED WITH URBANIZATION IN THE PHILIPPINES**

**V. THE PHILIPPINE CRIME PREVENTION POLICIES,
APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES**

As a Member State of the United Nations, the Philippines has fairly aligned its system of criminal justice and social defence with UN criminal policies. UN Member States have been encouraged to develop and pursue crime prevention and criminal justice programmes and strategies within the broad context of economic development, political systems, social and cultural values, and social changes, as well as in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals. The Milan Guiding Principles, on the other hand, advocated the promotion of economic growth, social progress and justice through a comprehensive and integrated approach.

The Philippines has chosen the path to peace as the cornerstone of the government's programme for the attainment of economic growth and development. The strategy is necessary for the country to realize its vision of being a strong republic adhering to the rule of law.

Due to the combined effect of the Asian financial crisis and poor weather conditions, GDP growth in 1998 fell to about -0.5% from 5% in 1997, but recovered to about 3% in 1999 and 3.6% in 2000. From 2001 to 2002 GNP growth rate was at 6.5 and from 2002 to 2003 pegged at 6.9.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo emphasized that her government would focus on building a "Strong Republic". She emphasized that good and effective governance is vital to winning the battle against crime. She detailed two essential features that will mark out a strong republic. The first is independence from class and sectoral interest so that it stands for the interests of the people rather than of a powerful minority. The second is the capacity, represented through strong institutions and a strong bureaucracy, to execute good policy and deliver essential services.

The results of these two features, good policies and empowered institutions, is faster economic development and social reform. According to the President, a strong republic takes care of the people and takes care of their future. A strong republic is the bedrock of victory against poverty.

In view of this, crime prevention policies have been incorporated in national economic development plans. The Medium Term Philippine Development Plan embodies as one of its policy frameworks the improvement of law and order, law enforcement administration of justice. It emphasises the government's role to guarantee public safety and national security, while ensuring that the rule of law prevails. Thus ensuring peace and order rests primarily on the ability of the government to curb criminal activities. In this regard, it is vital to strengthen the five pillars of the criminal justice system. The Plan enumerates the following as strategies for action:

- Professionalizing and modernizing the military and the police
- Pursuing peace agreements using the holistic approach
- Mobilizing the citizenry for peace and order through various citizens' organizations against crime and the instrumentality of the local Peace and Order Councils
- Promoting respect for human rights
- Improving the administration of justice and
- Intensifying anti-crime initiatives

A. National Approach - The Holistic System Approach of the Philippine Criminal Justice System

The Philippine criminal justice system has four formally organized components namely: law enforcement, prosecution, courts and corrections and one outside the formal organization made up of the mobilized community. The formal components are the traditional series of agencies that have been given formal responsibility to control crime. The fifth component is made up of public entities, private groups, and individuals and local officials who are performing functions related to the prevention and reduction of crime and help in the processes of the administration of justice.

Emphasis and recognition is placed on the mobilized community which is composed of those who are tasked to assume a leading role not only in law enforcement, but in the endeavour to fashion the values and

attitudes that make the criminal justice system work. The mobilized community has the responsibility to participate in activities by being partners of peace officers in reporting crime incidents, and helping arrest offenders. They can also participate in the promotion of peace and order through crime prevention deterrence, and in the rehabilitation of convicts, and their reintegration to society. As a component of the criminal justice system, the community is the most critical and useful component in view of its massive and pervasive composition. Enlightened and cognizant of their roles in the maintenance of peace and order as well as in the dispensation of justice, members of the community get involved in providing assistance and support to crime prevention activities, particularly in improving the police, detection and prosecution of crimes and the re-integration of offenders into the mainstream of society.

1. NAPOLCOM's Technical Committee on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the National Crime Prevention Programme

In its effort to institutionalize a systems approach to crime control, the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM), through the Crime Prevention and Coordination Service, established the Technical Committee on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (TCCPCJ). This *ad-hoc* interdisciplinary body is under the auspices and functional supervision of the Commission. This Committee, composed of acknowledged experts representing the five pillars of the Criminal Justice System - law enforcement, prosecution, courts, corrections, and community - meet monthly to consult each other and coordinate the plans and projects of the various pillars they represent.

The Commission, through the Technical Committee, formulates an annual National Crime Prevention Plan (NCPP) which is submitted to the President sixty days before the ensuing year. It contains appropriate policy recommendations from experts representing the five pillars of the CJS. The Plan is a multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary strategy involving all agencies of the CJS. The programme is a compendium of action programmes and strategies for implementation by the five components.

The NCPP major thrusts are geared towards the improvement of the internal capability of the individual pillars, and the maintenance of close interagency coordination toward the effective reduction of criminality, and the attainment of peace and order. The ultimate goals of the NCPP are the improvement of peace and order through enforcement of law, administration of justice and elimination of graft and corruption. The immediate effects that can be expected from the attainment of the above goals of the five pillars of the CJS are a reduction in the crime rate, speedy and efficient prosecution of cases in court, speedy disposition of court cases, jail decongestion, and effective and efficient rehabilitation of offenders and awareness and participation of community members in CJS activities.

2. The Peace and Order Council

Several years ago, a centralized coordinating mechanism to carry out a national programme addressed not only to criminality but to all forces that threaten national security was established with the promulgation of Executive Order 309, as amended by EOs 317 and 320, and recently EO 366. This national council, more popularly known as the Peace and Order Council, and which draws its membership from government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), underwent reorganization and revitalization at all levels - national, regional, provincial, city/municipal and recently barangay.

The Peace and Order Council (POC) is a unified and strongly coordinated body tasked to carry out a national programme addressing the current problems of criminality, terrorism, drugs, insurgency, rebellion, or disruption of public order which threaten our national unity and security. Further, Section 51 of RA 6975 mandates all provincial, city and municipal Peace and Order Councils to develop and oversee the implementation of their respective Integrated Area/Community Public Safety Plan (IA/CPSP).

An important part of the plan is the assessment of the peace and order situation in the locality. A comprehensive assessment should contain a narrative and qualitative description taking into consideration the magnitude or extent of the crime problem, as well as the rate of change, seriousness, locality and identifying causes of the problem. Therefore if there is no IA/CPSP, there is no structured plan for peace and order and the community will have no direction. The IA/CPSP is the blueprint for the protection of life and property in the locality. It is not solely the concern of law enforcement but is a product of collective responsibility that serves to harmonize the efforts of the local government, law enforcement and other

agencies of government, and the community.

The organization of peace and order bodies in the barangay is consistent with Senate Resolution No. 145, series of 1992, urging the establishment of Barangay Crime Watch Centres (BCWCs) nationwide to serve as an effective community-based crime prevention monitoring and coordinating mechanism. The Barangay Peace and Order Committees being established in all barangays are composed of the Punong Barangay as Chairman, and as members - the chairman of the Sangguniang Kabataan, a member of the Lupong Tagapamayapa, a Barangay Tanod, a public school teacher, a representative of the Interfaith group, a senior citizen, at least three members of the existing barangay-based anti-crime or Neighbourhood Watch Groups or an NGO representative well-known in his community and a PNP officer.

3. Partnerships with Citizens' Groups and Non-Government Organizations

Greater involvement of the community towards effective social defence in the local setting is being mobilized by government by encouraging formation of various citizen groups. The Crusade Against Violence (CAV), the Citizen's Action Against Crime (CAAC), the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC), Federation of Police-Accredited NGOs (FPAN), Foundation for Crime Prevention (FCP) and the Movement for the Restoration of Peace and Order (MRPO) and KillDroga were formed by citizens to help counter criminality in the country. These anti-crime movements undertake activities to monitor and ensure that the wheels of justice grind effectively and fairly. Some of these activities include advocacy campaigns to increase consciousness of the victims and their families on the need to cooperate with authorities, monitoring cases pending with the police, prosecution and courts, providing legal assistance to victims and witnesses, and conducting public education campaigns on crime prevention to encourage vigilance among the citizenry.

A nationwide Citizens' Crime Watch Network has been organized to provide assistance to the police in information gathering, reportage of suspicious persons and places, service of subpoena and other court processes, and monitoring the progress of investigation, prosecution, and disposition of heinous offences.

The PNP has established a Directorate for Police Community Relations to spearhead coordination with the various groups interested in taking part in the campaign against criminality.

B. Community-Based Strategies

In searching for ways to prevent or control urban crimes, the police invariably look into the major or precipitating causes of these crimes. Although examining the "root causes of crimes will be useful (e.g., social injustice, unequal economic opportunity, poor schooling, weak family structures, or mental illness), such factors are relatively unimportant from a traditional police *operational* standpoint since the police exercises little influence over them".

Based on available police data and from the experience of a cross-section of police officers, there are four precipitating causes of crimes: 1) criminogenic situations; 2) dangerous people; 3) alcohol and drug use; and 4) frustrating relationships.

Recidivists must be a continuing focus of police attention. Criminologists note that most crimes are perpetrated by persons with known criminal records. Likewise, there are places, conditions or situations that bring individuals or groups together that increase the probability of the commission of crimes.

Most crimes in the Philippines, especially those associated with crimes against persons and crimes against chastity (e.g. rape-slays, kidnapping with murder, serious physical injuries) are perpetrated by persons associated with alcohol or drug use. There are also crimes committed in the context of ongoing relationships that turn out to be criminogenic. Relationships can cause crime because they create expectations. If they are not met, the resulting disappointment produces anger. Anger may lead to vengeance and thereafter, retaliation.

The traditional police mindset, that of a reactive, incident-triggered concept of policing, needs to be realigned with the evolving new philosophy of policing. Heretofore, the police fight serious crimes basically by "being at the right place at the right time or by responding quickly to calls for police assistance". They stay in their barracks or stations, cruise aboard mobile cars, or pound their beat waiting for crime incidents to happen.

Research findings revealed serious limitations to this reactive type of policing. One study showed that doubling the number of cars patrolling the streets did not significantly reduce the number of crimes. The probability of arresting the perpetrators of serious crimes was not affected by the quickness of the response, for the calls are usually made after the offence. A study of the investigative process indicates that the factor in solving crimes was still the quality of information received by investigators and the timeliness and extent of cooperation extended by witnesses.

Part of the conclusion from research conducted by the PNP stated that crime prevention and control can be achieved by: a) looking at the root causes of crimes and joining the community in handling problems that produce serious crimes; b) improving police-community relations as part of confidence-building measures in crime prevention; and c) strengthening the community's social defence against crime.

1. Community Oriented Policing System

The National Police Commission and the Philippine National Police agreed that there should be a specific operational programme initiated by the government to counter criminality, even if some of the more successful models are those initiated by the community. The two agencies agreed to implement and institutionalize a particular community-based crime prevention programme nationwide. This programme is dubbed as "Community-Oriented Policing System or COPS". In fact, the NAPOLCOM has issued a resolution approving COPS Operations Manual for the PNP.

The "Community-Oriented Policing System" (COPS) is based on the notion that the police can provide better services to the community through the development of an effective partnership between and among them. Such partnership must be based on trust and goodwill in order to facilitate community support and cooperation to law enforcement/crime prevention and control activities, thus enhance police effectiveness and efficiency given the same police resources. The police, admittedly, cannot single-handedly solve the manifold problems of criminality considering the deficiencies in manpower, mobility, communication and firepower. Only the people can fill the gap. If the police demonstrate the concomitant sincerity and transparency, support and cooperation comes easy and is worthwhile on the part of the community.

COPS aims to cultivate the citizen-police partnership to serve the cause of peace and order in the community. It seeks the cooperation and active support of NGOs, the local government officials, and the entire community for crime prevention and control. It also ensures immediate police response to situations, thereby fostering a sense of security among the residents in the community. In the long term, it aims to facilitate the transition from the traditional reactive incident-driven model of policing to a proactive style of operation which seeks to identify and resolve community problems and actively engage members of the community in the process.

It is very encouraging that several points have been revealed out of the findings of the two victimization surveys commissioned by UNICRI (The 1990 Victimization Survey and the 1996 International Crime Survey). It was noted that in the previous survey the public evaluated crime prevention efforts as "not good job" but the more recent survey, showed that the citizens assessed government's crime prevention effort as "good job". The change in attitude can be aptly attributed to the implementation of community-based projects like the COPS because at the centre of community policing are those essential and complementary core components: community partnership, problems solving and change management. Effective community policing has a positive impact on reducing neighbourhood crime, helping to reduce fear of crime and enhancing the quality of life in the community. It accomplishes these things by combining the efforts and resources of the police, the local governments and community members.

2. The Barangay System

In the Philippine setting the activated community is spearheaded by the BARANGAY, the grassroots political unit which is primarily envisioned to strengthen the popular voice of political decision making, and at the same time augment law enforcement efforts in coordination with police forces. This latter role is indeed highly responsive to the imperatives of criminal justice in view of two advantages. Firstly, the community is afforded a self-policing mechanism which revolves towards the promotion of popular vigilance and self-reliance; and secondly, there is now a community-based grievance/conciliation mechanism - the barangay or village courts locally called "Lupong Tagapamayapa" which exist in each of the barangay throughout the country to provide for a community-based mechanism by which petty quarrels and

complaints are arbitrated at the grassroots level, thereby leaving the larger task of enforcement to the other components of the system. Certain cases are referred to the Barangay Lupong Tagapamayapa (village Justice System) for amicable settlement. Through these interventions, the filing of complaints is prevented.

(i) *The Barangay justice system*

Presidential Decree No. 1508, otherwise known as the Katarungang Pambarangay Law, established a system of amicably settling disputes at the barangay level. The system aims to strengthen the family as a basic social institution, preserve and develop Filipino culture and promote the speedy administration of justice and enhance the quality thereof being dispensed by the courts. The essence of Katarungang Pambarangay is embodied in two salient features of the law. One is that it makes the barangay settlement compulsory and a pre-requisite to bringing suits in regular courts of justice or before any governmental office exercising adjudicative functions.

As a community-based, conflict resolution mechanism, the KP has proven its effectiveness in perpetuating the time-honoured Filipino tradition of settling interpersonal disputes amicably without resorting to confrontational social behaviour. Moreover, while central to the concerns of the KP is the speedy administration of justice, what appears to be of primordial significance over time is people empowerment and, therefore, highly supportive of the notions of social ordering and human development.

The principal feature of the KP is the Lupong Tagapamayapa. For about 20 years of conflict resolution experiences, there is the view that successes have been largely attributed to the commitment and dedication of Lupon members in the performance of their duties and responsibilities.

Cognizant of the significant contributions of the Lupons in the furtherance of KP objectives through the years, the DILG launched in 1982 the First Gawad Tagapamayapa Award. The Award illustrates official recognition of the services of KP mediators and conciliators, and as part of the deliberate efforts to acknowledge Lupons that have excelled in KP implementation.

(ii) *Neighbourhood surveillance system*

The village Ronda system - surveillance groups composed of volunteers - patrol, especially at night-time, in shifts of four or more members around the community. The Barangay Tanod or the Barangay Security and Defence Officer (BSDO) and the Barangay officers actively participate in this programme.

The system is operationalized by teams of volunteers who take turns making rounds (Ronda) around the barangay during critical periods (late at night or early dawn). For operational purposes, the barangay is divided into "Puroks" and each purok has an appointed "Purok Leader". There are various methods of conducting the Ronda and each barangay improvises according to their resources and needs. There are generally two systems of Ronda.

a. *Type A (System A) Purok Ronda System* - All Purok Leaders organize their own volunteers and the group conducts the Ronda within their area of jurisdiction which may cover about two to three blocks. These small groups (purok ronda) is augmented by a larger group, headed by the Punong Barangay (Captain), who roams around the whole barangay.

b. *Type B (System B) Purok Ronda Scheduling* - Some barangays, those that have less volunteers, also divide the barangay into puroks. Each purok has a designated schedule to conduct the Ronda all throughout the barangay.

3. Establishment of Local Community Centres of Excellence for Public Safety (Gawad Kapayapaan)

Developing and maintaining safe and peaceful communities is central to the issue of crime prevention. Efforts aimed at maintaining safe communities will not prosper without empowering the citizenry and rousing them to commit to the ideals of inclusion and solidarity. As the primary catalyst for excellence in local governance, the DILG is mandated to promote peace, ensure public safety, and further strengthen local government capabilities aimed towards the effective delivery of basic services. The project is being implemented in recognition of the crucial role of local governments in maintaining peace and order, to attain full development as self-reliant communities and become active partners in the attainment of national goals. Under the Building Safe Communities and Developing a Culture of Peace Programme, the Safe Local

Communities Award is established to galvanize local governments and the citizenry to take the lead role in the development of solidarity practices and in the creation of safe communities that are free from fear and insecurities. The Gawad Kapayapaan Award is aimed at building safe communities in the country, rallying the local chief executives, their constituents, the private sector and the police for a concerted effort towards improvement of peace and order in their communities and to recognize outstanding performances and significant contributions in building safe communities.

C. International Technical Cooperation Projects

1. UN Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings

On March 28, 2000, the Philippine government entered into agreement with the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention, Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention to implement the pilot demonstration project of the Global Programme Against Trafficking in Human Beings named "*Coalitions Against Trafficking in Human Beings in the Philippines*". The DILG-PNP-National Police Commission with the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs were tasked to implement the projects of the programme in the country.

This pilot project was envisioned to strengthen crime prevention strategies against trafficking, improve the effectiveness of law enforcement and criminal justice responses and improving victim and witness protection and assistance in the country. Some of the activities lined up in the project include assistance in setting up specialized databases, compiling relevant legislation and bilateral and multilateral agreements, conducting training for law enforcers, prosecutors, social workers, and frontline officers, and conducting a comprehensive public awareness campaign on the subject.

The objectives of the programme were to enhance government agencies' knowledge of trafficking and improve agency coordination particularly as it relates to combating organized crime, strengthen the institutional capability of the criminal justice system to prevent, investigate and prosecute cases of trafficking in human beings, and improve international cooperation in cases of trafficking in human beings, particularly as it relates to transnational organized crime.

The Programme aimed to bring to the forefront the involvement of organized crime groups in human smuggling and trafficking, and promote the development of effective criminal justice responses to these problems. The Global Programme, consisting of policy-oriented research and targeted technical cooperation, has been developed by the Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI). CICP is in charge of technical cooperation activities, UNICRI is in charge of developing standardized research methodology and of coordinating research in the various projects to be carried out under the Global Programme.

The Global Programme collected data on different routes for smuggling and trafficking human beings, and the structures and modalities used for transporting and subsequently exploiting them. A global inventory of best practices used in addressing organized crime involvement in smuggling and trafficking, including special legislation and institutional arrangements, were also made.

2. The Safer Cities Programme - UN Habitat

The Philippine government became part of the Safer Cities Programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement - UN-Habitat with the Philippine launch of the Global Campaign for Good Governance and Secure Tenure on July and October 2002 respectively. These campaigns are part of the major thrusts of UN-Habitat.

Aside from the campaigns, representatives from both the government and non-government were invited to participate in international conferences such as the conferences organized in Singapore in 2002 and Durban, South Africa in 2003. Some representatives were even asked to present papers detailing best practices in the Philippine setting. (In fact, this author briefed the conferees on the effectiveness of community-based crime prevention projects of the country. The paper detailed the neighbourhood surveillance systems of the various local government units.)

Aside from the conferences, a UN-Habitat mission visited the Philippines to discuss some areas of concern in the field of urban security and governance as they emerge from the City Development Strategies (CDS) and as they are perceived among the urban stakeholders. The UN consultants came to identify areas where the Safer Cities Programme can assist specifically in development of local crime prevention strategies which are primarily based on partnership and local needs identification. They assisted in the development of a survey instrument which is now being utilized to determine the level of community safety of residents.

3. Action Research - “Nationwide Public Perception on Community Safety”

Research and evaluation are key activities in crime control and prevention. Being the criminological research arm of the criminal justice system, the National Police Commission conducts studies and research on crime and crime prevention. Presently, the Commission is undertaking the National Peace and Order Council research project entitled “*Nationwide Public Perception on Community Safety*”. The survey aims to determine the level of safety in selected cities of the country. It specifically aims to assess the crime prevention programmes in the community and its effects on the maintenance of peace and order.

The research instrument was jointly prepared by the Napolcom research team and the UN Habitat consultants on safe cities. The survey includes questions on the police and soliciting comments on how to improve safety in the community. More particularly, the survey tackles questions on the efficiency of police service, legislation and ordinances on peace and order and support programmes of the government that are being implemented in the area. The activity likewise involves a determination of local strategies being implemented to control and suppress crimes. Structured Face-to-face interviews and document analysis are being done by the team. The survey questionnaire will be administered in fifty randomly selected households while the other fifty respondents will come from the various sectors of the community, to include members of the academe, religious, business, labour, youth, media, non-government/civic organizations and local government units/barangay officials.

VI. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

Developing and maintaining safe communities, be they urban or rural, is central to the issue of good governance. An indicator of success of crime prevention programmes are their perceived effects on peace and order. It is important therefore that the public must have a feeling of safety in their community where they can walk the streets anytime of the day, enjoy their family and social environment, and participate in community activities without fear for their life and property.

Considering the varied problems confronting Philippine society today, we must realize that much is left to be done. The Government has continuously strived and is earnestly exerting efforts to implement a unified approach involving all sectors and spheres of Philippine society to effectively deter crime. A holistic approach, with particular emphasis on an active and empowered citizenry where society gives importance to its capacity to create justice and human growth, should be carried out vigorously to curb criminality. To emphasize, crime prevention and urban safety then becomes one of the activities devoted to increasing the relevance of the community as a socio-cultural organization making each and every citizen both the “server” and “served.” Society must face the challenge and be willing to do its part as a stakeholder of a crime-free society.

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