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Distinguished Colleagues and participants in the conference, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Radicalisation has become the main theme of this conference owing to, for instance, the tragic events in Paris and Copenhagen. In my native country Finland, we have been very lucky in this relation and we have had hardly any experience of terrorism and related radicalisation. Preventing them is extremely important and I am afraid that we will also have use for the skills and means, which are discussed in this conference.

In Finland, we have more experience of the second theme of this conference, which is strategic management and means to face, for example, financial challenges. Therefore, I will focus on that in my presentation.

Last year, the Conference of Directors of Prison and Probation Services was held in Helsinki and the theme was "Shared goals, shared values". This time, we are discussing our strategies and strategic challenges in the beautiful Bucharest. How can the probation and prison services achieve their goals in times of economic crisis with smaller resources and staff? The angle is different from last year but we are still talking about the same thematic entity. It includes our duties to enforce the sentences imposed by courts. It includes our goals to increase the safety of society by supporting desistance and reducing recidivism. It includes our values that form the basis of our work. Furthermore, it includes our strategy as well as the strategic policies and means to achieve our goals.

The values, duties, and goals of all organisations, which have adopted and comply with the Prison Rules and the Probation Rules of the Council of Europe, are basically the same. Values are typically quite stable and they usually change slowly. Likewise, our duties and roles in society are well established. Changes in our goals also take time and require long processes. By this, I refer to, for instance, the Nothing Works thinking and the transfer from it to the goals set to make enforcement more effective and prevent recidivism.

Our operating environments are different and, in the course of time, they can even face major changes. Therefore, the strategy and the strategic means to achieve the goals can be diverse in different countries and at different times. Even though the means to achieve the goals cannot always be chosen freely, it is, however often possible to find several alternative means. The operating environment and the changes in it guide the selection of the means.

Next, I will shortly describe what strategy and the selected strategic means have meant in the operation of my own organisation, the Criminal Sanctions Agency, in the past decade. In Finland, just like in many other countries, the public sector has been subjected to constant saving measures. The preconditions of operations have become more difficult and we have been forced to find new ways to carry out our duties. Over the past ten years, the directors of the prisons and the community sanctions

offices have been in a situation where they have had to cut down the number of staff year after year, while, at the same time, the legislation has become more goal-oriented and the performance targets include maintaining the quality of operations.

As we discussed the passed period in a recent meeting with Finnish directors of the prisons and the community sanctions offices, the topmost feeling was not about saving and running down operations but, instead, about developing and succeeding in our work. Naturally, the difficulties were not forgotten but coping with them was a more distinct memory. This positive situation can be credited to two things. First, the operation of the Criminal Sanctions Agency is guided by a strategy that was drawn up and taken in by the management and the staff. Secondly, our operating environment has developed favourably.

Our strategy consists of three main policies, which are summed up in the following slogans:

- 1) Path to a life without crime with the help of an active network co-operation.
- 2) Safely towards more open and influential enforcement.
- 3) Meaningful work, motivated and healthy personnel.

How does our first policy, "Path to a life without crime with the help of an active network co-operation", show in our work? Although the Criminal Sanctions Agency is responsible for the enforcement of prison sentences, our legislation is founded on the fact that the prisoners' affairs are not only our responsibility. Despite being imprisoned, the prisoners are still citizens of society and they are entitled to many services it provides. For instance, a social worker of the prisoner's home municipality can be invited to participate when we draw up the sentence plan together with the prisoner. Furthermore, when we arrange activities for the prisoners, we try to utilise the public services of society, such as the education system and the substance rehabilitation services. The Criminal Sanctions Agency has its own health care unit for prisoners but it will be transferred under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health at the beginning of next year. Our extensive cooperation network does not cover just the state and municipal authorities. We also lean on various non-governmental organisations and religious communities when we arrange activities for prisoners. Some of the activities arranged in prisons by the NGOs are purchased services, which means we pay for them, whereas for some prison activities the organisations get funding elsewhere.

The status of the peer support method, which has been tried and tested in various social sectors, has also been acknowledged in the operation of prisons. Based on a Swedish model, released prisoners who have reintegrated into society have established an organisation called CRIS, which provides support for prisoners and ex-prisoners. The operation of CRIS has constantly expanded and become more versatile and the Criminal Sanctions Agency regards the organisation as an important partner.

When people serving their sentences in prison are not considered just prisoners but also citizens, who need the same public services as other citizens and in particular services that advance integration into society, the role of the prison services is reshaped, too. Our duty is not to produce all services by ourselves but, instead, enable their availability and encourage our network partners to take part in the prison activities. Naturally, safety and security aspects have to be taken into consideration.

The second key policy of our strategy is "Safely towards more open and influential enforcement". This policy concretely means the placement of prisoners in as open conditions as possible but it is visible in other things, too. In order to put the policy into practice, we have been placing more prisoners in open prisons; as a result, 36% of all prisoners served their sentence in an open prison last year,

which is 10 percentage points more than a decade ago. This policy has created financial savings because the cost of a prison day is substantially lower in open prisons than in closed prisons.

The policy is not primarily justified by financial factors but by increasing the safety of society. Based on our experiences, the greatest risk to the safety of society is caused by a prisoner who is released from a closed prison. Therefore, our goal is to place as many prisoners as possible in open prisons before their release and to ensure that, for instance, the home municipality continues the support measures after the release. People sentenced to imprisonment for under two years can be placed in an open prison for the duration of the whole sentence. The placement in open prisons also applies to life sentence prisoners of whom nearly a third are in fact in open prisons. In practice, a life sentence lasts in Finland on average for about 15 years.

Besides the placement in open prisons, the gradual release process includes a so-called probationary liberty under supervision. It means that, under the conditions provided by law, prisoners, who have proceeded according to their sentence plans, can be released from prison at most six months before the beginning of their actual conditional release. Such prisoners are placed under supervision and required to participate in activities. Prisoners who have been released through this process are notably less likely to reoffend than other released prisoners.

The Criminal Sanctions Agency has made good progress towards more open enforcement but there is still much to do. Approximately half of all prisoners are still released from closed prisons and only 15% are released through probationary liberty under supervision. In addition, the network cooperation needs to be further developed as it contains unused potential. For example, the prisoners' relatives and the organisations representing them could have a bigger and more coherent role in the support network of the prisoners. However, the jointly prepared and approved strategy of the Criminal Sanctions Agency has guided our practical work and helped us cope with the reduced resources.

The main theme of this conference is radicalisation. Many European countries have become aware that a prison can be a favourable breeding ground for radicalisation. This is a good example of how the changes in our operating environment can quickly bring about a need to reassess the means required in our work. In order to respond to radicalisation, we have to find those means, which are compatible with our values and support our goals to increase the safety of society by influencing recidivism. Even those countries like Finland, which have not yet been targets of terrorism or related serious manifestations of radicalism, have to be prepared for them. It is important to take part in finding solutions and learn from others' experiences. Once again, this conference provides an excellent opportunity for that.

Thank you for your attention.