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International Conference

“Criminals are not dangerous people.
They are only people who are not
sufficiently loved. ”

APAC

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*Mezinárodní
vězeňské společenství*



Ministerstvo spravedlnosti
České republiky



I want to welcome you most cordially to the APAC International Conference organized by the Prison Fellowship International with the Prison Service of the Czech Republic and under the auspices of the Minister of Justice of the Czech Republic.

This conference is a small contribution to the many inspirations coming from around the world that focus on working with and preparing for release of male and female prisoners inside prisons. The Czech Prison Service and a number of non-profit organizations are working in this area. The APAC method is bold in its concept, but also proven by fifty years of experience. I believe that it makes sense to absorb new initiatives that not only broaden our horizons, but from which it will be possible to draw in the future.

Thank you for your participation and I look forward to discussing together and finding new ways to continuously develop this area that unites us.

Gabriela Kabátová

Executive Director of Prison Fellowship Czech Republic

This year, the Prison Service of the Czech Republic marks 30 years of its existence. Mutual cooperation with Prison Fellowship International has also been taking place for years. The PFI operates to a greater or lesser extent in almost all of our prisons or detention centres. We are very happy for this cooperation and certainly see it as mutually beneficial.

It does not hurt to look beyond the borders of the Czech Republic from time to time, because there is never a lack of inspiration on how to work with prisoners or how to improve prison staff. And thanks to the APAC methodology, we can look beyond our borders.

Maj. Gen. Mgr. Simon Michailidis

Director General of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic

In APAC prisons, inmates are housed in small prison communities, dressed in civilian clothes, and undergo a very demanding programme consisting of a full day of work, engagement and education.



Thursday 19th October 2023

- 8:00 – 8:45 Registration, Refreshments
- 9:00 – 9:40 Introduction
Supreme Councillor Col. Mgr. Ladislav Blahník,
Director of Prison Stráž pod Ralskem
PhDr. Petr Dohnal, Chief Executive of the
Section of Prisons and Departmental Controls,
Ministry of Justice Czech Republic
Andy Corley, President of Prison Fellowship
International (a Video Greeting)
Gabriela Kabátová, Executive Director of
Prison Fellowship Czech Republic
- 9:40 – 10:00 Ron Nikkel, President Emeritus of Prison
Fellowship International (a Video Entry)
- 10:00 – 11:00 Projection of the Documentary “Unguarded”
- 11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break
- 11:30 – 13:00 Valdeci Ferreira, Founder of APAC, Part I
- 13:00 – 14:00 Lunch
- 14:00 – 15:00 Online Broadcast With APAC Prison in Brazil
- 15:00 – 15:30 Coffee Break
- 15:30 – 16:00 Final Panel Discussion
- 19:00 Gala Dinner at Michna Palace

Friday 20th October 2023

- 8:00 – 8:45 Registration, Refreshments
- 9:00 – 10:30 **First Session**
Lt. Mgr. Iva Kohoutová, Deputy Head of the Detention and Punishment Department, Světlá nad Sázavou Prison
Tobias Merckle, Founder of Seehouse, Prison Fellowship Germany
Hans Barendrecht, Executive Director of Prison Fellowship Netherlands
- 10:30 – 10:50 Coffee Break
- 10:50 – 11:40 Valdeci Ferreira, Founder of APAC, Part II
- 11:45 – 12:30 **Second Session**
PhDr. Mgr. Hana Prokopová, Head of Department of Custody For the so-called “Open Prison”
PhDr. Andrea Matoušková, Director of Probation and Mediation Service Czech Republic
Mgr. Lenka Ouředníčková, Director for Innovation and Development of RUBIKON Centre
- 12:30 – 13:00 Discussion
- 13:00 – 14:00 Lunch and Conclusion of the Conference

There are currently 5000 convicts undergoing the APAC programme in Brazil.





Supreme Councillor Col. Mgr. Ladislav Blahník

Director of Prison Stráž pod Ralskem

He graduated from the Faculty of Education at the Technical University in Liberec and the Andragogy at the Jan Amos Comenius University in Prague. His professional base is the Stráž pod Ralskem Prison, where he has been working since 2001. Since 2016 he has been the director of the prison.

PhDr. Petr Dohnal

Chief Executive of the Section of Prisons and Departmental Controls, Ministry of Justice Czech Republic

He held various executive and managerial positions at the Prague – Pankrác Prison. From 2007 to 2008, he was the director of this prison.

From 2008 to 2021 he worked as Director General of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic and then as Deputy Director General for Health and Administrative Activities. He currently holds the position of Chief Director of the Prison and Departmental Control Section at the Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic.



Andy Corley

President of Prison Fellowship International (PFI)

As President and CEO of PFI, Andy leads the work of PFI among the family of national affiliates in 121 countries. He developed his strategic thinking and leadership skills while serving in various management and director roles for global construction groups, including Lafarge and Hanson Brick Europe. Having a passion for Christian ministry, Corley served as an advisor and board member to a number of internationally focused faith-based organisations.



Gabriela Kabátová

Executive Director of Prison Fellowship Czech Republic

Gabriela Kabátová has been working in the prison sector for 17 years. In 2010, she founded the Mezinárodní vězeňské společenství, z. s. NGO, which has been part of Prison Fellowship International since 2011. MVS works on the basis of Christianity and restorative justice, helping people in prison, after release, their families and victims of crime.

Ron Nikkel

President Emeritus of Prison Fellowship International (PFI)

Ronald W. Nikkel is the President Emeritus of PFI. In addition to his work with PFI, Ron has served as a chairperson of the United Nations Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (1988-1996) and as the Vice President of the International Association of Volunteers in Criminal Justice (1983-1986). He currently serves on the Board of Directors for Advocates International, The Jericho Road Foundation, and Love in Action.



Valdeci Antonio Ferreira

Founder of APAC

Valdeci has academic backgrounds in Law and Theology. Using these backgrounds he founded APAC Itaúna in Brazil. He also was the General-director of the Brazilian Fraternity of Assistance to Convicts and now is the Director of International Center for APAC Method Studies. He has also accepted roles to advise PFI in relation to the APAC Method.



Lt. Mgr. Iva Kohoutová

Deputy Head of the Detention and Punishment Department, Světlá nad Sázavou Prison

In 2004, she started working at the Světlá nad Sázavou Prison. First as an educator – therapist in the drug-free zone, or as a special educator. For more than 7 years, she has been the deputy head of the Department of Detention and Punishment. She is active as a member of various publicly active organisations that help in the field of drug and crime prevention.

Tobias Merckle

Founder of Seehouse, Prison Fellowship Germany

Tobias Merckle founded the Seehaus Leonberg as a juvenile prison in the “free form” where juvenile delinquents live together with families in order to experience ordinary life. In 2013, Merckle founded the Hopebearer Foundation where he developed a concept for integrative affordable housing (houses of hope) where Germans and refugees live together and support children of prisoners. Other works of his includes Singgeber gGmbH and HTS Verantwortungseigentum.



Hans Barendrecht

Executive Director of Prison Fellowship Netherlands

Hans Barendrecht has been the Chief Executive Officer and founder of Prison Fellowship Netherlands since 1995. Hans was trained as a lawyer and worked at the court of appeals in the Hague. This year he joined the PFI board.

There are no guards in APAC prisons. Inmates are mainly working with volunteers. Selected prisoners have keys to the prisons, which are locked from the inside. Great emphasis is placed on relationships, aesthetics of the environment and cleanliness. Prison rules are strict and breaking them means returning to a regular prison.





PhDr. Mgr. Hana Prokopová

Head of Department of Custody For the so-called "Open Prison"

She has been working in the prison service for 29 years and has gained experience in many positions. Currently, she holds the position of Head of the Penalty Enforcement Department for the "Open Prison" facility at Jiřice Prison and is also its spokesperson.

PhDr. Andrea Matoušková

Director of Probation and Mediation Service
Czech Republic

After her studies, she started working at the District Court for Prague 10 as one of the first probation officers in the Czech Republic. She participated in the introduction of probation and mediation into Czech practice and later in the preparation of the establishment of the Probation and Mediation Service. She has been its director since 2016.



Mgr. Lenka Ouředníčková

Director for Innovation and Development of
RUBIKON Centre

She has been working in the field of criminal justice all her professional life. She was part of the team that was at the birth of the Probation and Mediation Service. She has also been involved in the field of probation and mediation development at the international level as a member and vicepresident of the CEP European organisation. She is a co-founder of the RUBIKON Centre NGO. Since 2022, she has been involved in the RESCALED European network, which aims to develop the concept of so-called community prisons.

The restorative approach to sentencing using the APAC methodology was developed also thanks to Prison Fellowship International.





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The conference is held under the auspices of the
Minister of Justice JUDr. Pavel Blažek, Ph.D.



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