

Draft for Elevator Speech by Prof. Dr. Irvin Waller

World leaders will achieve their commitment to reduce violence significantly by 2030 by shifting policy from primarily reacting to crime through criminal justice responses (after the fact) to smart investing in prevention (upstream of the violence) to tackle causes and risk factors.

Covid has shown us the importance of acting collaboratively, using evidence and investing in prevention. It has also shown us that transformations are difficult but possible. If Leaders act now, they will reduce violence significantly by 2030, annually stopping 100,000s of homicides, protecting millions of women from intimate partner and sexual violence, and stopping 100s of millions of young people from being victims of violence.

This is particularly important in high violence cities and countries, where the lack of use of solutions to violence leads to tragic suffering from those high rates of common and gender base violence, but also causing flight from those countries and cities, as well threats to GDP. the rule of law, corruption and worse.

We will share:

- Prevention programs agreed by WHO and others are proven to reduce violence by 50% better than the reactive status quo; These include services that out reach to vulnerable youth, school curricula and community action that change attitudes to violence, support for positive parenting, actions to stimulate adequate living income, and policing oriented to partnership between law enforcement and prevention agencies.
- Guidelines show how to implement effective prevention as agreed by ECOSOC, UN-Habitat and representatives from Latin American but still not widely used; These include national and local plans led by a violence reduction unit, mobilising sectors able to tackle causes, public engagement, adequate and sustained investment and monitoring and measuring results.
- Some leading cities have already achieved a 50% reduction within just a few years. Most exciting is the important momentum from several pathfinder networks of cities who are multiplying those successes and a model congress in Europe that promotes awareness and action on prevention. These networks share local experiences, promote evidence-based programs/approaches, train human talent, support monitoring and get political commitment to achieve reductions by 2030.

- A compelling case that investment equivalent to 10% of what is currently spent on reaction can achieve the significant reductions in violence in SDG16.1 plus as well as growth in GDP while advancing SDGs more generally.
- Responsibility/accountability

To transform policy to significantly reduce violence and so achieve the goal of SDG16.1 plus, we recommend world leaders shift funding from what does not work to what does – balancing tough on causes with , tough on crime.

1. International organizations are able to invest for success, develop training and safety monitor tools, foster exchanges, share what works, and require investments in violence prevention as a condition of loans to increase GDP and the attainment of other SDGs;
2. Governments have a continuing infrastructure role to address the long term causes of violence, such as inequality, lack of education, availability of guns and a market for illicit drugs;
3. Governments now have a new role to tackle risk factors using science and guidelines to get a prevention dividend within just a few years by investing in training and raising awareness of what has been proven to work as well as investing in national programs and in cities themselves able to achieve the goals locally:
4. Cities must shift to using proven prevention and implementation guidelines to organize prevention that responds to local causes and risk factors but need financial and technical support for programs to make it happen.