

POLICE POLICY RESEARCH

General Development of Crime Prevention Policies

Lesson from Japanese Experience

August 7, 2011

Conference Room 301, 3rd Floor of Kobe International Conference Center

Opening address

Mr. Takahiko YASUDA, Director, Police Policy Research Center, NPA

Presentation

“Changes in Crime Situation in Japan and Future Challenges”

Prof. Osamu SAKUMA, Osaka University Law School

“Community-Based Crime Prevention: Crime Opportunity Theory and Community Safety Map”

Prof. Nobuo KOMIYA, Rissho University

“Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008”

Mr. Kunitaka TOMITA, Counsellor, Cabinet Secretariat

“Changes in Number of Criminal Offenses over Past 20 Years and Police Response”

Mr. Nobuhiro KATO, Director, Crime Prevention Office, NPA

Questions and Answers

Panelists:

Prof. Osamu SAKUMA, Osaka University Law School

Prof. Nobuo KOMIYA, Rissho University

Mr. Kunitaka TOMITA, Counsellor, Cabinet Secretariat

Mr. Nobuhiro KATO, Director, Crime Prevention Office, NPA

Coordinator:

Mr. Takahiko YASUDA, Director, Police Policy Research Center, NPA

POLICE POLICY RESEARCH CENTER

National Police Academy, Tokyo, Japan

RESEARCH FOUNDATION FOR SAFE SOCIETY OF JAPAN

Opening address

Mr. Takahiko YASUDA

Director, Police Policy Research Center, NPA

In Japan, the number of penal code offenses known to the police climbed for seven consecutive years from 1996, reaching a postwar record of some 2.85 million in 2002. This was despite vigorous police crackdowns. As a result, the National Police Agency (NPA) formulated the Emergency Public Safety and Security Program in 2003, and has since been implementing comprehensive public safety measures, as well as pursuing joint public-private crime prevention efforts by actively involving government agencies, citizens, and others.

Against this background, the Japanese Government set up the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime, a high-level forum comprising the Prime Minister and all other cabinet members, in 2003. Following the adoption of an Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime by the ministerial meeting, various public safety projects were launched, and wide-ranging public safety measures were strenuously implemented through the close collaboration of relevant national and local administrative bodies at all levels and the involvement of private businesses. At the same time, momentum grew among community residents across the country to take the initiative in building safe and secure communities, rather than just relying on police efforts. Consequently, the number of penal code offenses known to the police began falling in 2003 to set off an eight-year downward trend that was still unbroken last year (2010), when the figure fell below 1.6 million for the first time since 1989.

While this demonstrates that Japan's public safety situation has been steadily improving, the traditional crime control function of Japanese society has not fully recovered. For instance, there have been a series of crimes that victimize women, children, the elderly and other vulnerable members of society, causing deep anxiety to citizens in their daily lives. In addition, the globalization of crime, including the operation of crime syndicates on a global scale, poses a new security threat to society. For these reasons, we consider that our journey towards the restoration of public safety is still only halfway complete.

Back in the 1950s to 1980s, community solidarity and ties, as well as people's strong sense of social norms, played a vital role in deterring crime and maintaining public safety in Japan, but they have since weakened amid social changes. Unless such community ties and strong sense of social norms are revived, full restoration of public safety is not possible. At present, Japanese police are doggedly pursuing the revival of community ties by actively implementing policy measures geared towards creating a crime-resistant society.

Aiming to contribute to the worldwide advancement of international criminology and improvement of crime deterrent measures in various countries, this symposium explains how Japanese government, including police, have achieved a major success in those areas by putting effort into the planning and designing of a government-wide crime deterrent policy

and ensuring its effectiveness, rather than just relying on police crackdown on crime, in a concrete manner. I hope that the symposium will make a major contribution to the future advancement of crime deterrent measures across the world. Thank you.

Presentation

“Changes in Crime Situation in Japan and Future Challenges”

Prof. Osamu SAKUMA, Osaka University Law School

“Community-Based Crime Prevention: Crime Opportunity Theory and Community Safety Map”

Prof. Nobuo KOMIYA, Rissho University

“Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008”

Mr. Kunitaka TOMITA, Counsellor, Cabinet Secretariat

“Changes in Number of Criminal Offenses over Past 20 Years and Police Response”

Mr. Nobuhiro KATO, Director, Crime Prevention Office, NPA

Changes in Crime Situation in Japan and Future Challenges

Osamu SAKUMA

Professor

Osaka University Law School

1. Recent Crime Situation

(1) Background to rises and falls in number of criminal offenses known to police

Let us take a quick overview of the recent crime situation. After World War II, the number of criminal offenses known to the police stayed low at around 1.5 million for nearly 30 years, excluding offenses committed during the chaotic period in the immediate aftermath of the war and those relating to motor vehicle accidents as a product of the rise of postwar motorization. In the 1980s, however, the number of general penal code offenses (penal code offenses excluding those relating to motor vehicle accidents) known to the police began rising steadily to reach almost 3 million in 2002. Subsequently, the numbers fell back rapidly as a result of the implementation of various policy measures, settling just above 1.7 million in 2009. This success is considered to be attributable in large part to the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime, released in 2003.

It is surmised that one of the major contributing factors to the fall in the number of offenses known to the police was citizens' activities and cooperation and collaboration with the police. Although traditional crime prevention organizations, such as local neighborhood associations and neighborhood watch groups, have over the years contributed to the prevention of juvenile delinquency in Japan, the networking of crime has given rise to the need for crime prevention activities to network. For this reason, great hopes have been attached to the role of the police as the linchpin of those activities. In recent years, the activities of public organizations and NGOs have been gathering steam amid a wave of the formation of volunteer groups.

(2) Controversy over notion of "deteriorating public safety"

In recent years, a debate has been raging over whether Japan's public safety situation has deteriorated. Roughly speaking, two opposing views have emerged from the analysis of the same set of crime statistics. In this respect, a simple numerical comparison that ignores the ongoing social change in the form of a rapid fall in the birthrate and aging of the population should fail to convince the general public. With the exception of some opinionated people, it is untenable to deny the reality of Japan's deteriorating public safety. With its rapid postwar economic development well and truly behind it, Japan has entered a period of social equilibrium, resulting in a fall in the share of young people in the overall population. According to orthodox thinking, this would have resulted in a fall in crime. In reality,

however, crime is rapidly increasing, giving rise to deep community concern.

On the other hand, some scholars assert that the rise in the number of offenses known to the police is simply attributable to a change in the police approach to crackdown on crime. There are still others who express opinions that lack concrete grounds of argument or evidence. Such groundless arguments do not even deserve a proper rebuttal but, as far as objective data is concerned, it is undeniable that the crime situation has been deteriorating. Having said this, the number of general penal code offenses known to the police has now gone back to levels prevalent before the rapid increases, thanks to the recent crime deterrent measures, so there is room for argument as to whether the situation is still at a critical level.

(3) Change in population dynamics and modern facets of crime

If raw data on year-to-year changes in the number of offenses known to the police cannot tell the whole story about the crime situation, how can we go about it? Well, here is an example. According to the Japanese statistical yearbook, the country's total population began shrinking in 2009 after registering slight annual increases from 1990. What is particularly noteworthy here is the number of people under 20 years of age, i.e. minors. Compared to the 1990 figure, the number of minors fell to 79% in 2000 and again to 71% in 2009. Namely, over these two decades, this segment of the Japanese population shrank by nearly 30%.

Taking into consideration this demographic change, let us look at the juvenile crime situation during this period. The number of juvenile arrests relative to the overall under-20-years population almost doubled in 2000 compared to the previous level. As far as robbery is concerned, the figure more than tripled. Juvenile arson also rose sharply, though juvenile rape declined. In the face of these phenomena, the only logical conclusion is that Japan's crime situation is not improving. How to tackle this situation, therefore, presents us with a real challenge for the future.

(4) Increase in crime in everyday life and public anxiety

Some people want to believe that crime is not increasing or public safety is not deteriorating. However, denial of the above argument on the ground that it is based on the number of arrests made rather than that of offenses known to the police is unconvincing. It is clear that even the number of offenses known to the police increased after 1998. Taking into account that there are also unreported cases, it is rather irresponsible to criticize a theory postulating deterioration in public safety for no reason other than there is no apparent change in numbers.

Moreover, as will also be pointed out by Prof. Komiya in the next presentation, the complexion of crime is slightly changing, particularly in terms of the closeness of crime scenes to the sphere of people's daily lives. How, then, should we look at this fact? Once upon a time, people hardly had to worry about becoming victims to crime as long as they lived normal lives, but, today, ordinary citizens are under threat of crime in their daily lives.

Please allow me to talk about a rather personal example here. I am originally from Nagoya, but moved to Kyoto when I was offered a job there. I also had a stint in the Federal

Republic of Germany, but have now moved back to Nagoya. Compared to my youth, I feel that public safety in the community has markedly deteriorated. This may be my naive observation as an ordinary citizen, but I remember that, in those days, we were never broken into despite the fact that we left our doors open. Recently, however, we are sometimes broken into even though we keep our doors locked. Worse still, burglars are opportunistic enough to climb up the back fence during hours when only aged parents are home. I and other members of my family have had our bicycles stolen several times. In the past, we never got our bicycles stolen even when they were left on the street. Moreover, when my children were still school kids - at my old school by the way - they often had to be picked up from the school because of an alarm raised by the school over a suspicious individual.

In view of these phenomena, it is not surprising ordinary citizens feel anxious. Namely, people feel threatened by invasion of crime into their daily lives through randomization and diversification. Such being the case, empty reassurance of “a safe society” cannot restore public confidence in anti-crime measures. It is true that, as some theorists point out, reporting by the mass media sometimes stirs up people’s fear of serious crime. It is also true that the police approach to crackdown occasionally undergoes a change. Nevertheless, those facts alone cannot explain the increase in the number of offenses known to the police and that of arrests made. In short, the contrarian view to deteriorating public safety based on repeated assertions that are objectively unverifiable cannot convince or satisfy the general public.

2. Characteristics and Problems of Crime Deterrence Policy in Japan

(1) “Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime”

As will be discussed in more detail by other speakers, the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime, which has contributed greatly to the reduction of crime, covers wide-ranging and diverse issues, including, among other things, the revival of community solidarity, improvement of crime prevention awareness, prevention/control of rapidly rising stealing crimes, such as purse snatching and robbery, and fall in the age of offenders as can be seen in juvenile delinquency and juvenile crime cases, response to the globalization of crime, and prevention of organized crime and cybercrime.

While the action plan no doubt contributed to the fall in the number of criminal offenses known to the police observed in 2004 and subsequent years, other factors also made substantial contributions. Take Japan’s koban (police box) system and community-based police system. Though their contributions may be indirect, they deserve full credit as, without them, safe and secure community development would not be possible. In my view, the real driving force behind the dramatic reduction of crime is the flexible and seamless response to it based on everyday crime prevention activities and community policing, and the above social infrastructure provided a vital foundation for it.

Of course, the crime deterrence effect of the deployment of massive police resources cannot be denied. Indeed, this is the approach taken in New York and other places. However, is the heavy-handed crackdown based on the mobilization of a large number of police personnel really an efficient crime deterrent measure? Not necessarily.

(2) Security industry and “fortification” of residential areas

As mentioned at the beginning of this presentation, some theorists and elements of the mass media hold the optimistic view that Japan’s public safety is not deteriorating. However, the general public does not buy this. The rapid spread of the private use of security cameras and fortification of upscale condominiums and apartments is testimony to it. This trend is leading to the gradual rise of a surveillance society. In today’s anonymous society, an escalation of surveillance seems inevitable as long as community residents feel insecure. Indeed, the private use of security cameras and fortification of condominiums and apartments are considered to be desperate self-defense measures by the general public in rejection of the “false safety” preached by some irresponsible commentators and elements of the mass media.

This trend, however, has given rise to instances of overdone security arrangements and undesirable consequences of excesses. At any rate, such an approach is unlikely to lead to “a crime-free happy society”. Especially in large cities, where upscale condominiums and apartments with state-of-the-art security measures are spreading, it is questionable whether their fortification and the dramatic increase in the number of security cameras installed in shopping and entertainment districts will contribute to the safety and security of the residents in the true sense of the words.

(3) Public-private cooperation in crime prevention efforts

Frankly speaking, overdependence on security systems and crime prevention devices does not provide a fundamental solution. No matter how many security cameras you install, you cannot prevent all crime. In fact, there are reports that, in residential districts where the streets are lined with auto-lock upscale condominiums and apartments, property loss due to purse-snatching and theft from motor vehicles has increased. According to some data, property loss is several times greater than that recorded in neighboring areas. Ironically, once you step outside an overprotected building, your environment may be more crime-ridden than would otherwise be the case.

The apathy of the residents of condominiums and apartments about the security situation outside their little enclaves sometimes hampers crime prevention activities in the local community. Here is an extreme example of this. In an upscale condominium, there was a murder, but the administrator refused police entry on the ground of the protection of the privacy of residents. The privacy of individuals may be important, but people’s lives and health should take precedence. Clearly, the value system has been turned on its head here. Although the private-sector security industry is undeniably addressing the public’s sense of insecurity, it is still important to be aware of the potential problem caused by an overestimation of its role. The self-help efforts of the security industry and other private-sector actors should play a complementary role to crime prevention activities of the police. This is because public safety should pervade the community, including public spaces outside buildings.

(4) Security gaps among citizens and public safety

In some developed countries, fortified residential enclaves called “gated communities” have taken root. Some accuse gated communities of turning areas around them into slums because of the security gaps they create. The residents of a guarded closed district may be able to enjoy artificially created security, but, as soon as someone steps outside, an unsafe environment prevails.

Even a well-guarded building potentially exposes its residents to crime committed by someone living amongst them. In Japan, a case in which a resident of a condominium building attacked another have been reported, and some of the audience may have come across news reports showing the enormous difficulties the police investigation encountered. Since there is no guarantee that crime does not occur inside a building, absolute safety cannot be provided no matter how well it is protected against external threats. Moreover, total reliance on a security company for safety may even give rise to a kind of selfishness among residents by reducing their willingness to work together to protect themselves.

3. Attempts to Address Recent Criminal Phenomena and Future Challenges

(1) Invasion of crime into daily lives and new criminal phenomena

In recent years, people’s perception of crime has changed dramatically. A concrete example is an increase in vicious crimes committed by “strangers” who lurk in people’s daily lives. Sadly, such strangers can be family members, unfamiliar neighbors, and the like. In addition, criminals sometimes invade families via the Internet. As you know, the emergence of a networked society has led to an increase in crimes that occur in people’s daily lives. To deal with these kinds of criminal phenomena, a buildup of police resources will not be enough. The general public as users of the Internet must make efforts to ensure their own safety.

In recent years, anti-cybercrime measures have been expanded in citizens’ crime prevention activities and community policing, including phishing, spams, transfer-money-now (furikome) fraud, and so on, as will be discussed in more detail by other speakers. Namely, measures attuned to these crime trends are being gradually taken as part of public-private crime prevention efforts. To deal with the widening range of potential crime victims in an anonymous society, the use of security cameras and other measures may be justifiable to a certain degree, given the characteristics of the malaise of modern society.

(2) Aging population and crime-resistant society

Another challenge Japan faces is the rapid fall in the birthrate and aging of the population, with cases in which both the perpetrator and victim are the elderly on the rise. From the view point of preventing recidivism, old habitual criminals are more difficult to rehabilitate than their younger counterparts. Still, the elderly with reduced physical strength are considered less likely to commit vicious crimes, centering on violent crimes. Moreover, shoplifting by the elderly, which has been occurring in epidemic proportions in recent years, may be, to some extent, preventable by improving social policy and welfare facilities.

Aging of the population and transnational crime (globalization of crime) are two common problems confronting developed nations, and they have been working together to deal with them. On top of this, developing countries face added challenges of overcoming/alleviating exclusionism, rooted in the division between social classes resulting from widening gaps between the rich and the poor, and intolerant laws and policies.

In modern society, people's self-control ability is said to have diminished. People with short fuses, such as those who assault railway workers on station platforms and in trains, have increased in number, while an intolerant society in which fights easily break out over trivial matters has emerged. The general public is often alarmed by such developments. The improvement of the situation in which the display of violent behavior in people's daily lives is fairly common should be given more attention in future anti-crime measures.

However, such long-term measures take considerable time before their effects are noticeable. Given that it is impossible to eliminate all crime from society, efforts are needed to push down the number of criminal offenses known to the police to levels that are tolerable to the general public.

(3) Crime displacement phenomenon and framework for public-private cooperation

The removal of conditions that encourage crime in one area does not provide a permanent solution if crime groups just move to another area, a phenomenon known as "crime displacement". The frequent occurrence of crime outside overprotected condominiums and apartments may be, in a sense, considered as a crime displacement phenomenon. Namely, crime just moves from inside condominiums and apartments to outside so there is no fundamental solution to it here.

Granted, just reducing the chance of people being exposed to crime may have some degree of crime control effect. Similarly, if the number of domestic criminal offenses known to the police can be reduced at least for a while, this might itself be considered a positive. However, the globalization of crime means that this may only result in crime just moving to other countries as members of organized crime move across national borders. Once upon a time, Japan was a society that was totally naive about crime. As a result, Japanese tourists were often targeted in foreign countries as criminals tried to exploit that naivety. Today, crime maps that show sites that are vulnerable to crime and those that are not have become widespread even in Japan. Crime map activities have no doubt contributed greatly to crime deterrence. They have also proved to be extremely effective in heightening community residents' crime prevention awareness.

There is a growing trend towards taking security more seriously. Crime prevention maps and security cameras are just two examples. Others include a growing number of condominiums and apartments that feature an automatic security lock system. Some people are critical of this trend as being excessive or overly security-conscious. They even deride citizens' crime prevention volunteer activities as knee-jerk reactions. However, their approach is just a throwback to the good old days of modern liberalism, no more than a product of their nostalgia. This kind of attitude is too detached from reality. Regardless of

such fantasies, crime deterrent measures must continue evolving into the future, keeping pace with the changing trend of criminal phenomena in Japan. Only this kind of realistic approach will prove useful to people suffering from deteriorating public safety.

(4) Examination of validity of crime deterrent measures and prevention of crime

It should be noted that crime deterrent measures should not be examined in isolation as if they are self-contained. This is because they depend greatly on the social situation and the combination of a whole range of policy measures. Moreover, amid globalization of crime, situations where coordinated action with other countries is required have become increasingly common as exemplified by international organized crime and cybercrime. In this sense, crime prevention measures introduced by a single country or territory cannot be complete by themselves. From now on, therefore, it is necessary to scrutinize the effectiveness of crime deterrent measures in a wider context, including police collaboration with private-sector organizations. Matters such as information sharing and cooperative relationships between police authorities, as the core organization of anti-crime policy response, and other organizations also need to be added to the future scrutiny list.

Some time ago, U.S. criminologist Prof. David Johnson made interesting observations in his keynote speech delivered at a forum hosted by the Police Policy Research Center. Contrasting New York and Tokyo, he first showed a dramatic improvement in the crime situation in New York as evidenced by a huge 80% decline in the homicide rate from 1990 to 2007, but added that Tokyo's homicide rate during the same period was 8% (one-twelfth) that of New York despite it also being a mega city. Similarly, Tokyo's rape rate was 17% (one-sixth) that of New York. This means that Tokyo is a safe city compared to major Western cities even though Japan's public safety has deteriorated in recent years. Today, the numbers have already subsided to about two-thirds of the peak.

Moreover, according to Prof. Johnson's observations, the number of police personnel mobilized in response to the increase in the number of offenses known to the police was not so large relative to the total population or the number of offenses, and he thinks this fact says something characteristic of Japan's crime deterrent measures. Prof. Johnson further observed that Japanese police rarely resort to the use of naked coercive force. This was probably based on comparison with U.S. police. What Prof. Johnson wanted to shed light on is this: In Japan, police themselves are very sensitive to changes in the crime situation from the viewpoint of crime prevention and Japanese society as a whole is characterized by hyper awareness about public safety.

4. Concluding Remarks

The deniers of deteriorating public safety in Japan would seize upon the above tendencies of Japanese society and say "too much vigilance". Some of them criticize the "overreaction" of the general public. However, given that smoke is already coming out everywhere, what is the point of going about saying "Don't worry it's still okay"? Wouldn't it be too late to hurriedly call fire engines after a fire took hold and became out of control? Crime is the same. Especially, considering the fact that social polices take a decade or so

before their effects are noticeable, the importance of taking action early on cannot be overemphasized.

Today, some criminal law scholars and criminologists exhibit a tendency to indulge in the nostalgia of the good old days of modern liberalism. However, one's ideals should remain just that. Confronted by the reality that crime has invaded people's daily lives while gradually transforming itself, we must put a suitable legal system in place. Nostalgia that turns a blind eye to reality does nothing to prevent or control crime.

It is true that an oversurveillance society has stifling and oppressive effects on people. So, we must strike a balance. In an environment where people's safety and health is threatened, the protection of privacy must take second place. Earlier, I talked about a criminal case in which police were refused access to the crime scene, a condominium building, for investigation on the ground of protecting residents' privacy. This is a typical example of the common-sense value system being turned upside down. The embracement of the private-sector self-defense efforts and reliance on the security industry should be proportionate. Excessive security activities aimed at defending some properties may lead to their isolation from the community and end up compromising safety. There is a need for security measures that do not create security gaps. In this sense, I believe that Japan's crime prevention and control efforts so far have been well-balanced. This concludes my presentation.

Community-Based Crime Prevention: Crime Opportunity Theory and Community Safety Map

Nobuo KOMIYA

Professor
Rissho University

1. Criminal Opportunity Theory

(1) Tsutomu Miyazaki Case

Before taking on my main topic, I would like to talk about the Tsutomu Miyazaki Case, in which four children were kidnapped and killed over a ten month period starting in August 1988. The case should be familiar to everybody who is here today. Let's take a look back at it.

What I'd like you to think about is whether the case could be prevented today. In August 1988, Tsutomu Miyazaki came to a housing complex. After parking his car there, he began walking. He was on the prowl for a young girl to kidnap. Soon, he saw a little girl walking right in front of him. He thought to himself, "Good, I'll snatch that girl today." Now, if you were the kidnapper, how would you speak to the girl? How would you take her to your car, which is parked in a housing complex?

Most people think they'd sneak up from behind and tap on her shoulder, saying "Hey, honey ..." However, Miyazaki was not so dumb. If he had, the girl might've thought "This man snuck up on me from behind. He may have been following me. It means that the man may be a bad guy." That's why he didn't do that.

What did he do then? The girl began climbing up a pedestrian bridge. As soon as he saw it, Miyazaki hurriedly walked onto the road to cross over to the sidewalk on the other side. He then climbed up the same pedestrian bridge from the opposite direction. This meant that the girl and Miyazaki would cross each other somewhere on the bridge. It allowed him to pretend that he was not following the girl. Miyazaki then called out to the girl. When speaking to a child, he always lowered himself to the child's height. Instead of looking down, he looked straight at the child at eye level. Miyazaki had an excellent intuitive grasp of child psychology, and this ability made him a genius at instantly understanding what a child wanted then and there.

It was a hot August day. The girl was probably dripping with sweat. Miyazaki said something like "It's hot and yucky today, isn't it? But I'm on the way to somewhere very cool. How nice!" Once again imagine you are the kidnapper. How would you take the girl to the parking lot inside the housing complex? The scenario that comes to mind might be like this. The kidnapper says something like "I'm on the way to somewhere cool. Would you like to come with me? Let's go," takes her hand, and starts walking. Miyazaki was too clever for that.

If he had done so, the girl might have realized he was a bad guy. At some schools, students are taught how to get away from a would-be kidnapper's grasp. It goes like this: "Bad guys try to grab your hand. If someone grabs your hand, shake it off like this."

What did Miyazaki do? He said "It's hot and yucky today, isn't it? But I'm on the way to somewhere very cool. How nice! You can come too if you'd like. I'll go there first and wait for you. Bye!" He then started walking towards the steps and climbed down alone. The girl was left on her own on the bridge. She thought "Oh no, the man's gone. Wait. I've been told that bad guys grab your hand and drag you away. So, after all, that man was a good guy. I'll go after him." She then followed him. This is how the Tsutomu Miyazaki Case came about. Could we prevent this case from happening today?

I'm afraid not. A self-protection alarm would be useless. So would the art of self-defense, crime prevention patrols, watch-over-the-kids activities, and watch-out-for-strangers education.

(2) Who are suspicious individuals?

Did Miyazaki look like a suspicious individual? So far I've visited about 200 elementary schools to give lessons. When I ask students if they know the words "a suspicious individual", they all say yes. I then go on to ask them what kind of person a suspicious individual is. Strangely, they always come up with three answers: a man wearing a mask, a man wearing sunglasses, and a man wearing a black cap. However, after quick research, one realizes that there has never been a criminal going after children who fits all of these descriptions. Needless to say, Miyazaki was not wearing a mask or sunglasses. This means that the kind of safety education currently being given to school children across Japan could not prevent the Tsutomu Miyazaki Case.

Some people may think that case was way off the scale so there will never be a case like that again. However, it actually followed a common pattern in that the perpetrator tricked a child as is the case with most crimes targeted at children. According to the results of a survey of child kidnap cases conducted by the National Police Agency (NPA) covering all child victims, including elementary and junior high school students, 55% of the victims were lured away through trickery. Significantly, this 55% only included cases in which police found evidence of trickery, so the actual figure could well be higher.

Only three weeks ago, a sex offender who had been collecting saliva from little girls was arrested. As soon as he saw a young girl, he would approach her and say "I'm a saliva researcher. I'm looking for saliva samples for my study so could you give me your saliva?" He drank all the saliva he had collected. After his arrest, police learned that he collected saliva from more than 500 children over a 17-year period. Police were surprised by the extent of it.

Another sex offender who lived in Yokohama would approach children by saying things like "Hey, you there, you have rotten teeth. Don't they hurt? If you leave them like that, they'll start hurting. But, don't worry, I'm very good at fixing rotten teeth. Aren't you lucky? Would you like me to fix them? Would you like me to do it, eh? Then open your mouth. I'll

fix them now.” Then, he would perform a variety of sex acts, including a deep kiss. It turned out, by the time the man was arrested, he had done this more than 50 times. It was a case that went totally under the police radar, because children didn’t even tell their parents. They would have just thought “I was lucky today because a man fixed my teeth. What a nice person he was!” Crimes that target children are all like this. People might think a perpetrator suddenly appears out of thin air and attacks a child. The child then screams and reaches for his or her self-protection alarm. No, cases like that are very rare.

Criminals love to trick. Tricking is almost risk-free. If a trick doesn’t work, it’s no big deal. Just keep doing until it works. A criminal approaches a child and tries to trick. He fails. He then approaches another child. He fails again. He doesn’t care too much because he knows he won’t get caught doing it. He just keeps trying until he succeeds. On the other hand, if he attacks a child, a failure could immediately lead to his arrest. It’s very risky.

So, if you want to keep children safe, you must teach them how to deal with the kinds of criminal acts that account for the vast majority of real-life cases. To put it more plainly, it is important to help children develop an ability to realize if someone tries to trick them. Unfortunately, almost nothing is being done in this area.

(3) Landscape reading ability

What on earth can we do to foster such an ability in children? For a child to realize when being tricked, the child must use something that never tricks as a guide. This “something” is our only hope. People cannot be relied on as a guide because they can disguise themselves as part of their tricks. We must therefore turn our eyes to something that never play tricks.

What is it then? It’s the landscape. Landscapes never play tricks. Only people do. People lie, but landscapes don’t. In fact, landscapes are furiously sending danger signals to children: “This is a dangerous place for you. Be careful. You might be being tricked right now.”

Sadly, children are unable to notice these signals. Safety education is really about giving this ability to children. I call this ability “landscape reading ability”. The community safety map, which I’m about to talk about, aims to reinforce landscape reading ability.

I devised the community safety map in 2002. It is based on crime opportunity theory. This theory has a lot of alternative names: situational crime prevention, environmental criminology, rational choice theory, routine activity theory, criminal geography, crime pattern theory, defensible space theory, crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), and broken windows theory. Not surprisingly, these theories are essentially the same in that they all aim to establish situational or spatial conditions that are associated with a high probability of the occurrence of crime. The only difference lies in where emphasis is placed - microscopic factors or macroscopic factors, physical aspects or social-psychological aspects, and so on. In fact, crime opportunity theory encompasses these two groups of theories, and the community safety map is an educational application of it.

2. Community Safety Map

(1) Territoriality and surveillance

The community safety map focuses on territoriality and surveillance, two common denominators of various versions of crime opportunity theory. The community safety map indicates low territoriality sites and low surveillance sites as dangerous sites. High territoriality means difficult for perpetrators to access. Even if perpetrators manage to enter this zone, they'll give up and leave, if surveillance is high. The community safety map has incorporated these two elements.

However, the words territoriality and surveillance are difficult for children to understand, so I teach them that dangerous places are places that are easy to get into for anyone and those that are difficult to see for anyone. "Easy to get into" and "difficult to see" are therefore two key phrases that children use as criteria when they look for dangerous places.

My community safety map is very similar to crime opportunity profiling, a practice followed in the United Kingdom. The greatest difference rests in the fact that crime opportunity profiling assumes the profiler to be police, whereas the community safety map assumes the profiler to be children in the context of a school lesson.

(2) Benefits of community safety map

I'd now like to move on to the benefits of the community safety map. The first and greatest benefit of the community safety map is that it enables children to learn crime opportunity profiling skills. Crime opportunity profiling helps children develop an ability that schools call "risk prediction ability". Risk prediction ability, in turn, reduces the risk of children wandering into criminal situations. Using this term, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has issued a notification calling for schools to provide children with safety education.

The second benefit of the community safety map is that it helps prevent juvenile delinquency. Children who have participated in the drawing up of a community safety map are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior. This activity is performed through group work, so it helps children make friends and strengthen their friendship with other children who are already friends. Namely, the community safety map helps develop a bond in the school. It also helps children develop a bond with the local community and community residents.

Community safety map activity includes the appointment of interviewers, and children are instructed to collect information on dangerous places from community residents as part of the lesson. This, however, is more like an excuse. The real purpose of interviews is not the collection of information. Rather, it is to make children realize that, although there are a lot of "strangers" in the community, they are not "suspicious individuals" and that these "strangers" are more like "uncles" and "aunts" who would protect them from harm. At the same time, interviews would provide a cue for community residents to get more interested in the schools and local community as a whole by showing them how hard children are working to make

their community better. In this manner, the process of drawing up a community safety map leads to the strengthening of the bond among children and that between children and the local community. This functions is what is known as “a protective factor” in criminology, and prevents juvenile delinquency as a result.

The third benefit of the community safety map is that it helps reduce street crime in the community. As community safety map activity is based on crime opportunity theory, lessons will help spread this theory from the classroom to parents, the local community and school staff through children. This will lead to activities aimed at reducing crime opportunities in the community, rather than just being vigilant or careful. A reduction in crime opportunities will result in a reduction in crime. In this sense, the community safety map can also be characterized as a community empowerment tool.

(3) Making community safety maps

Let’s now view an actual making of community safety maps.

[Playback of recorded NHK World program]

In the Tsutomu Miyazaki Case, which I discussed earlier, the problem lay in the nature of the location, the top of a pedestrian bridge. If that girl had been given a community safety map lesson, she might have realized that the top of a pedestrian bridge was a place that is easy to get into and difficult to see. Nobody takes notice if someone climbs up the steps of a pedestrian bridge. It looks perfectly normal. Namely, the top of a pedestrian bridge is very accessible. In addition, it is blocked from view. Drivers cannot see it. Pedestrians cannot see it.

In fact, criminals love the top of pedestrian bridges, and a lot of offenses have been committed there. There was a case in which a junior high school student mugged people on the top of a pedestrian bridge as two of his friends stood guard at the bottom of the bridge’s two flights of steps. Last year, the murder-robbery of a housewife occurred on the top of a pedestrian bridge in Yokohama. Instead of attacking the victim on the street, the perpetrator of this crime followed the victim until she got to his preferred location, where he stabbed her, stole her money, and fled. Namely, he consciously chose this location. The community safety map helps protect people from these kinds of crimes by improving their landscape reading ability.

As we have just watched, the first step of community safety map activity is to teach children the two key concepts: “easy to get into” and “difficult to see”. They serve as yardsticks with which children find dangerous places. Children are then taken out for field work, which includes interviews. After this, they return to school and draw up a map. This is followed by the presentation of investigation results at a mini seminar. This is the basic process flow of making community safety maps.

(4) Supporting evidences

To demonstrate the effectiveness of the community safety map, I’d like to briefly discuss

the evidence.

First of all, risk prediction ability is about reading landscapes from the viewpoint of criminals. On this subject, Mr. Yasutaka Haramiishi and Mr. Nobuo Iwai have coauthored a paper [Haramiishi Y. and Iwai N. (2008), Elementary School Safety Education to Foster Risk Avoiding Ability, Social Safety No. 69: p.p. 17-28]. The authors, who are teachers at Ikeda Elementary School attached to Osaka Kyoiku University, gave community safety map lessons at their school, and measured students' risk prediction ability before and after their lesson. The paper concludes that "students' risk prediction ability has improved".

Next up is social bonds. On this subject, prof. Shinji Taira has written a paper [Taira S. (2007), Preparation of Community Safety Map and Measurement of Its Effects, Bulletin of Fukuyama University Mental Health Consultation Room No. 1: p.p. 35-42]. Based on activities undertaken in Hiroshima, the paper concludes that the community safety map helped strengthen the social bond between children and the local community or children's love for the local community.

The third subject is street crime. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has published a booklet on it [Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2008), Community Development Keyword Book - Regenerating Local Communities: p.p. 216-217]. The booklet includes a case study of an activity undertaken in Yao City, Osaka Prefecture. While it is quite difficult to conduct empirical studies in Japan, the Yao City's experiment produced very interesting results. A few years ago, Yao City introduced community safety map lessons in one area. A year later, a city-wide crime survey was conducted. The results showed that the area in which community safety map lessons were given was the only area experiencing a fall in the number of street crime known to the police, bucking the city-wide upward trend. So far, this is the only empirical verification of the effectiveness of the community safety map that withstands scientific scrutiny.

The volume of available data is still hopelessly inadequate, so I'll have no objection if my presentation today is taken as no more than a preliminary analysis, although I firmly believe that the community safety map has the potential to reduce crime, as I have argued throughout my presentation. Anyway, the real issue at the moment is not the effectiveness of my community safety map but the circulation of an assortment of misconceived community safety map look-alikes. Examples include the suspicious individuals map, which plots locations where suspicious individuals have appeared, and the crime map, which plots locations where criminal offenses have been committed. A version of the latter map is released by individual prefectural headquarters across the nation as well.

The crime map and community safety map are totally different. Crime maps are very effective when used by local governments and police departments to determine, for example, where to deploy police resources. However, they are next to useless for community residents and children because they do not walk around the community while looking at a map. They don't memorize it either. In fact, community residents and children look at the changing landscape when they walk, so it is necessary to have them make a safety judgment on the basis of the landscape. Despite sharing the word "map", these two maps have totally different

functions, so they must not be mixed up.

Even at schools, many people have mistaken ideas. One day, for example, a school teacher came to me and said “I know the community safety map is a good idea, but our school district is so big that we cannot do a survey.” He got it completely wrong. There is no need to survey the entire school district. As the aim of community safety map activity is to enhance landscape reading ability, it is sufficient to just walk around the neighborhood of the school. To put it another way, children from Kobe could just as well draw up a map in Tokyo or Osaka.

The landscape reading ability we are trying to foster in children will still be useful when they become junior high school students, senior high school students, or adults. It wouldn't matter whether children from Kobe moved to Osaka, Tokyo or even a foreign country. The important thing is to ensure that children can recognize the danger signs of a landscape as soon as they see it and think “This place looks like what criminals are looking for. Be careful. Don't be tricked.” The community safety map enhances this ability. Drawing up a map is never the goal itself. You could just as well tear up the completed map. Please put community safety map activity into practice in the correct way, do an experiment to find out what kinds of benefits it has, how we can make it more efficient, and so on, and give me feedback on that. I hope that many of you here today will take an interest in this activity.

Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008

Mr. Kunitaka TOMITA

Counsellor
Cabinet Secretariat

0. Public Security Institutions and Other Organizations and Groups

The Action Plan for the realization of the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008 is a five-year plan adopted by the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime, which is comprised of the Prime Minister and all other cabinet members, and has so far been released in 2003 and 2008. It is a comprehensive catalog of public security measures that encompasses all government measures.

The ultimate goal of anti-crime measures contained in the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008 is to create a crime-free society. Under this goal, the plan proposes to tackle seven priority issues, including crimes in people's daily lives, using three so to speak "non-coercive" approaches consisting of providing support for citizen's crime prevention activities, developing a social environment that discourages crime, and pursuing collaboration among relevant domestic and overseas organizations. The relationship between these seven issues and three approaches is summarized in the seven-row three-column table included in my handout. In fact, this table contains a complete list of government security measures, and I'll try to expand on it a little in my presentation.

The notes begin with legal provisions for public security institutions, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, crime-prevention volunteer groups, and others as government and private-sector players in the implementation of public security measures. Under the present framework, anti-crime measures fall on the shoulders of these organizations.

Public security institutions include the police, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (Japan Coast Guard) as defined in Article 2, paragraph 1, of the Police Law and other legal provisions. Some administrative organizations, such as labor standards inspection offices and public health centers, engage in activities aimed at maintaining public safety and order in specific sectors. Examples include food safety, safety of medical and pharmaceutical products, granting of business licenses and permits for various industries, and work environments. Theoretically speaking, these organizations constitute administrative police. There are also private-sector crime-prevention volunteer groups, who engage in volunteer crime prevention activities, characterized as crime prevention activities undertaken by citizens to ensure their own safety.

As mentioned by earlier speakers, the number of penal code offenses known to the police

reached some 2.85 million in 2002, setting a postwar record. By the way, the number of penal code offenses known to the police means the number of penal code offenses recognized by the police. This excludes penal code offenses based on the Road Traffic Law, i.e. penal code offenses relating to traffic accidents, and includes certain offenses that are not penal code offenses but resemble them. The number of penal code offenses known to the police is the most fundamental indicator for assessing the security situation, comparable to annual growth rate or national income in economics. Most public safety issues, therefore, revolve around this quantity.

In response to the deteriorating crime situation, the Government adopted the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime in December 2003, as mentioned at the beginning of this presentation. Five years later in December 2008, the action plan was revised and released as the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008.

1. Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime

(1) Stable crime situation during postwar era

Before tackling the main topic, the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008, I'd like to talk about the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime. I'll begin with an overview of the changing crime situation going back to the postwar era. In the immediate aftermath of WWII, especially from 1948 to '49, penal code offenses were committed in epidemic proportions. By 1950, however, the number of penal code offenses known to the police had plummeted, and stayed low at around 1.4 million from 1951 to '79.

Whether this number is really low in absolute terms is a moot point, but, at least in relative terms, it is low. Namely, Japan's crime rate, the number of penal code offenses known to the police per 100,000 of the population, is very low compared to other countries with similar social conditions. For example, the crime rates of the United States, United Kingdom, Germany and France were approx. 5900, 5100, 6200 and 4900, respectively, in 1980. Japan's figure, on the other hand, was just 1200, which ranged from a fifth to a quarter of those countries. In an opinion survey conducted around that time, many respondents named "good public safety" as a reason for being proud of Japan, indicating that people also genuinely believed that Japan was a very safe country.

(2) Rapid deterioration in public safety, starting in 1998

However, the number of penal code offenses known to the police began increasing again in 1980, and the trend accelerated from 1998, with annual rises of more than 100,000 recorded in that year and subsequent years. 2001 was a particularly bad year as the size of increase topped 300,000. As a result of these large annual increases, the number of penal code offenses known to the police reached around 2.85 million in 2002. This was about twice the level prevalent during the 1951-'79 period, which was characterized by a stable crime situation, as explained above. Even compared to the chaotic period in the immediate aftermath of WWII, the 2002 figure was higher by 1.8 fold.

Over the same period, juvenile crime also increased. In 2003, 144,000 juveniles were arrested for penal code offenses as against 380,000 arrests made of both adult and juvenile suspects. Namely, more than one in three suspects arrested for penal code offenses were juveniles in that year. Given that juveniles only accounted for 17.5% of the total population around that time, the level of juvenile arrests was really high. In addition, there were about 220,000 foreign nationals staying in Japan illegally.

Reflecting such deterioration in public safety, the proportion of people “concerned about public safety” jumped from 26% to 41 % over a five-year period from 1997 to 2002 according to opinion surveys conducted during that period.

(3) Establishment of Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime

The deterioration in the public safety situation caused great concern to the whole society. Recognizing this as a state of emergency, the Special Committee on Public Safety of the Liberal Democratic Party, which was in government at the time, drew up “An Emergency Proposal on the Strengthening of Public Safety” and put it to the Government in June 2003. The Government, on its part, set up the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime in September 2003 (cabinet agreement of September 2, 2003) as a vehicle to engage in planning, designing, general coordination, etc. for comprehensive anti-crime measures.

Although the nation’s general public policies are discussed by the Cabinet, the deliberation of a specific topic falls on a ministerial meeting attended by specific ministers. At any rate, the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime is rather special in that it is attended by all cabinet members, the only other example being the Ministerial Meeting concerning Economic Measures. This shows that public safety measures have become a top priority issue on the same level as economic measures.

Since 2003, the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime has been held roughly every six months. Although a change of government to the Democratic Party of Japan occurred a couple of years ago, it did not affect this ministerial meeting at all. If and when a specific public safety topic arises, a working group is set up under the ministerial meeting to put in place individual measures, as well as general measures. In my notes, nine are included as follows: illegal firearms, drug abuse, child pornography, human trafficking, protection of children from crime, comprehensive anti-boryokudan measures, including crack downs, consumer rights infringement offenses, recidivism prevention, and ensuring safety and security in disaster-stricken areas, etc. Only last week, a working group on cause of death investigation met to discuss matters relating to postmortem examination. Topics for which a working group has been established are current public safety topics recognized as such by the Government.

2. Adoption of Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008

(1) Initial plan (Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2003: December 2003 decision of Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime)

The Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008 has been

adopted through a decision of the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime. First, let's take a brief overview of the initial plan (December 2003 decision). To stem the rise in crime and dispel community anxiety about public safety, five priority issues were identified vis-à-vis the prevailing crime situation at the time. These were the prevention of crimes invading people's everyday spaces and posing a threat to people's daily lives, prevention of juvenile crime through society-wide efforts, response to cross-border threats (globalization of crime), protection of the economy and society from organized crime (boryokudan problem), and development of infrastructure for the restoration of public safety (system). The initial plan focused on those five issues.

As pointed out by earlier speakers, there is uncertainty about whether those measures alone were responsible for the improvement in public safety. At any rate, the number of penal code offenses known to the police did fall to about 1.91 million by 2007. The number of juvenile arrests made for penal code offenses also decreased to about 103,000. Similarly, the number of foreign nationals staying in Japan illegally dropped to about 170,000.

(2) Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008

Nevertheless, new types of crime, such as furikome (transfer-money-now) fraud, random murder and assault, crimes victimizing children and cybercrime, have emerged or become more frequent. As a result, the fall in the number of penal code offenses seems to have failed to make the general public feel safer, as pointed out by earlier speakers, and this has been confirmed by a 2008 opinion survey, which found that half of the respondents still felt "anxious about public safety". In response to this crime situation, the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008 was adopted in 2008 by revising the initial plan.

3. Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008

(1) Overview

As mentioned earlier, the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008 has been summarized in an attached table. Covering the five year period from 2009 to 2013, the action plan aims to further reduce crime and dispel community anxiety about public safety.

I'd now like to talk about the three approaches and seven priority issues. The three approaches to restoring public safety are a. providing support for activities undertaken by citizens to ensure their own safety, b. developing a social environment that discourages crime, and c. various anti-crime measures, including point-of-entry measures. Incidentally, the same approaches were also used in the initial plan.

Let me elaborate a little on them. "Providing support for activities undertaken by citizens to ensure their own safety" is based on the idea that, to maintain public safety, citizens' voluntary efforts are essential, in addition to the activities of the police and other public security institutions, and that the administrative organizations should provide support for such activities. "Developing a social environment that discourages crime" involves the

regeneration of community solidarity and family bonds and restoration of their crime prevention functions, as pointed out by earlier speakers. It calls for consideration to be given to crime prevention when deciding on how to receive foreign visitors in terms of the institutional framework, when designing social infrastructure, such as roads and parks, and so on. Namely, developing a social environment that discourages crime has both an intangible aspect (family, community, and institutional framework) and a tangible aspect (social infrastructure). “Various anti-crime measures, including point-of-entry measures” focus specifically on collaboration and information sharing by relevant domestic and overseas organizations on the grounds that there is nothing special about administrative organizations making efforts to maintain public safety and order. Why are point-of-entry measures mentioned here? Because point-of-entry measures, such as maritime policing, airport policing, prevention of illegal entry at ports, anti-terrorism measures and prevention of smuggling, are typical measures that require collaboration between the police, Japan Coast Guard, Immigration Bureau, Customs Office and other relevant government agencies. It is in this context that the action plan discusses information sharing and coordination.

Let’s now move on to the seven priority issues. These issues have been selected on the basis of the crime situation prevalent in 2008. The first issue is “building a society resistant to crimes in people’s daily lives”. In 2008, there were 1.8 million penal code offenses known to the police. Of these, theft accounted for 1.37 million or 76%, including 390,000 bicycle thefts, 150,000 shopliftings, and 150,000 motor vehicle contents thefts. As pointed out by earlier speakers, numerous offenses are still being committed in people’s daily lives.

The next issue is “building a society that keeps its citizens from turning into criminals”. Although the number of penal code offenses committed by juveniles fell, juveniles still account for 27% of all arrests made for penal code offenses. Moreover, recidivists account for 30% of all arrests made for penal code offenses. Similarly, 60% of all penal code offenses are committed by recidivists. This highlights how important it is to keep people with criminal records from reoffending.

The rest consists of “response to globalization”, “countermeasures against criminal organizations and other antisocial forces”, “building a safe cyberspace”, “addressing threats of terrorism, etc.” and “development of infrastructure for the restoration of public safety”. The action plan has set a total of 172 tasks under these priority issues.

The action plan has also adopted “building a society resistant to crime” as its fundamental goal. Here’s an important point that deserves special attention. The expression “prevention of crimes in people’s daily lives” used in the initial plan has been changed to “building a society resistant to crimes in people’s daily lives” in the new plan. The reason behind this move is the belief that the word “prevention” falls short of the mark. This may have something to do with the definition of the term “prevention”, but current thinking places emphasis on building a society with a built-in deterrence to crime. Another example is “prevention of juvenile crimes” in the initial plan. This has been changed to “encouragement of social participation” in the new plan. This change is based on the recognition that juvenile crimes are committed by youths who have become isolated in the society. To prevent such crimes, therefore, it is important to encourage social participation and foster self-awareness as

a citizen, much more so than properly conducting criminal investigation. Successful social participation deters crime and is in line with the 2008 action plan's emphasis on building a built-in deterrence to crime.

The relationship between these seven priority issues and three approaches has been discussed above. Needless to say, the seven priority issues are issues to be tackled on a priority basis. The three approaches, on the other hand, are administrative techniques to be used when tackling those issues. Namely, to implement the seven priority issues, administrative authorities need to provide assistance for activities undertaken by citizens to ensure their own safety. In concrete terms, this involves the provision of facilities, information and knowledge/insight and implementation of budgetary measures. In the case of the development of a social environment, the establishment/modification of relevant administrative schemes and implementation of budgetary measures are needed. Various anti-crime measures, including point-of-entry measures, on the other hand, require the collaboration of domestic and overseas intelligence organizations. These approaches represent administrative techniques commonly applicable to the seven priority issues.

Now, let's take another look at the attached table. A majority of the cells created at the intersection of a row and column are subdivided into smaller cells. These contain concrete forms of the approach as defined by the priority topic concerned. For example, the approach "providing support for citizen's crime prevention activities" becomes "enhancement of support for crime prevention volunteer groups" when applied to the topic "building a society resistant to crimes in people's daily lives". The same approach then becomes "exclusion of boryokudan and associates from economic activities" when applied to the topic "measures against criminal organizations and other antisocial forces". Basically, this is what the table is trying to say.

(2) Characteristic features

I'd now like to discuss the characteristic features of the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime 2008. First, diversity and comprehensiveness are noted. As shown above, the implementation-level details of an administrative technique change according to the priority issue at hand. Take "developing a social environment that discourages crime from both tangible and intangible perspectives" as an example. This technique becomes the establishment of safe and secure activity centers for children through the utilization of unused classrooms at elementary schools if the priority issue at hand is "building a society resistant to crimes in people's daily lives". If the priority issue is "building a society that keeps its citizens from turning into criminals", it becomes the creation of employment for people who are unable to earn a steady income. If the priority issue is "addressing threats of terrorism, etc.", the development of a social environment takes the form of protection and security for important facilities and VIPs. This shows that, in concrete terms, crime deterrent measures can take diverse and comprehensive forms. At the same time, in our complex modern society, the police do not have the capacity to implement wide ranging public safety measures on their own, and this necessitates the collaboration of all relevant organizations with specialized expertise in their respective policy areas.

The second characteristic feature is reliance mainly on non-coercive techniques. As mentioned earlier, the 2008 action plan contains the provision of support for activities undertaken by citizens to ensure their own safety, developing a social environment, and point-of-entry and other measures as crime prevention and control techniques. Here, the strengthening of the power of police officers is being considered. However, it is on the agenda only in a few specific areas, including investigative power for law-breaking juveniles (juvenile offenders aged under 14) and anti-terrorism institutional systems. Similarly, the boosting of the number of police officers and prosecutors is being contemplated, but general strengthening of the power of police officers is out of the question.

Why? Though this has also been pointed out by earlier speakers, a detailed analysis of the exercise of power by individual police officers on the ground shows that it is only effective in deterring crime if people who are already committed to perpetrating a crime have a high probability of bumping into an on-duty police officer or consider this probability high. This is basically a hit or miss process. Namely, it has high potential effectiveness, but is very inefficient due to its random nature.

A more efficient approach would be to build a society that is fundamentally resistant to crime. The most effective way to achieve this goal is to provide support for volunteer crime prevention activities, develop a social environment that discourages crime, and ensure close collaboration among existing security institutions as mentioned above. The action plan is premised on the effectiveness of a fundamental solution based on these three techniques.

In fact, the number of penal code offenses known to the police fell steadily from 2003 to 2010. As of 2010, the figure stands only at 1.58 million. The number of juvenile arrests has also fallen substantially to 86,000. These are actual outcomes. As mentioned earlier, public safety measures are not something that is implemented only after its effectiveness is proven through social science experiments. For this reason, there is uncertainty about whether those measures alone were responsible for the improvement achieved in these crime statistics. Nevertheless, we are confident that they have a certain level of effectiveness, and will therefore continue implementing them into the future. This concludes my presentation.

Three approaches to public safety Seven priority issues	Supporting citizens' active involvement towards ensuring their own safety	Creating a social environment where crime is discouraged	Coordination among concerned organizations
I. Building a society resistant to crime	Improving support for crime-prevention volunteer groups	Promoting public-private collaboration in creating communities resistant to crime	Countermeasures against <i>furikome</i> fraud
	Improving support by local autonomous bodies for voluntary crime-prevention activities	Creating places of safety for children	Countermeasures against offenses from consumers' perspective
	Adequate provision of crime and community safety information	Eliminating harmful for juveniles	Measuring for the safety of children and women
	Promoting voluntary crime-deterrent measures by private businesses	Promoting various crime-prevention systems	Measuring against automobile and other thefts
II. Building a society not creating criminals		Civilizing juveniles wholesomely and socializing isolated youths and others	Investigative measures against juvenile crime and criminal circumstances
		Assistance to releasee from prison or juvenile training school	Effective information-sharing on releasee from prisons
III. Response to globalization		Building a society with no illegal immigrant by implementation of new immigration control systems	Countermeasures at points of entry
		Building infrastructure enabling a multicultural society	Countermeasures against transnational organized crime
IV. Countermeasures against criminal organizations and other antisocial forces	Excluding Boryokudan and their affiliates from economic activities	Blocking affiliations with Boryokudan and encouraging dissociations from Boryokudan	Countermeasures against Boryokudan and related forces
	Support, publicity, and awareness-raising activities provided to concerned bodies		Countermeasures against money laundering
		Measures to prevent drug abuse	Illegal firearms countermeasures
			Drugs countermeasures
Countermeasures against various crimes perpetrated in an organized way			
V. Building a safe cyberspace	Sophistication and dissemination of detection methods and filtering software for illegal or harmful information	Coordinating parties in regard to illegal or harmful information on the Internet	Prevention and apprehension of cybercrime through public-private cooperation
		Promoting environment for adequate use of mobile phones	
		Dissemination and awareness-raising activities for public about knowledge and means of information security	
VI. Addressing threats of terrorism		Comprehensive counterterrorism measures based on people's understanding and cooperation	Counterterrorism cooperation and assistance in the international community
		Establishing better relationships with community in concentrated population of foreigners	Reinforcing countermeasures at points of entry
		Further coordination with business operators of important infrastructure	Countermeasures for containing means of terrorism
			Information gathering and thorough control of illegal acts
			Security level and crisis management
			Countermeasures against cyber terrorism and cyber intelligence
Countermeasures against transnational threats such as proliferation of weapons of mass destruction			
Addressing suspected cases of abduction by North Korea			
VII. Building infrastructure of public security	Promoting information provided by citizens	Various research projects and studies	Augmenting human and material resources
		Securing crime evidence and securing cooperation to facilitate swift and adequate investigation	Securing traceability of crimes and to collect evidence
			Adequate response to criminal trials

Changes in Number of Criminal Offenses over Past 20 Years and Police Response

Mr. Nobuhiro KATO

Director

Crime Prevention Office, NPA

1. Introduction

In the 1990s, crime began increasing across the board to set off a crime epidemic. the number of criminal offenses (penal code offenses excluding traffic-related professional negligence resulting in injury or death and dangerous driving resulting in injury or death, the same applying hereafter) known to the police, which stood at around 1.6 million in 1990, climbed modestly in the first half of the decade, and reached 1.8 million in 1996. In the following year, the rate of increase accelerated and the surge continued until 2002, bringing the figure to 2.8 million after seven consecutive rises. In response to this crisis situation, nationwide all-out crime deterrent efforts were made, and the number of offenses began falling in 2003. The trend continued in subsequent years and was still unbroken in 2010, bringing the figure below 1.6 million after eight consecutive falls.

What made the number of offenses rise and fall like this? Elucidating their causes will make more effective crime prevention possible in the future. However, identifying contributing factors to rises and falls in crime is extremely difficult. In my presentation, I'd like to talk about which crimes rose and which ones fell, likely contributing factors to those changes, and efforts made by police, as well as providing a future outlook, including challenges.

Before I proceed, I'd like to remind you of two things.

First, there are qualitative differences among crimes. When criminal offenses known to the police are tallied, an act of murder receives one count and so does an act of shoplifting of a pencil. However, by narrowly focusing on quantitative changes in the number of offenses without regard to qualitative differences among crimes, you end up with a one-sided view on the crime situation, particularly in relation to the threats of crime and countermeasures against them. Well aware of this risk, I'm going to focus on quantitative changes in crime as embodied in the number of criminal offenses known to the police today.

Second, the number of criminal offenses known to the police is not usually the same as the number of criminal offenses actually committed, because some cases are bound to be unreported. For example, a store manager may consider the shoplifting of a pencil not worth reporting or a victim of sex crime may hesitate to report it to the police for fear of being stigmatized. Another possibility is the police mistaking a murder for a suicide. If this happens,

a bona fide criminal offense is left unrecognized. In an extreme case, the police could intentionally ignore criminal offenses to keep them out of the statistics, though this is more of a theoretical possibility than an actual one. At any rate, the police are trying hard to minimize the number of unreported criminal offenses, but there is no objective data to determine how close the number of criminal offenses known to the police is to the number of criminal offenses actually committed. For this reason, I will ignore any potentially unreported criminal offenses.

2. Signature Crimes in Past 20 Years

The rise and fall pattern of the number of criminal offenses known to the police discussed above, including a peak around 2002, does not apply uniformly to all crimes. For example, there were no distinct peaks in murder or arson. Although robbery and rape did double or halve within a span of a few years, their frequency is low, with even their peak figures no more than several thousands. This is rather insignificant in terms of its contribution to the changes in the overall number of offenses, which peaked at more than 2.8 million and changed across a 1 million plus range. (Note: I'll touch on the impact of those crimes later.) What, then, is the crime that characterized those changes? It is larceny. Larceny, which normally accounts for some 80% of the overall number of criminal offenses known to the police, jumped from 1.4 million something in the 1990s to 2.3 million something in 2002 but fell back to 1.2 million something in 2010. As can be seen from this example, larceny offenses are committed very frequently, so it is usual practice to classify them by modus operandi before embarking on a statistical analysis. I'm going to use this classification throughout my presentation.

Crimes (including crime subcategories classified by modus operandi, the same applying hereafter) that changed by more than 10,000 offenses a year over a period of several years around 2002, namely the signature crimes that helped characterize the changes in the overall number of offenses known to the police over the same period, can roughly be classified into three groups. The first group consists of crimes that increased and then decreased. Typical members of this group include (i) vehicle load theft, (ii) vending machine theft, (iii) bicycle theft, (iv) burglary of a home in the absence of residents, and (v) vehicle parts theft. The second group consists of crimes that more or less just increased. Typical members of this group include: (i) vandalism and (ii) shoplifting. The third group consists of crimes that more or less just decreased. Typical members of this group include motorcycle theft. Let's now take a look at them one by one.

(1) Vehicle load theft

Vehicle load theft is the theft of money, goods or any other items carried in a motor vehicle or loaded on a bicycle or motorcycle. The juvenile share (people aged 14 to 19 years, the same applying hereafter) of suspects is a little more than 20%. People in their 20s have a similar share. The number of arrests per suspect is more than 10. The typical image of a suspect that emerges from these statistics is a young person with behavior problems committing a series of offenses for money and goods.

The number of offenses known to the police increased by about 220,000 from 1997 to 2002 and decreased by about 320,000 from 2002 to 2010. At about 70,000 each, the margin of increase was particularly large in 2000 and 2001. The number of arrests, on the other hand, decreased in those years. Down nearly 40% from the previous year, it was particularly low in 2000, with the arrest rate almost halving (25.0% → 12.6%).

Why did the number of arrests decrease while the number of offenses known to the police increased? Here, I'd like to draw your attention to the arrest rates of felonious crimes (murder, robbery, arson, rape, abduction & kidnapping, human trafficking and indecent assault, the same applying hereafter) and felonious larcenies (burglary, motor vehicle theft, purse-snatching, and pickpocketing, the same applying hereafter). From 1999 to 2000, the arrest rate of felonious crimes fell by 23.7 points (84.1 → 60.4%), while that of felonious larcenies fell by 31.4 points (64.6% → 33.2%). Felonious crimes and felonious larcenies are crimes that the police consider important and try to tackle on a priority basis. Namely, the resolution of felonious crimes and felonious larcenies are priority goals for the police as a whole, so they had few resources left to address vehicle load theft. In other words, vehicle load theft increased because there were not enough deterrents in the form of crackdowns and arrests.

I'll talk about measures to combat vehicle load theft later. Right now, I'd like to explain the arrest rate a little. The arrest rate is a ratio of the number of arrests to the number of offenses known to the police. As such, it shows what proportion of the recognized offenses ends in arrest. The arrest rate of penal code offenses as a whole used to be around 60% until the 1980s, but fell to about 40% in the early 1990s. It then plummeted in 1999, and hit a nadir of 19.8% in 2001 before recovering a little. In recent years, the arrest rate of penal code offenses has been around 30%. The figure varies from crime to crime. Generally speaking, it is high with felonious crimes and low with minor crimes. For example, the arrest rate of murder is over 90%, while that of bicycle theft has been less than 10% in recent years.

(2) Vending machine theft

Vending machine theft is the theft of a vending machine or money or goods contained in it.

The number of offenses known to the police increased by about 110,000 from 1996 to 1999 and decreased by about 200,000 from 1999 to 2010. During the rising phase, a distinct case emerged. It was the use of altered 500 Korean won coins. It worked like this: A thief inserts a 500 Korean won into a vending machine and steals a genuine 500 Japanese yen by turning the coin return lever. Back then, 500 won was worth only about 50 Yen, so this method gave the thief a 1000% return.

To combat this crime, several measures were taken. One was a design change to the coin returning mechanism whereby the machine would return the same coin as the one inserted. Another method, introduced in 2000, was a reminting of the 500 yen coin itself, including a change of material from cupronickel to copper-zinc-nickel alloy. Other measures include the strengthening of the coin and bill recognition capability of vending machines and rolling out

of vending machines equipped with an alarm and physically reinforced vending machines capable of withstanding pry-opening attempts, as well as more frequent recovery of change. Due partly to these measures, the number of offenses known to the police has fallen sharply since 2000.

(3) Bicycle theft

Bicycle theft is the theft of a bicycle. It accounts for more than 20% of all penal code offenses, the largest share among all crimes. Some 60% of suspects are juveniles. This is a crime committed by many people without a sense of guilt, thinking “I’m just borrowing it.”

The number of offenses known to the police increased by about 110,000 from 1999 to 2001 and decreased by about 150,000 from 2001 to 2010. The number of arrests, on the other hand, fell to about two-thirds of the previous year in 2000. Bicycle theft followed the same pattern as vehicle load theft in that the year 2000 saw the number of offenses known to the police rise and the number of arrests made fall. So, this is also likely to have been caused by changes in the arrest rates of felonious crimes and felonious larcenies. Namely, the resolution of these crimes became priority goals, leaving few resources to deal with a minor crime like bicycle theft. I’ll talk about measures to combat bicycle theft later.

(4) Burglary of a home in the absence of residents

The burglary of a home in the absence of residents is a crime in which the perpetrator breaks into a home and steals money or goods while its residents are out.

The number of offenses known to the police increased by about 50,000 from 1999 to 2003 and decreased by about 90,000 from 2003 to 2010. Here, I’d like to draw your attention to one point. Why the burglary of a home in the absence of residents? Burglaries that target homes also include the night-time burglary while residents are sleeping (the perpetrator breaks into a home and steals money or goods after its occupants have gone to bed) and day-time burglary while residents are unaware (the perpetrator breaks into a home and steals money or goods while its occupants are taking a nap, eating a meal, or doing other things). Compared to changes exhibited by these two crimes, the burglary of a home in the absence of residents was exceptional in terms of the rise in the number of offenses known to the police from 1999 to 2003. This means that thieves specifically targeted empty homes (= locked homes) and that they had the ability to undo locks very quickly. This ability was based on lock-picking techniques, and, from 2000 to 2002, burglaries perpetrated through the use of lock-picking tools reached epidemic proportions. Each year, there were 20,000 to 30,000 offenses known to the police, and Chinese nationals accounted for about 70% of all arrests.

To combat this crime, a new legal regime was put in place in 2003. Namely, the Law to Prohibit the Possession of Special Unlocking Tools and Other Matters was introduced, and this outlawed the possession of lock-picking tools. At the same time, the indication of the crime prevention performance of building locks became mainstream through the introduction of a formal scheme, followed by the granting of CP marks for building parts with excellent crime prevention performance. Due partly to these measures, the number of offenses known

to the police has fallen sharply since 2004.

(5) Vehicle parts theft

Vehicle parts theft is the theft of parts and accessories mounted on a motor vehicle, motorcycle, etc. Traditionally, tires and license plates were the main targets, but the theft of car navigation devices has increased sharply in recent years. Juveniles account for about 60% of all suspects, and the proportion of offenses committed with partners or accomplices is quite high at just under 50%. The typical image of suspects that emerges from these statistics is a group of delinquent juveniles conspiring to steal vehicle parts and accessories to use them themselves (including their use in unlawful acts) or sell them for money.

The number of offenses known to the police increased by about 60,000 from 1999 to 2002 and decreased by about 60,000 from 2002 to 2010. The number of arrests, on the other hand, fell to about two-thirds of the previous year in 2000. Vehicle parts theft followed the same pattern as vehicle load theft and bicycle theft in that the year 2000 saw the number of offenses known to the police rise and the number of arrests made fall. So, this is also likely to have been caused by changes in the arrest rates of felonious crimes and felonious larcenies. I'll talk about measures to combat vehicle parts theft later.

(6) Criminal damage

Vandalism is the infliction of damage on someone else's property, excluding a public document, private document, building, or the like.

The number of offenses known to the police increased by about 180,000 from 1999 to 2003 and decreased by about 70,000 from 2003 to 2010. Although vandalism has been on the decrease in recent years, levels are still higher than what they used to be before the crime epidemic.

At first glance, vandalism seems to have nothing to do with larceny, but quite a few vandalism offenses are actually attempted larceny cases. Examples include: The perpetrator breaks a window of a motor vehicle with the intention of stealing money or goods from it but aborts it because those items were not present; the perpetrator destroys the lock of a vending machine to pry it open but flees without taking anything as an alarm goes off; and the perpetrator breaks a window of a home with the intention of committing a burglary but aborts it because the residents are alerted. Namely, an increase in vandalism is considered to be a consequence of an increase in larceny. However, from a different point of view, an increase in vandalism may be interpreted as the manifestation of a crime prevention effect, rather than just showing a deterioration in public safety, because larceny itself was prevented.

(7) Shoplifting

Shoplifting is the theft of goods from a store by circumventing staff oversight.

The number of offenses known to the police increased by about 50,000 from 2000 to 2004 and decreased by about 10,000 from 2004 to 2010.

Regarding the number of arrests, trends in its breakdown by age group deserve attention. After peaking at over 50,000 in 1998, the number of juvenile arrests fell by about 40% from that year to 2010. In contrast, arrests among the elderly (persons aged 65 years or over, the same applying hereafter) continued to increase even after topping 10,000 in 1999, and reached nearly 30,000, the same level as juvenile arrests, in 2010. Namely, it is believed that shoplifting did not see a large drop-off in the number of offenses known to the police due to the emergence of a new “elderly crime” aspect.

In this connection, shoplifting accounts for more than half of criminal offenses committed by the elderly. Although people tend to think that elderly crime has increased in recent years in proportion to the increase in the elderly population, it has actually far outpaced the growth of this population segment, given that the number of elderly offenders across all penal code crimes per unit population of the elderly has almost doubled in the last 10 years.

(8) Motorcycle theft

Motorcycle theft is the theft of a motorcycle, scooter, or the like.

The number of offenses known to the police, which, for years, stayed steady at around 250,000 until 2000, decreased by about 180,000 from that year to 2010.

With the juvenile share of arrests constantly above 90%, motorcycle theft is a typical juvenile crime. However, the juvenile population has been shrinking more or less steadily since 1989, when it peaked with the help of second-wave baby boomers, and has been reduced by almost 40% in the last 20 years. Meanwhile, the introduction of auxiliary locks, keyhole shutters, etc. has improved the theft resistance of motorcycles. It is believed that these two factors have combined to successfully reduce the number of offenses known to the police. However, a more fundamental factor seems to be that young people have drifted away from motorcycles. Namely, motorcycles may have lost some of their appeal to young people. In recent years, motorcycles have become more expensive due to the need to comply with strict exhaust standards. As a result, people in their 40s or older account for about 70% of all purchases of brand-new motorcycles.

3. Observations Arising from Crime Situation and Police Response

(1) Observations arising from crime situation

I’d like to talk about three observations that have arisen from the crime situation.

First, the emergence of an epoch-making criminal technique has the potential to give rise to a sharp increase in crime, and the prevention of such an increase will require the devising of new measures that are suited to the technique concerned. Examples include defaced 500 won coins in vending machine theft and lock-picking in the burglary of a home in the absence of residents. Furikome (transfer-money-now) fraud, a crime that tries to swindle a large sum of money with a single phone call, also belongs to this category.

Second, the police have only a limited crime control capacity. When the total amount of

crime exceeds this capacity, there is a risk that crimes that the police have loosened their grip on may get out of hand. The “total amount of crime” here is not a simple aggregate of offenses. Rather, it is a quantity “adjusted for quality”. Though occurring infrequently at a rate of less than 10,000 cases a year, robbery, rape and other felonious crimes require a relatively large amount of police resources per case, so their contribution to the total amount of crime is huge. If the total amount of crime increases, the police allocate their resources to crackdowns and arrests in felonious crimes, felonious larcenies and other crimes they consider relatively important on a priority basis. As a result, resources get squeezed for crackdowns and arrests in vehicle load theft, bicycle theft, vehicle parts theft and other crimes the police consider relatively minor, and this is considered to be the reason why the rapid rise in those crimes occurred. To control these crimes, therefore, it is necessary to take measures aimed at reducing the total amount of crime, centering on minor crimes.

Third, changes in the age structure and wealth distribution of the society influence mid to long-term crime trends. Typical examples are the elderly-driven rise in shoplifting and juvenile-driven fall in motorcycle theft. Also, behind the rise in furikome fraud in recent years lies a distinct social change in the form of an increase in the number of “rich elderly” and that of “poor young people”.

Of these three observations, I’d like to elaborate a little on the second one, measures to reduce the total amount of crime, centering on minor crimes. As mentioned above, special attention should be paid to “crimes that the police consider relatively minor (and are unable to keep a tight control on)”, when devising such measures. These are “crimes that can be committed with ease even by inexperienced criminals”. In this sense, they are “crimes that can easily become an epidemic” and therefore “crimes that occur in the daily lives of the general public”. If such crimes are left unchecked, public confidence in the police will decline, and so will social morals. This, in turn, gives rise to the risk of the perception “Criminals never get caught” becoming widespread.

(2) Police response

The measures to reduce the total amount of crime implemented in response to the surge in crime that lasted until 2002 can be classified into two groups: state-level measures and police-level measures. The former measures were compiled in the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime in 2003. Regarding the latter measures, the National Police Agency issued a notice titled “The Implementation of Comprehensive Measures to Prevent the Occurrence of Street Crimes and Break-in Crimes” to prefectural police headquarters across Japan in 2002 in the name of the Deputy Commissioner General.

This notice is noteworthy in that it contained two paradigm shifts. First, there was a shift in focus from felonious crimes to crimes in daily lives. (Note: This did not mean a downgrading of felonious crimes.) Previously, emphasis was placed only on crimes that are serious in terms of the violation of the benefit and protection of the law enjoyed by individuals, but “crimes that make the general public feel insecure in their daily lives”, in other words “crimes that occur more frequently”, were newly given priority status.

A shift also occurred from “resolution of cases” to “deterrence of crime”. Previously, emphasis was placed on the resolution of cases by treating the occurrence of criminal offenses more or less as a given, but the “deterrence of crime”, namely “preventing crime from happening”, was newly nominated as a goal.

It is believed that, because of these two paradigm shifts, the police were able to play the major role in the crime reduction process that started in 2003.

In the case of vehicle load theft, bicycle theft and vehicle parts theft, concrete measures taken by the police from the viewpoint of deterring crime in people’s daily lives encompassed the following four aspects:

The first aspect was the strengthening of police activities. In concrete terms, those included targeted patrols, namely patrols conducted specifically in crime-prone areas and crime-prone hours to make arrests, as well as police questioning, dismantling of delinquent youth groups, on-site criminal identification activities, and so on.

The second aspect was the strengthening of crime prevention awareness. In concrete terms, this included the conveying of awareness messages, such as “No street parking” “Lock your car or bicycle” and “Leave nothing in your car” through PR activities.

The third aspect was the strengthening of anti-theft performance. In concrete terms, this included the inclusion of an immobilizer as a standard feature of a car, promotion of the use of car theft prevention alarms, promotion of the use of tamper-proof nuts and bolts for license plates and car navigation systems, and JIS standardization of bicycle cylinder locks, all made possible through approach to relevant industries.

The fourth aspect was the strengthening of surveillance. In concrete terms, this included the deployment of security guards and watchmen, installation of security cameras and improvement of illumination through the installation of lighting equipment at parking lots/facilities for motor vehicles and bicycles that are vulnerable to vehicle load theft, bicycle theft and vehicle parts theft.

The importance of the strengthening of police activities needs no explanation, so attention should focus on the three other aspects. In short, they were aimed at developing a crime-resistant social environment by working on people (excluding police), objects and places. Known as situational crime prevention, this concept was incorporated into the Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime, and was arguably the greatest contributing factor to the reduction of the total amount of crime achieved in 2003 and subsequent years.

4. Future Outlook and Challenges - Creating Crime-discouraging Society

(1) Current society

Looking back on the crime situation over the last 20 years, current society may be characterized as a crime-encouraging society with four characteristic features.

First, the wide accessibility of the Internet helps spread crime information. Typical

examples include the so-called “Secret Site Murder” case of 2007 and online posting of marijuana cultivation methods.

Second, tools of crime have become widely available as a side effect of efforts to make the society more convenient. The key aspect of this phenomenon is “anonymization”. A typical example is furikome fraud committed by using an IP telephone to make the caller untraceable. Though this is not about anonymization, the popularization of mobile phones with a built-in camera has given rise to a rash of illicit photo taking offenses based on the use of a hidden camera.

Third, the diversification and erosion of values has weakened the hatred of crime as a social norm. Namely, some perverted values, such as “people who are deceived or swindled are just too gullible”, “you can do anything as long as you don’t get caught”, and “the strain of society creates criminals (→ so it’s not the criminals’ fault)” tend to encourage crime.

Fourth, a weakening of bonds among people has led to the fraying of the crime prevention network capable of bringing would-be offenders back from the brink. The crime prevention network consists of various interpersonal relationships, including families, relatives, neighbors and coworkers. Typical examples of this “fraying” include the so-called “Akihabara Mass Street Murder” case of 2008, in which the perpetrator’s motive was a sense of alienation felt from hostile messages posted on an Internet bulletin board, shoplifting offenses driven by a sense of isolation, which are common among the elderly, and child abuse caused by a parenting-related nervous breakdown.

(2) Desirable future society

Faced with these problems, the police have been striving to build “a crime-discouraging society” as a desirable future society. I’ll now explain the four characteristic features of this society by contrasting it to the current “crime-encouraging society”.

The first feature will be the blocking of crime information and spread of crime prevention information. Examples of the blocking of crime information include the deleting of child pornography images and filtering of the Internet. Examples of the spread of crime prevention information include the establishment of a crime prevention information network as a mechanism for the police and other relevant organizations to exchange crime prevention information and distribution of crime prevention emails to community residents by the police.

The second feature will be the development of crime prevention tools. The key point of that process will be de-anonymization, namely the creation of a situation where would-be offenders think “if I commit a crime, I’ll get caught” through, for example, the installation of security cameras. Mobile phones with a built-in camera are also making a contribution as crime prevention tools, particularly useful for members of the general public to snap photographs of suspicious individuals and suspicious motor vehicles.

The third feature is the fostering of social norms. While it is important to preach the benefit of observing rules, it is even more important to drive home the disadvantage of breaking them, i.e. to make committing a crime taboo. Examples include drunk driving and

stalking. The fostering of social norms will lead to the clarification of responsibility. Rather than blaming social background, it is desirable to establish a social trend in which offenders are strictly called to account.

The fourth feature is the enhancement of social bonds. Today, geography-based bonds have declined amid trends towards nuclear families, two-income families, and population over-concentration/depopulation. However, it is hoped that crime prevention activities involving voluntary participants will make up for it and contribute to community crime prevention.

(3) Concluding remarks

In a sense, the current “crime-encouraging society” is a liberated society, where people are free from human ties. While a liberated society is what we’ve been chasing, freedom liberates and facilitates crime (criminals) as well. In contrast, a future “crime-discouraging society” will attempt to establish a social order geared towards preventing crime, and will, in that sense, uphold certain values and restrict freedom. This means that crime deterrent activities are constant efforts to find a balance between freedom and order.

Questions and Answers

Panelists:

Prof. Osamu SAKUMA, Osaka University Law School

Prof. Nobuo KOMIYA, Rissho University

Mr. Kunitaka TOMITA, Counsellor, Cabinet Secretariat

Mr. Nobuhiro KATO, Director, Crime Prevention Office, NPA

Coordinator:

Mr. Takahiko YASUDA, Director, Police Policy Research Center, NPA

Questions and Answers

Coordinator During the break, four members of the audience handed in their questions using the question form.

Though there's no particular order, let's begin with Mr. Eguchi of the Osaka Prefectural Police, who has a couple of questions for Prof. Sakuma.

Thank you for an interesting presentation. I'd be pleased if you could answer these questions: (i) Why did crimes in people's daily lives increase? and (ii) Do you think public anxiety has deepened in recent years? If so, what measures would you prescribe?

Prof. Sakuma, please go ahead.

Sakuma I'll answer the first question first. I suspect that a major contributing factor to the increase in crimes in people's daily lives is an increase in crimes that can easily be committed even by inexperienced offenders, as Mr. Kato pointed out. Shoplifting, vehicle load theft and bicycle theft are concrete examples. In these crimes, money, goods and other valuable items are on display on supermarket shelves, in parked cars and public roads in a readily accessible manner. In this kind of situation, people with a weak sense of social norms can easily succumb to the temptation. In addition, many offenses end up not being reported, and, if such news spreads among juveniles, they feel undeterred and go on to commit further offenses. Moreover, under the current Penal Code, larcenies cannot be punished severely, particularly in view of reduced normative consciousness with regard to shoplifting, so much so that even a fine has been added as a punishment option for these crimes.

What shall we do then? Since it would not be always be possible to ask supermarkets, motorists and cyclists to keep valuable items from public view, alternative methods need to be employed. Another major contributing factor is the Internet as a potential pathway for the invasion of families by criminals as I mentioned in my presentation. In the Internet environment, Internet fraud and other threats are ever present, and children are particularly vulnerable. Furikome fraud is another example.

Now, I'll answer the second question. I think public anxiety has indeed deepened, significantly. I can say this from personal experience. I myself have been a victim of crimes committed in my daily life, and others in the community also constantly feel a threat of crime. Anxiety felt by crime victims must be enormous, and there will be nothing that makes people more insecure than crimes committed in their daily lives.

My prescription for this is thorough public education about the implementation of crime prevention measures by the police and private-sector volunteer groups and encouragement of people to take part in such activities to regain senses of security. Widespread knowledge about such activities also has a deterrent effect on potential offenders. In this sense, we should take a comprehensive approach.

Coordinator The next questioner is Mr. Hoshino of the Japanese Association of Sociological Criminology, who has questions for Prof. Sakuma, Mr. Tomita and, probably, Mr. Kato. I'll read them out.

While the number of offenses known to the police is being used as a measure for the level of public safety, an increase in the number of police officers or rise in their activity level leads to an increase in that particular statistical data with regard to victimless crimes and crimes in which recognition and arrest often coincide, such as shoplifting and bicycle theft (including conversion of lost property). This can be interpreted as the recognition of the previously unreported portion of offenses. In this case, therefore, the increase in the number of offenses known to the police actually indicates an improvement in the level of public safety. What are your thoughts on this? Namely, the method to measure the level of public safety seems to need a revamp. What would you suggest should be done?

Coordinator I'd like Prof. Sakuma to answer first.

Sakuma Since I'm not a statistics specialist, my answer to Prof. Hoshino's question may not be right to the point. So please bear with me.

I think that victims of crimes in which recognition and arrest often coincide (e.g. shoplifting and bicycle theft) usually file an offense report with the police. In cases where an offense report is not filed, the offense will go unrecognized, unless it is detected directly by the police.

I myself have been a victim of crime more than once, but I did not always file an offense report, thinking "No matter what I do, I'll never get back the stolen goods, and the police will also be too busy for this kind of thing." Such offenses will never be reported and become hidden as far as crime statistics are concerned. I think there are quite a few of them. Such being the case, an increase in the number of police officers does not necessarily lead to the uncovering of such hidden offenses. It is more likely that many of them will remain hidden. If so, an increase in the number of offenses known to the police would not indicate an improvement in the level of public safety.

Moreover, the number of offenses known to the police really shot up from the early 1990s to the 2002 peak, while there was no boost to the number of police officers until 2001.

So, the premise that an increase in the number of police officers leads to an increase in the number of offenses known to the police does not hold in this case. Rather, other factors must've been at play. In this sense, it would not be logical to consider an increase in the number of offenses known to the police as a sign of improved public safety. Still, there can be various other factors, so, unfortunately, things are not always clear-cut. Though my answer may have missed the point, this is what has come to mind.

Tomita I'd like to add a little to Prof. Sakuma's answer. In the case of crimes in which recognition and arrest coincide, an increase in recognition automatically results in an increase in arrests, so, in theory at least, an increase in recognition may be seen as a sign of improved public safety. However, as pointed out by Mr. Kato in his presentation, the arrest rate in bicycle theft, for example, is only 10%, which is very low. If arrests in crimes in

which recognition and arrest often coincide were really increasing, the arrest rate would increase, but the arrest rate of penal code crimes actually fell from 60% in 2001 to 20% in 2002. Namely, the number of offenses known to the police and the number of arrests did not rise together. It therefore seems untenable to say that an increase in the number of offenses known to the police indicates an intensification in the activities of police officers or improvement in public safety.

Still, how to account for unreported cases is an eternal question, as pointed out by Mr. Kato. Although various efforts are being made, it is not easy to get a satisfactory answer. I think one way of doing it is to use opinion surveys on public anxiety. If a majority of people feel anxious, it can at least be said that public safety is not improving, though it does not necessarily mean there are a large number of unreported cases. Another thing is a crime victimization survey that is part of OECD statistics, though my memory is a little hazy on this one. Anyway, the survey found that Japan was relatively safe, second only to Spain, on the basis of a low number of people who had become victims of crime.

Though debate on better indicators has been underway through G8 conferences and other forums, the answer remains elusive. I believe that opinion surveys provide a reasonable method to gauge the level of public safety. If there are any good indicators, we will be happy to use them. Anyway, we'll keep working on this topic and would appreciate your feedback.

Kato Regarding the number of unreported cases and level of public safety, I think that an increase in the number of offenses known to the police can occur as a result of the uncovering of unreported cases, rather than a deterioration in the crime situation. For example, the number of offenses known to the police in sex crimes (rape and indecent assault) rose sharply before 2002, and this is attributable to the uncovering of unreported cases, made possible by various measures designed to encourage reporting, such as the abolition of a time limit for reporting and assignment of female officers to interview victims, as much as an actual increase in the frequency of crime.

Komiya Sorry to speak up without being nominated. Anyway, Prof. Hoshino probably knows about this, but Japan has conducted a major survey on unreported cases four times to make comparison with other countries possible. All the data is available in the White Paper on Crime, published by the Ministry of Justice. According to this data, the victimization rate today is largely higher than what it used to be during the Showa period, though it is lower compared to the 2002 peak. All in all, the victimization rate has shown a similar trend to the number of offenses known to the police.

Questioner 1 (Hoshino) I'd like to clarify my questions by explaining their background. About 20 years ago, the Musashino Police Station of the Metropolitan Police Department mounted an all-out crackdown on bicycle theft in front of railway stations, at bicycle parks, in front of stores, and so on, and this resulted in a sharp increase in the number of offenses known to the police. A newspaper article then reported that the Musashino Police Station was the worst in the nation in terms of the number of bicycle theft offenses. This experience

shows that stepped-up police activities sometimes lead to an increase in the number of offenses known to the police, particularly with crimes like bicycle theft. So, to convince residents that public safety is good in Musashino City, the police should have sat on their hands doing nothing, and residents would have felt more secure.

If this example is anything to go by, it may be inappropriate to use the number of offenses known to the police as a direct measure of the level of public safety or publish it to influence the public perception of the public safety situation. For this reason, I'm inclined to think that we need to qualify what the number of offenses known to the police stands for though I'm not categorically opposed to the sole use of this statistical data to measure the level of public safety. Examples include the introduction of a U.S.-style index crime designed to ascertain the public safety situation and use of a combination of opinion surveys, such as victimization surveys and public anxiety surveys, especially giving them a similar level of importance to the number of offenses known to the police when releasing them to the mass media, given that people's sense of security is greatly influenced by them. Although this topic may be a little too specialized, we'll be in for trouble unless we solve this problem.

When studying where to allocate extra police to maximize the improvement of the public safety situation, one needs to consider various factors. For example, the boosting of police numbers leads to an increase in the number of offenses known to the police. To reduce public anxiety, patrols by uniformed officers stationed at police boxes, either on foot or by bicycle, are far more effective than patrols in patrol cars because of their greater visibility. The problem is that more police boxes mean more police officers. Patrol cars are more economical in this respect.

Prof. Sakuma said in his presentation that it is not efficient to resort to heavy-handed crackdowns based on the mobilization of a large number of police personnel. Crackdowns aside, I think that greater visibility achieved by boosting the number of police personnel, including non-Japanese officers and community police officers, will reduce public anxiety and encourage the public to cooperate with police. When studying these issues, one realizes that attempts to deploy police personnel based on a scientific analysis sometimes run into difficulties if the number of offenses known to the police is used as the measure for the level of public safety. Public anxiety, on the other hand, can be measured through an innovative approach. So, I hope that PPRC, under the direction of Mr. Yasuda, will come up with a good idea.

Coordinator I believe that the number of offenses known to the police is one of the most fundamental public safety indicators, and that its importance is undeniable in terms of the accumulation of data over many years, which makes historical comparisons possible. However, there may be some aspects that are unamenable to it, so we will keep working to shed more light on it. We'd appreciate your future suggestions.

In this regard, research by Prof. Masahide Maeda of Tokyo Metropolitan University shows that the boosting of police numbers has had a crime deterrent effect, particularly in Saitama Prefecture and other areas where the police used to be understaffed relative to the

population. So, we will take into consideration the work of a variety of researchers as we engage in our own research.

Let's move on to the next questioner. Prof. Kobayashi has some questions for Prof. Komiya. Isn't it possible to expand the concept of the community safety map to virtual spaces, namely the Internet and cyberspace? Is such research underway? My point is that cyberspace seems to perfectly fit the description "places that are easy to get into and difficult to see" because of its easy and anonymous accessibility. This is particularly so when we look at today's university students. I suspect they get into trouble in cyberspace more often than in real life. So, I wonder if we can devise something like a cybersafety map for use in university-level Internet literacy education.

Komiya The answer is "Yes". It is very insightful of Prof. Kobayashi to think of cyberspace from the two key phrases of the community safety map: "easy to get into" and "difficult to see". I think you can teach the safety map very much straightaway.

Unfortunately, the answer to your second question, whether there is any research being done on this subject, is "No". One promising area may be the development of software that enables the user to find dangerous places on the Internet using the two key phrases. Apart from university students, it would be useful for junior and senior high school students. I hope that someone in the audience will take up such research.

Coordinator Prof. Hashimoto of Tohoku University has a question for Prof. Komiya, Mr. Tomita and Mr. Kato. In view of the nature of the question, I'd like Mr. Kato to answer the question first.

In the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake, there was concern about a deterioration in public safety in disaster-hit areas, but we've largely been able to keep it from becoming a reality. I can say this from personal experience. Taking this opportunity, I'd like to express my gratitude to nationwide police services for their assistance and support as a Tohoku resident.

In some disaster-hit areas, local communities and schools have lost some of their binding power, with people at some temporary housing sites struggling to establish a sense of community. In light of this example, I think how to prevent and control crime in disaster-hit areas will always be a pressing issue in the event of a major disaster. A concentrated deployment of police resources may be effective as a short-term measure, but, in the long term, other measures need to be considered at both policy and community levels. I'd appreciate it if you would allow me to share your thoughts on this.

Kato In the case of the Great East Japan Earthquake, I think the deployment of police resources, namely the dispatch by prefectural police services not affected by the disaster of patrol cars and police officers to the three disaster-stricken prefectures, had a major crime deterrent effect in disaster-hit areas in the primary phase.

However, looking at crime deterrent measures in disaster-hit areas during their reconstruction phase, the restoration of communities is essential. To this end, residents' independent and voluntary activities play an important role, and it is imperative that the police actively support them.

Examples of such police support include the provision of public education on crime prevention volunteer activities to residents of temporary housing with joint patrol follow-ups and mounting of a public information and awareness campaign designed to provide crime prevention tips.

Coordinator Now, Mr. Tomita, I believe you've been in a discussion on earthquake-related public safety measures through the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime, so I'd like you to touch on it in your answer as well.

Tomita We compiled public safety measures for disaster-hit areas at the May conference of the Ministerial Meeting concerning Measures against Crime. It is correct to say that we'll be focusing on the boosting of police manpower for the time being as a short-term public safety measure. Along these lines, we initially put in 4400 police personnel, which have since been wound back to 3700. This is equivalent to the staff size of a medium-sized prefectural police service, so it's like we've just created a 48th prefectural police service. Though this strategy is working very well at the moment, a long-term solution does present a future challenge.

As Mr. Kato just said, the rebuilding of communities should take precedence. Beyond that, the designing of urban landscapes and residential buildings that takes crime prevention into consideration will be pursued through the installation of security cameras at convenience stores, houses, etc., development of roads with good visibility, and so on, as has been included in the adopted public safety measures.

In addition, funding for crime prevention and other activities has been secured under "voluntary crime prevention organizations" as part of an emergency employment program. The scheme works like this. Municipal governments directly employ local people and ask them to go on crime prevention patrols in exchange for some payments. I guess they'll think about the next step as communities recover. Anyway, that's what's happening right now. As a working team has been set up on this issue, they'll keep on investigating. In this respect, I do honor to people working as crime prevention volunteers.

Komiya Although there may be some overlap with what Mr. Tomita just said, I think this can be viewed as a golden opportunity to build crime-resistant communities in the long run. Crime opportunity theory is much easier to introduce from scratch. Modifying existing roads, buildings and parks is costly. Building from ground zero is like working with a white canvas. There's a lot of design freedom. Residents should be involved in the development of urban landscapes right from the planning and design stages, so they can speak up and provide feedback, like "This kind of building would be an easy target for criminals," in a noisy yet friendly atmosphere. That process itself will contribute to community building and community empowerment. I encourage active participation by residents and would like administrative authorities to establish a proper mechanism for that.

Coordinator That's wrapped up the panelists' answers to questions submitted through the question form. We still have a little time left so we'll accept a few more questions from the floor.

Questioner 2 (Ueda) Though this is not a question, I'd like to say a few words about the activity of the Research Foundation for Safe Society regarding private-sector crime prevention groups in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima, three prefectures struck by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

The foundation passed a special resolution to provide special subsidies for private-sector crime prevention activities in the above three prefectures, worth 30 million yen (10 million yen per prefecture) a year over the next seven years, during its general meeting held last June. The subsidies are aimed at assisting in the swift recovery of private-sector crime prevention activities, which have suffered major damage, including the destruction of district crime prevention association infrastructure. We've taken this action because it is easier for us to allocate funds than the National Government.

After the resolution, I traveled to the three prefectures in July, starting with Fukushima. I asked the presidents of the prefectural and district crime prevention associations to gather and briefed them on our scheme. I went on to ask them to submit ideas on the reconstruction of lost district crime prevention association infrastructure, assistance in the establishment of crime prevention patrol teams in residential areas, including temporary housing sites, and the like within a budget of 10 million yen. Response has been prompt, especially in Fukushima, from which already over 8 million yen worth of requests have been received.

As described above, our scheme has taken off rapidly, and the provision of assistance for crime prevention activities, including temporary housing sites, has already begun. I've filed this report partly to publicize the activities of our foundation.

Coordinator If you have any questions, please raise your hands.

Questioner 3 (Komatsu) I have a couple of questions for the five panelists regarding the strengthening of the sense of social norms, a subject discussed earlier.

Our research shows that, the harder we try to strengthen the sense of social norms, the more social attacks occur on the negative people, namely people who commit crimes. This often results in those on the receiving end of such attacks lashing out at society and, in extreme cases, committing acts of violence. In the past, a strict moral attitude was able to intimidate and silence criminals. Today, however, such an attitude increasingly unleashes a sudden outburst of rage, perhaps a knife attack, from criminals, and such cases have been frequently reported in countries like China and Germany as well. So my first question is: What is the current status of research on the psychological aspect of this issue?

My second question relates to opinion surveys on public anxiety. Sorry to bring up Germany again, but we don't give too much credit to opinion surveys. Since opinion

surveys are held against a background of certain social trends, lots of people come up with answers that they think would please the society. This has been empirically proven through a psychological test called the “respect test”. This being the case, why should we keep propping up opinion surveys on public anxiety as if they are absolutely reliable?

Coordinator I’d like Prof. Komiya to answer first.

Komiya The need to strengthen normative consciousness has been accepted almost universally. However, how we can go about it is rarely discussed, so I’d like to present my personal view on this.

In the past, social norms were maintained in Japan without fussing about things like normative consciousness. In my view, Japan used to be run through large groups containing people with various characters and positions. I call them “insider groups”. This concept is similar to what we mean when we say “my society”, “my school”, and so on. For Japanese, all people other than insiders are outsiders, namely strangers as opposed to pseudo-family members that insiders are. We care about insiders, but are rather indifferent towards outsiders. A typical example is the Japanese life-time employment system, under which most company employees were able to stay with the same employer until retirement whether or not they had abilities. Namely, the group was the source of a sense of security for insiders.

Communities were the same. Neighborhood associations had a particularly powerful influence. Like today, there were black sheep, and people were more or less aware of them. However, instead of attacking them, they were kept under control within the fold of this big group.

Insider groups always had busybodies, and, whenever someone looked like drifting towards crime or delinquency, they pulled him back into the fold by reasoning with him and letting him know what he can and cannot do.

Until recently, I was thinking that such insider groups had been disintegrating. But I’ve changed my mind a little. I think insider groups are still alive and well in Japan. This is easy to see when you look around inside a train car. On Japanese trains, the use of mobile phones is banned. As far as I know, Japan is the only country where talking on a mobile phone while on a train is banned. It must be okay in Germany because a train car is a public space or the “outside” according to Japanese thinking.

In contrast, I don’t think people eat a sandwich, or rice ball for that matter, in a train car in other countries, including Germany. However, this is okay in Japan. Young women even put their makeup on. Namely, a train car is an insider space, like home. This explains why people get angry when someone starts talking on a mobile phone. It’s like saying “Stop talking to someone else when you have been invited to my home”. This kind of feeling gives rise to complaints to railway companies.

Meanwhile, Japan and South Korea are about the only countries in the world not to have security cameras inside train cars. In Germany, even subway cars have security cameras,

because they are public spaces. In Japan, train cars are like homes, so people have an aversion for it. So, after all, insider groups have survived in Japan.

There is one problem, though. That is, the size of insider groups is getting smaller and smaller. Look at university students, for example. In the olden days, when they had a party, the whole class, about thirty to forty students, would go. Today, they rarely have a party in the first place. In my classes, students tend to form groups of three to four. The whole class looks like islands scattered across the classroom, and there is no connection between the islands.

For this reason, normative consciousness is stronger today than in the past, though this is a bit ironic. As you may know, it was through such small groups that baggy socks, called “loose socks” spread among teenage girls. As soon as one member of a group starts wearing them, other members copy her. The “gangro” fake tan fashion is another example. Again, as soon as one member of a group starts wearing a fake tan, other members follow suit. If a member refuses to do the same, she may be bullied and expelled from the group. Normative consciousness is that strong in those groups. Children are at the mercy of groups and would do anything to avoid being targeted for bullying.

The problem is that the rise of small groups has made it difficult for society to control them. So, the remedy is obvious. We must put up bridges between those islands. Instead of forcing the rules of society as a whole on those groups, we must create links between them. Then, social cohesion will automatically emerge. That will make the rules of small groups resemble the rules of society as a whole. I think this is the best approach.

Questioner 3 Sorry to insist but I’d just like to mention one thing. Looking at things as a group, doing things as a group, and following group rules. These are behaviors that are characteristically Asian, including Japan. Currently, I work for a Chinese disaster management think tank, so I really think that this is the norm in Asia. Still, there are a lot of people who easily go ballistic as soon as they step outside their groups.

At present, we are trying to redefine the concept of terrorism. In the past, terrorism referred only to organized and planned activities set in motion by a leader’s order or instructions. Today, some horrendously violent acts, like stabbing five, ten people, are committed by individuals who’ve lost the plot. Mental illness is a hot topic in Shanghai as well. According to the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Japanese prevalence rate for mental illness is one in a hundred. Given that nearly 60,000 Japanese live in Shanghai, there is a fear about a potential Akihabara-style mass street murder committed by someone who’s snapped, as it could do incalculable damage to Japan-China relations. So, we keep an eye out for people who suddenly go ballistic. I’d appreciate it if this issue could be discussed/studied by the five panelists and relevant organizations.

Coordinator Please answer the questions, Mr. Tomita.

Tomita I think that there’ll always be problems with the credibility of opinion surveys. After all, opinion surveys represent a fairly primitive survey method. What they do is ask a small number of people the same set of questions. Even if 30% of respondents say “Yes”,

it's really just 18% if the response rate is 60%. Still, trends can be ascertained from those surveys. If there have been any changes from the previous survey and the one before that, it will show up in the results. Despite their usefulness, opinion surveys represent a primitive method, so one should always be cautious about their credibility. So, you are right that we shouldn't treat them as something indisputable.

But, as reference data, I think their usefulness is undeniable.

Questioner 3 I would like you to verify the results of opinion surveys as well.

Police Policy Research Center

National Police Academy

3-12-1 Asahi-cho, Fuchu-shi, Tokyo, 183-8558, Japan

TEL: +81-42-354-3550

FAX: +81-42-330-1308

<http://www.npa.go.jp/keidai/keidai-en.files/seisaku1-en.html>

Research Foundation for Safe Society

Otemachi Sano Building 6F

1-7-8 Uchikanda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 101-0047, Japan

TEL: +81-3-3219-5177

FAX: +81-3-3219-2338

<http://www.syaanken.or.jp>