The paper describes the context in which the European Institute, on its establishment, identified Professor Dušan Cotič as the ideal candidate to serve on its Advisory Board and an internationally oriented criminal justice practitioner and criminologist, so that the Board could bridge the gap between East and West, and academia and practice. Professor Dušan Cotič served on the Board with distinction.

**Keywords:** international cooperation, United Nations crime programme, criminology, criminal justice.

A comparison between Europe at the end of 1970s and at present brings up striking echoes from the past. The public and politicians alike were concerned about struggling out of a recession, the rise in petrol prices, and threats of terrorism (the Red Brigades, the Baader-Meinhoff Gang and the IRA then, al-Qaeda today). On the horizon was the war in Afghanistan (the Soviet invasion then, the U.S. and more broadly Western disengagement today) and its impact on regional and, more broadly, international stability.

But there were also striking differences. The major political difference was that thirty years ago, Europe was split in two, with Western Europe and the Soviet bloc pursuing very different agendas.

As in many areas, this political divide was reflected in criminal justice. Each common law and Continental law country in Western Europe pursued its own criminal justice policy, although the (then fully Western European) Council of Europe was creating a wider European treaty framework and a growing body of recommendations and resolutions. In Eastern Europe, the socialist legal tradition coloured the criminal policy choices made by national leaders,
although there were considerable differences between, for example, Leonid Brezhnev’s Soviet Union, Erich Honecker’s German Democratic Republic, Enver Hoxha’s Albania and Nicolae Ceauscescu’s Romania.

The criminological research community was similarly split. The Council of Europe provided some framework for international cooperation in the West, but despite the strength of, for example, the tentative international work of the Home Office in the United Kingdom, the Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Justice in Germany and the National Council for Crime Prevention in Sweden, criminology was either inner-oriented, or oriented towards trends coming from the other side of the Atlantic. In the Soviet bloc, in turn (with notable exceptions in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia), criminology was in general hampered by the lack of access to primary sources and by a clearly doctrinaire tendency.

It was against this backdrop of divisions between East and West that the United Nations planned to expand its network of regional institutes for crime prevention and criminal justice into Europe. The first institute, the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders had been established in Japan in 1962, and had immediately undertaken impressive work to assist countries in the region in strengthening their response to crime. The global UN research institute, the United Nations Social Defence Research Institute (to be renamed the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Institute) opened its doors in 1968 to start work as the research arm of the UN Secretariat. And in 1975, the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders set up operations.

Professor Gerhard Mueller, at the time Chief of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section of the United Nations Secretariat, started negotiations with Finland on the possibility that a European UN Institute could be set up in Helsinki. Finland had some advantages compared to other countries that were considered as potential hosts. Finland was a neutral country, with a good administrative and communications infrastructure suitable for the operation of an international institute. Professor Anttila, who early on was tapped to be the Director of the new European regional institute, was at the time the Director of the National Research Institute for Legal Policy of Finland. She was also relatively well-known both in criminological circles, and especially after having been appointed to the United Nations Committee on Crime Prevention and Control and serving as the President of the Fifth United Nations Congress.
on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (Geneva, 1975), she was well-known also within the UN crime prevention community.

Professor Mueller, with his experience with the creation of the regional institutes in Japan and Costa Rica, and the interregional institute in Italy, quickly agreed with Professor Anttila on one key question: the new institute needs an advisory board that could serve as its link to the different countries in the region. After all, the staff would be Finnish civil servants, and the Institute not only needed to show its outreach throughout Europe, but also needed to have eminent criminal justice practitioners and criminologists to advise it of wider European concerns.

Some of the pieces of this puzzle were easy to find. The chairman was tapped from neutral Sweden (which was also a major financial donor to the new Institute): Bo Svensson, justice of the Supreme Court. Looking towards the West, Professor Anttila suggested Simone Rozes, the Premier président of the Cour de Cassation of France, and Erich Corves, Ministerialdirigent at the Ministry of Justice in Germany. Turning to the East, the Soviet Union was a self-evident choice, and here, too, Professor Anttila identified an eminent person: Vladimir Koudriavtsev, Academician, professor and Director of the Institute of State and Law of the Academy of Sciences.

It was at this stage that Professor Mueller and Professor Anttila recognized that the last piece of the puzzle had to be the perfect fit. What was needed was perhaps an impossible combination. The person had to come from Eastern Europe, and yet have an international orientation: he or she should understand the value of cooperation with colleagues from different countries. The person had to have a background in either criminal law or criminology (ideally, of course, both) and understand the importance of policy development of independent and unfettered research. The person should ideally have a professional and personal status that provided him or her with an “in” with the authorities not only of his or her own country, but also of other European countries. It would, of course, be helpful if the person had a familiarity with the work of the United Nations in crime prevention and criminal justice; after all, this was the environment in which the new European Institute would be working.

Thirty years ago, computers were not widely accessible, and the internet search function was unheard of. Had those facilities existed, however, they could not have invented a better dream candidate than what was offered by Dušan Cotič. As Professor of Criminal Law at the University of Belgrade,
his academic credentials were impeccable. The criminological research community in Yugoslavia was vibrant, and he was widely known as a criminologist also internationally, thanks to his many years as President of the Yugoslav Association of Criminal Law and Criminology. He closely followed international developments in criminology; after all, he was the Chief Editor of the Review of Criminal Law and Criminology. His professional and personal reputation were considerably burnished (not that it needed burnishing) by his service as Deputy Secretary of Justice of Yugoslavia, followed by his years as Justice of the Supreme Court of Yugoslavia. And not only was he a regular attendee of the quinquennial UN Crime Congresses (since 1960), he had just been elected as a member of the United Nations Committee on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

During many years that he served as a genial and active member of the Advisory Board of the European Institute (and a regular participant at the European Seminars arranged by the European Institute), he proved to be all that was promised and more: a widely-read and thoughtful criminologist, a skilled practitioner of criminal law, and an expert eminently suited for international work in crime prevention and criminal justice. It was he who opened many doors to the authorities in several European countries, and helped to establish contacts with both leading academics and practitioners.

The European Institute, its staff and Advisory Board members past and present all join in to congratulate Professor Dušan Cotič on his 90th birthday, thank him for his contribution to European cooperation in crime prevention and control, and wish him continued success in all he undertakes.
Dušan Cotič i Evropski institut: premošćavanje jaza

Predmet članka je odabir profesora Dušana Cotiča kao internacionalno orijentisanog stručnjaka za krivično pravosuđe i kriminologa od strane Evropskog instituta kao idealnog kandidata za člana Savetodavnog odbora sa ciljem da se premosti jaz između istoka i zapada kao i između akademske sfere i prakse. Profesor Dušan Cotič učestvovao je u radu Savetodavnog odbora sa velikim uspehom.

Ključne reči: internacionalna kooperacija, program Ujedinjenih nacija protiv kriminala, kriminologija, krivično pravosuđe.