

The United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Annual calendar

The UN Crime Programme calendar revolves around meetings organized primarily in three contexts:

- the UN Crime Commission,
- the Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC COSP), and
- the Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC CoSP).

The **UN Crime Commission** generally meets for five days during May of each year, with “pre-sessional” negotiations on the preceding Friday and a reconvened session generally held in early December. If needed, so-called inter-sessional meetings can be held. At inter-sessional meetings, largely procedural matters are discussed, and the participants are informed of progress on implementation of decisions.

The two **Conferences of States Parties** have five-day sessions every second year, during alternating years. The UNTOC COPS is always organized in Vienna, with the next session to be held in late 2018; the UNCAC CoPS is generally held at invitation outside of Vienna, although the 2017 session (6-10 November 2017) will be held in Vienna.

Five Working Groups have been established under the mandate of the UNTOC COPS: one for each of the three protocols, one on technical assistance and one on international cooperation. In general, they meet annually, but there have been longer intervals.

The most important body under the mandate of the UNCAC CoPS is the Implementation Review Group, which has its main meeting in June of each year, with a resumed session generally held in November.

Three Working Groups are organized annually under the mandate of the UNCAC CoPS: the Working Group on Prevention, the Working Group on Asset Recovery, and the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Meeting on International Cooperation.

The status of the UNCAC working groups is currently under review, due to the fact that the second review cycle (2016-2020) deals specifically with prevention and the asset recovery, which are the topics dealt with by two of the three working groups.

In addition to the meetings referred to above, various **ad hoc meetings** may be organized. Earlier, these ad hoc meetings tended to be rather informal, English-only events, with many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in attendance. Several member states have been critical of this practice on two grounds: absence of multilingualism (formal UN meetings should allow use of all six official languages) and excessive influence of NGOs. As a result, when the Commission mandates an expert group, these almost invariably are specified to be open-ended hoc intergovernmental expert groups. (“Open-ended” means that any member state can participate. Generally, other entities – such as NGOs – may not participate, unless the mandate specifically allows this.)

The current list of expert groups and working groups (not all of which are active) is as follows:

- Open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (active; usually meets once or twice annually)
- Open-ended intergovernmental expert group meeting on gender-related killing of women and girls
- Open-ended intergovernmental expert group meeting to develop a draft set of model strategies and practical measures on the elimination of violence against children in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice
- Open-ended intergovernmental expert group on protection against trafficking in cultural property
- Open-ended intergovernmental expert group meeting on civilian private security services: their role, oversight and contribution to crime prevention and community safety
- Open-ended intergovernmental expert group meeting on strengthening access to legal aid in criminal justice systems
- Open-ended intergovernmental expert group meeting to develop supplementary rules specific to the treatment of women in detention and in custodial and non-custodial settings
- Open-ended intergovernmental expert group meeting on cybercrime (after a four-year interval, the third session was held 10-14 April 2017)

Right of participation. The UN Crime Commission and the two Conferences of States Parties operate in accordance with the standard ECOSOC Rules of Procedure, according to which there are four categories of participants: member states (/states parties), intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and UN bodies “and others”. (Essentially the same Rules of Procedure apply to the quinquennial UN Crime Congresses. However, they are exceptional – also compared to many other parts of the UN system – in that also individual “experts” may attend the Crime Congresses.)

ANNEX

UNTOC calendar of meetings, 2017

Working Group on Trafficking in Persons	6-8 September
Working Group on Smuggling of Migrants	11-13 September
Joint meeting of the Technical Assistance and International Cooperation Working Groups	9-13 October

UNCAC calendar of meetings, 2017

Training for Focal Points and Governmental Experts participating in the Review Mechanism for the United Nations Convention against Corruption	14-16 June 2017
Intersessional meeting for the purpose of the drawing of lots	16 June 2017
8th session of the Implementation Review Group	19-23 June
8th session of the Working Group on Prevention	21-23 August
11th session of the Working Group on Asset Recovery	24-25 August
7th session of the COSP	6-10 November
Resumed 8th session of the Implementation Review Group	7-8 November (tentative tbc)
6th session of the open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Meeting on International Cooperation	6-7 November (tentative tbc)