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## UN anti-crime official and Pope Benedict XVI confer on global challenges



UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov

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The United Nations' lead anti-crime official and Pope Benedict XVI conferred today on ways to expand common efforts in the battles against drugs, crime and other social and health challenges throughout the world.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime ([UNODC](#)) said in a [press statement](#) that its Executive Director Yury Fedotov and the Pope focused on “drug prevention, the promotion of healthy lifestyles, crime eradication, human trafficking and migrant smuggling” during their meeting at the Vatican.

“With over a billion followers, the Catholic Church – as with all religions – has a special link to people across the globe and is in a unique position to spread key messages in helping prevent drug use and crime,” Mr. Fedotov said.

“UNODC looks forward to expanding our relationship with all religions as we work together in addressing social and health challenges of drugs and crime in every part of the world.”

Mr. Fedotov “noted the need to further the links between the efforts of the Catholic Church and UNODC in reaching out to the world’s most vulnerable whose lives are adversely affected by

criminals every day, particularly in the developing regions of Africa and South America,” UNODC said.

The Pope and Mr. Fedotov also “discussed the importance of inter-faith dialogue in a bid to look at root causes of terrorism across the world.”

Yesterday Mr. Fedotov met with several senior Italian officials to discuss drug and crime-related matters, including migrant smuggling into Southern Europe on the back of the recent and ongoing events in North Africa, UNODC said.

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[Growing links between crime and terrorism the focus of UN forum](#)