

## *From the Director's Desk . . .*

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Over the past few months I have had the pleasure and privilege to be involved in several criminological meetings outside Australia. These occasions have provided an interesting opportunity to put the work of our own Institute into a wider world perspective.

From December 10 to 13 last year, I participated in the first conference of the Indonesian Society of Criminology. The conference title was "International Trends in Crime: East Meets West", and the meeting was jointly sponsored by the Australian Institute of Criminology and the Netherlands Council for Co-operation with Indonesia in Legal Matters.

It was of particular significance for representatives of Australian research organisations in the area of crime and criminal justice, to observe the fledgling programme of our Indonesian colleagues. I was greatly impressed by their enthusiasm and creativity in researching contemporary crime issues, within their unique country and diverse cultures. We in the "west" have much to learn from scholars in emerging nations, whose research endeavours are purified by the particular stringencies and cultural specificity of a developing environment. I conveyed our best wishes to the president of the new society and expressed the hope that the development of criminological research in our region would be a co-operative phenomenon.

Such meetings also provide a chance for renewing old acquaintances. I was able to have discussions with Professor Anthony Bottoms, Director of the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, these involving consideration of how our two organisations might co-operate in the future. I also met with Professor Kellens, Deputy Secretary General of the International Society of Criminology.

In January of this year I returned to the United Nations Inter-Regional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI/formally known as UNSDRI) in Rome. I have had a long-standing professional relationship with certain colleagues at the Institute, and I was anxious in my role as Director to confirm some connections between the Institute of Criminology and UNICRI.

My brief visit to Rome allowed me the opportunity to receive a detailed briefing on the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders held in Havana, Cuba last year. I was also able to examine the data from the Third UN World Crime Survey and hear views on the intended development of this style of comparative research.

It is useful on occasions to look beyond our own jurisdiction and to appreciate crime and its control as a world issue. It was encouraging to note that our activities in 1990 compared favourably with the initiatives taken by other institutes in the field of criminology.

*Mark Findlay*