



**Contribution by the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
to the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
2019 Theme: “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and
equality”**

I. Introduction

This contribution is submitted by **H.E. Mirghani Abbaker Altayeb BAKHET (Sudan), the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) at its 62nd session**, in response to a letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council of 26 November 2018, inviting the Commission to provide an input to the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which will meet under the auspices of ECOSOC at the UN headquarters in New York from 9 to 18 July 2019, on the theme “**Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality**”. It will also review the following sustainable development goals (SDGs): SDG 4 (Quality education), 8 (Decent work and economic growth), 10 (Reduced inequalities), 13 (Climate change), and 16 (Peaceful societies, justice and strong institutions) along with SDG 17 on Global Partnerships.

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs works on a large portfolio of issues. The ones addressed in this contribution do not reflect the work of the Commission in a comprehensive manner, but represent examples related to the 2019 theme and the SDGs under review.

2019 is an important year for the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. In the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem of 2009, Member States decided to establish 2019 as a target date for the goals set in the Political Declaration. In 2016, the General Assembly adopted an outcome document of its special session on the world drug problem, which contains over 100 operational recommendation on addressing and countering the world drug problem and recognizes that efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing. Pursuant to its resolution 60/1, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs will have on 14-15 March 2019 a two-day ministerial segment in addition to its regular session, to take stock of the implementation of the commitments made to jointly address and counter the world drug problem, in particular in the light of the 2019 target date.

Member States has negotiated an outcome for the ministerial meeting that outlines the way beyond 2019. More information on the ministerial segment, including the Ministerial

Declaration is available on <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/2019/2019-high-level-ministerial-segment.html>

II. Response to Questions from the Economic and Social Council

- (a) The identification of gaps, areas requiring urgent attention, risks and challenges in achieving the SDGs; and, or in relation to the theme within the area under the purview of your intergovernmental body and (b) Valuable successful experiences and lessons learned on empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*

The comprehensive implementation of all commitments made by the international community to address and counter the world drug problem, in accordance with a comprehensive, integrated, balanced and scientific evidence-based approach, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility, contributes to empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality.

In its resolution 60/1, the CND resolved that the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action¹, the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 and the UNGASS outcome document represent the commitments and recommendations made by the international community over the preceding decade to addressing and countering the world drug problem and recognized that those documents are complementary and mutually reinforcing².

At the 61st session of the Commission the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) presented the Report on action taken by Member States to implement the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem of 2009 (E/CN.7/2018/6). With a view to supporting Member States in the preparations for the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in 2019, the target date identified in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, the report contains the information received from Member States over the last biennium, and describes the challenges identified and progress made since 2009.

The UNGASS Outcome Document acknowledged the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals. With the implementation of the over 100 operational recommendations contained in the seven thematic chapters of the outcome document of the General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the world drug problem (2016), the Commission in its follow-up process focused in particular on valuable lessons learnt – the thematic discussions on the practical implementation of UNGASS provided Member States, UN entities and specialized agencies, international and regional organizations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations among which those representing affected populations, with the opportunity to share experiences and to inform about concrete activities already taken to implement the UNGASS recommendations.

¹ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 8 (E/2009/28), Political Declaration;

² See CND resolution 60/1, operative paragraph 1.

In 2016, the World Drug Report from UNODC provided an overview of the interrelationship between the world drug problem and sustainable development.³

While tangible progress has been achieved in some fields, the world drug problem continues to present challenges to the peace, security, prosperity, health and well-being of all humanity. Member States have reiterated their strong commitment to addressing and countering the world drug problem, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility, and to reinforce national and international efforts to further increase international cooperation while recognizing the necessity for an integrated, multidisciplinary, balanced and scientific evidence-based approach to all aspects of the world drug problem, in order to face those challenges.⁴

During the thematic discussions held by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs from September to November 2018, areas under the purview of the Commission, stemming both from the Political Declaration and Plan of Action of 2009⁵ and the UNGASS outcome document of 2016, have been addressed and a **number of remaining gaps and challenges related to the world drug problem** identified:

It was noted during a presentation by UNODC⁶ on the goals and targets contained in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, that both the range of drugs and drug markets were expanding and diversifying as never before. The findings of the world drug report 2018⁷ made clear that the international community needed to step up its response to cope with these challenges.

With regard to SDG target 3.5, UNODC reported that global coverage of treatment for drug use disorder remains at low level, with about only one out of six persons in need having had access to treatment, hence the need to strengthen the prevention, early intervention and treatment, care, recovery and rehabilitation of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse. Treatment coverage remains even lower for women – while one in three people who use drugs are women, only one in five people undergoing drug dependence treatment are women.

Limited access of many people worldwide to controlled medicines, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, was addressed by the Commission in the thematic discussions in the fall of 2018, as well as in a number of CND resolutions including 57/10. Member States noted with concern that the availability of internationally controlled drugs for medical and scientific purposes, including for the relief of pain and suffering, remained low to non-existent in many countries of the world, and highlighted the need to enhance national efforts and international cooperation at all levels to address that situation by promoting measures to ensure their availability and accessibility for medical and scientific purposes, within the framework of national control systems, while preventing their diversion, misuse and abuse in line with the three international drug control

³ <http://www.unodc.org/wdr2016/>

⁴ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, preamble.

⁵ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 8 (E/2009/28).

⁶ http://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/2019/Contributions/November/Panellists/8_November/01._UNODC_Ms._ME_CND_intersession_08112018_AM.pdf

⁷ <https://www.unodc.org/wdr2018/>

conventions. This matter is of importance for the achievement of SDG 3, which includes a target (3.8) to provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines to all.

Since 2009, a significant increase in the area under cultivation for both opium poppy and coca bush was noted. The area under cultivation for opium poppy more than doubled between 2009 and 2016, from less than 200,00 hectares to more than 400,000 hectares worldwide, while for coca the numbers increased from just above 150,000 hectares to over 200,000. The global opium production and coca manufacture reached new record highs by the end of 2016.

By threatening the implementation of the rule of law and governance in general, the illicit drug economy is having a detrimental impact on the development of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, undermining efforts to achieve SDG 16". A record high manufacturing and trafficking of opiates and cocaine also increase global illicit financial flows related to drugs contrary to the target set in 16.4. Changes in the global cannabis market over the past decade showed an overall decrease in seizures of cannabis. The number of annual cannabis users, in fact increased from about 160,000 in 2009 to 190,000 in 2016 showing that the global cannabis market has expanded.

UNDOC further reported to the CND that amphetamine and methamphetamine seizures had increased since 2009, with methamphetamine seeing a more than four-fold increase and generally dominating the synthetic drugs market. In combination with other indicators, this suggests that the market of ATS has rapidly expanded. Ecstasy-type substances however had decreased between 2007 and 2016, which was attributed, to a large part but not exclusively, to precursor control.

Challenges relating to new psycho-active substances as well as the opioid crisis were prominently dealt with during the 61st session of the Commission. The Commission placed 12 new substances under international control (6 under the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs; 6 under the 1971 Convention), acting upon the recommendations from WHO. In addition, health-based approaches to this problem were mentioned in the respective CND Resolution 61/8. Among these substances is Carfentanil, being 100 times more potent than fentanyl and associated with hundreds of documented deaths globally.

The Commission also adopted a resolution entitled "Laboratory support for the implementation of the scheduling decisions of the Commission of Narcotic Drugs" (61/3), by which it, amongst others, invites UNODC to continue to support the analytical work of laboratories and ensure high quality standards by providing reference material, identifying best practices, developing and updating relevant guidelines and research, and facilitating the exchange of laboratory information and data so that Member States can ensure their preparedness for the implementation of scheduling decisions.

The Commission further adopted a resolution entitled "Enhancing and strengthening international and regional cooperation and domestic efforts to address the international threats posed by the non-medical use of synthetic opioids" (61/8), which, amongst others, encourages Member States to support UNODC, INCB and WHO in accelerating

the process foreseen in the UN drug control conventions of issuing recommendations for the inclusion of synthetic opioids in the international control regime; encourages them to actively participate in early warning networks and promote the use of drug surveillance lists and controls and the sharing of relevant information through UNODC, INCB and WHO, within their respective mandates, and enhance bilateral, subregional, regional and international cooperation; and requests the UNODC, INCB and WHO to develop new and innovative approaches for the treatment and prevention of the non-medical use of synthetic opioids, in line with SDG 3.5; The resolution also invites UNODC to continue to act as the coordinating entity within the United Nations System on efforts to implement activities to address the challenges posed by non-medical use of synthetic opioids. In this regard, an intergovernmental expert group meeting on challenges posed by the non-medical use of synthetic opioids was held in December 2018. The resolution also invites Member States to promote the inclusion in national drug policies, in accordance with national legislation and, as appropriate, of elements for the prevention and treatment of drug overdose.

Regarding the reduction of the diversion and trafficking of precursors since 2009, it was noted during the thematic discussions of the Commission that in 2018, all main precursors and pre-precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants were under international control. However, as controls were increased, and diversion carried risks and costs, traffickers moved to a dynamic range of chemicals to manufacture precursors.

An underlying challenge in effectively addressing the world drug problem is the **lack of comprehensive, reliable data and statistics**.

The importance of global data collection is reflected in the three International Drug Control Conventions,⁸ by which parties are required to annually submit drug-related data to the United Nations. The need to improve and coordinate data collection, analysis and research on the world drug problem has been emphasized in resolutions and documents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

The General Assembly most recently in 2018 invited Member States to “promote and improve the systematic collection of information and gathering of evidence as well as the sharing, at the national and international levels, of reliable and comparable data”⁹. The availability of high-quality data on drugs is key to understanding the drug situation at the national, regional and global levels and is a cornerstone of evidence-based policymaking and monitoring.

The UNGASS outcome document promotes the value of reliable, comparable, objective and quality statistics across all drug domains¹⁰. Member States reaffirmed that targeted interventions that are based on the collection and analysis of data, including age- and gender-related data, can be particularly effective in meeting the specific needs of drug-

⁸ The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

⁹ See General Assembly resolution 73/192

¹⁰ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, Annex, chapters 1, 2, 3, 5.

affected populations and communities¹¹ and committed to enhance the quality and consistency of reported data.¹²

In the UNGASS outcome document, Member States also specifically recommended to improve the availability and quality of statistical information and analysis of illicit drug cultivation, production and manufacturing, drug trafficking, money-laundering and illicit financial flows, including for appropriate reflection in reports of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Narcotics Control Board, in order to better measure and evaluate the impact of such crimes and to further enhance the effectiveness of criminal justice responses in that regard.¹³ In General Assembly resolution 73/192, Member States reiterated that commitment.

In its resolution 60/1 of March 2017, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs highlighted the importance of strengthening data reporting mechanisms, including by identifying gaps in the current drug statistics and by exploring possibilities to support countries to strengthen existing data collection and analysis tools at the national level. With CND resolution 60/1 Member States invited UNODC to “in close cooperation with Member States, to reflect on possibilities to strengthen and streamline its existing data-collection and analysis tools, including improving the quality and effectiveness of the annual report questionnaire, and to report to the Commission on possible ways to enhance these.” The Expert Working Group on Improving Drug Statistics and Strengthening the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ), held in Vienna in 2018, served as a step in exploring options for responding to resolution 60/1. The expert discussion focused on activities to strengthen national capacities to produce statistical information and on ways to improve and streamline the Annual Report Questionnaire, including by further enhancing inter-agency cooperation.

(c) Emerging issues likely to affect inclusiveness and equality at all levels and (d) An assessment of the situation regarding the principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind” at the global, regional and national levels

At the 60th anniversary session of the Commission in 2017, Member States reiterated that the **efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address and counter the world drug problem were complementary and mutually reinforcing**¹⁴.

This important relationship has also been noted in the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem (UNGASS) in 2016, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”¹⁵, negotiated by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and adopted by the General Assembly. The special session took place shortly after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development. In the UNGASS outcome document, Member

¹¹ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, Annex, preamble.

¹² See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, Annex, chapter 5.

¹³ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, Annex, chapter 3.

¹⁴ See Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 60/1

¹⁵ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1

States welcomed the 2030 Agenda and highlighted the important linkages between the Agenda and the work of the Commission.

Given the complementarity and mutually reinforcing nature, efforts to effectively address the world drug problem support also the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

The CND considers the world drug problem on the basis of common and shared responsibility, with a multidisciplinary, integrated, balanced and scientific evidence-based, comprehensive and balanced approach, also taking into account relevant drug-related socioeconomic issues, as well as the links between drug-related issues and achieving sustainable development.

Already in 2009, at the time of the adoption of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, Member States noted, inter alia, that vulnerabilities undermining human development, such as poverty, and social marginalization, should also be considered by States in their interventions¹⁶. The **principle of “ensuring that no one affected by the world drug problem is left behind”** is a prerequisite to improvements on the world drug problem as well as to achieving sustainable development.

The UNGASS 2016 outcome document encourages states to consider ways to strengthen the development perspective within the framework of comprehensive, integrated and balanced national drug policies and programmes, in order to address the causes and related consequences of illicit crop cultivation, manufacture, production of and trafficking in drugs, including through, inter alia, addressing risk-factors affecting individuals, communities and society which may include a lack of services, infrastructure needs, drug-related violence, exclusion, marginalization, gender inequality and social disintegration. Strengthening a development perspective can help address the causes and consequences of all aspects of the world drug problem . Addressing the risk factors can contribute to the reduction of poverty (SDG 1) as well as the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16)¹⁷.

Commitments have also been made to intensify efforts to address the **most pressing drug-related socioeconomic factors**, including unemployment and social marginalization, which make people vulnerable to exploitation by criminal organizations involved in drug-related crime.¹⁸ In General Assembly resolution 73/192, Member States were encouraged to develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmes that, by fostering social development, are aimed at the prevention of crime and violence and that address the multiple factors that contribute to marginalization, crime and victimization.

Poverty itself has strong links also with drug use and drug use disorders. The drug abuse problem places a heavy burden on poor people. Higher socioeconomic groups may have a greater propensity to initiate drug use than lower socioeconomic groups, but it is the lower socioeconomic groups that pay the higher price as they are more

¹⁶ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 8 (E/2009/28), Political Declaration;

¹⁷ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, Annex, chapter 7.

¹⁸ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, Annex, chapter 5.

likely to become drug dependent or develop other drug use disorders.¹⁹ Poverty, unemployment, poor education, domestic violence and social disadvantage are vulnerabilities linked to social development that can be conducive to drug use.²⁰

The Commission is convinced that **drug use prevention** based on scientific evidence and on a rigorous process of adaptation to socioeconomic circumstances “can be a cost-effective approach to preventing the illicit use of drugs and other risk behaviour and is therefore a cost-effective investment in the well-being of all, including children, adolescents, youth, women, families, communities and societies”²¹.

In its resolution 61/4, the Commission has reiterated its commitments made in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action to “promote, develop, review or strengthen effective, comprehensive, integrated drug demand reduction programmes, based on scientific evidence and covering a range of measures including primary prevention, early intervention, treatment, care, recovery, rehabilitation, social reintegration and related support services aimed at promoting health and social well-being of individuals, families and communities and reducing the adverse consequences of drug abuse for individuals and society as a whole”.

The Commission has recognized that much needs to be done, inviting Member States and other donors to provide extra-budgetary resources to “strengthen comprehensive and scientific evidence-based drug demand reduction, including in the areas of prevention, early intervention, treatment, care, recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration, as well as initiatives and measures aimed at minimizing the adverse public health and social consequences of drug abuse”²². The UNGASS outcome document further highlights the need to ensure adequate quality of drug treatment and rehabilitation services and to prevent any possible acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment²³.

In response to CND resolution 58/5, entitled “Supporting the collaboration of public health and justice authorities in pursuing alternative measures to conviction or punishment for appropriate drug-related offenses of a minor nature”, UNODC and WHO have developed a Handbook on “Treatment and care for people with drug use disorders in contact with the criminal justice system”, presented in the margins of the 61st session of the CND. CND Resolution 61/11 promotes non-stigmatizing attitudes to ensure the availability of, access to and delivery of health, care and social services for drug users.

In its efforts to ensure that “no one is left behind” in addressing and countering the world drug problem, the Commission has emphasized the importance of **responding to the specific needs of vulnerable members of society** including children, adolescents, vulnerable youth, women, including pregnant women, people with medical and psychiatric co-morbidities, ethnic minorities and socially marginalized individuals, as

¹⁹ See UN Office on Drugs and Crime, *World Drug Report 2016* (Vienna).

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ CND resolution 59/6.

²² CND resolution 60/8.

²³ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, Annex, chapter 4c

well as people in prison, detention and closed settings, among others²⁴ and recognizing the importance of appropriately mainstreaming gender and age perspectives in drug-related policies and programmes²⁵.

In its resolution 61/4 on “Promoting measures for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, hepatitis B and C and syphilis among women who use drugs” the CND urged “Member States to strengthen their efforts to ensure continued political commitment to combating HIV among people who use drugs, in particular people who inject drugs, and to strive to achieve Sustainable Development Goal targets 3.3, to end the epidemics of AIDS and other communicable diseases by 2030, and 3.5, to strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse”.

Addressing **specific needs of women** in the context of comprehensive and integrated drug demand reduction programmes and strategies, has been highlighted by the Commission in its resolution 59/5, entitled “Mainstreaming a gender perspective in drug-related policies and programmes”, as well as in a number of additional resolutions and policy documents. The UNGASS outcome document invites Member States to “Mainstream a gender perspective into and ensure the involvement of women in all stages of the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of drug policies and programmes, develop and disseminate gender-sensitive and age-appropriate measures that take into account the specific needs and circumstances faced by women and girls with regard to the world drug problem and, as States parties, implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women²⁶”.

The UNODC World Drug Report 2015 estimated that while one in three people who use drugs are women, only one in five people undergoing treatment are women and addressing the aspects of SDG 5, gender equality, it is important to ensure non-discriminatory access for women to health, care and social services in prevention, early intervention, treatment, primary care, recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes, including those offered to persons in prison or pretrial detention, and ensure that women, including detained women, have access to adequate health services and counselling²⁷. Specialized treatment programmes that take into account prior victimization and the special needs of pregnant women and women with children are often unavailable.²⁸ In many countries women offenders imprisoned for drug-related offences make up a large proportion of the female prison population and face particular hardship when criminal justice systems are not yet equipped to cater their specific needs.²⁹

Recognizing that **children** are particularly vulnerable to drug-related risks, the Commission adopted resolution 61/9 “Protecting children from the illicit drug challenge”, in which it called upon Member States to effectively implement relevant existing international legal instruments and national legislation to protect children from

²⁴ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 8 (E/2009/28), Plan of Action;

²⁵ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, Annex, Preamble.

²⁶ See General Assembly resolution S-30/1, chapter 4, paragraph (g)

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ See UNODC Handbook on Women and Imprisonment, pp. 13-14, 115-118.

²⁹ See UNODC Handbook on Women and Imprisonment, p. 116.

use of illicit drugs and trafficking. Such efforts would be supportive to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular SDG 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 16..

(e) Areas where political guidance by the high-level political forum is required

The High-level Political Forum can provide an opportunity to showcase **the value and relevance of the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs** to the 2030 Agenda and the support that UNODC can provide to Member States in that regard, in close cooperation with all other relevant stakeholders.

The High-level Political Forum can also support the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in **increasing the visibility for the work the CND is undertaking**. In line with the 2030 Agenda provisions on multi-stakeholder engagement, support could be provided by the HLPF to the CND, as the central policymaking body in the United Nations system for drug-related matters, in the efforts undertaken by the CND to strengthen its coordination with other relevant UN bodies and to further enhance the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the work of the Commission, as well as in ensuring coherence between its contributions and the work of the HLPF.

III. Links between the work of the CND and the SDGs under in-depth review in 2019 (4, 8, 10, 13, 16) and 17 and (f) policy recommendations on ways to accelerate progress in empowering people, ensuring inclusiveness and equality, and achieving SDGs

Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

The Commission in 2018 in resolution 61/2 made a strong commitment to “Strengthening efforts to prevent drug abuse in educational settings”. Member States were encouraged to “enhance efforts to develop or update drug prevention curricula and to promote policies and tools that target relevant ages and risk factors in multiple settings, and to integrate them, as appropriate, into all levels of education with a view to advancing drug prevention in educational settings as part of a balanced national drug policy, as appropriate and in accordance with domestic law and priorities;”. This call corresponds to SDG target 4.7; asking that “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development”.

The CND also in resolution 61/9 called upon Member States to “to take effective, practical and scientific evidence-based age-appropriate and gender-sensitive measures aimed at preventing children’s initiation of the use of illicit drugs by providing them with accurate information about the risks of use of illicit drugs, by promoting skills and opportunities to choose healthy lifestyles and develop supporting parenting and healthy social environments, by ensuring equal access to education and vocational training, and

by delivering scientific evidence-based prevention programmes in a range of settings, including in families, schools and communities”.

Sustainable Development Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

The relationship between economic development and drugs is evident in the case of the illicit cultivation of drug crops. In rural areas, socioeconomic elements such as poverty and a lack of sustainable livelihoods represent negative risk factors that might lead farmers to engage in illicit cultivation.³⁰

At its 61st session in March 2018, the Commission adopted a resolution entitled: “Promoting the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development and related commitments on alternative development and regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented, balanced drug control policy addressing socioeconomic issues” (61/6), by which it, amongst others, underlined the need for long-term and flexible funding, for the implementation of comprehensive and balanced development-oriented drug control programmes and viable economic alternatives in particular alternative development, based on identified needs and national priorities, for areas and populations affected by or vulnerable to the illicit cultivation of drug crops, with a view to its prevention, reduction and elimination and also encouraged States, to the extent possible, to stay strongly committed to financing such programmes.

Addressing drug-related socioeconomic issues is not limited to rural areas and crop cultivation. The development of viable economic alternatives is also needed to address other illicit drug-related activities, including in urban areas. In resolution 61/6, the Commission encouraged the development of viable economic alternatives for communities affected by or at risk of illicit cultivation of drug crops and other illicit drug-related activities in urban and rural areas, including through comprehensive alternative development programmes, and to this end encouraged “the consideration of development-oriented interventions, while ensuring that both men and women benefit equally from them, including through job opportunities, improved infrastructure and basic public services and, as appropriate, access and legal titles to land for farmers and local communities, which will also contribute to preventing, reducing or eliminating illicit cultivation and other drug-related activities”. Alternative development activities that secure market access for products and promote sustainable income generation over the long-term, ultimately contribute to SDG 8, and in particular its targets 8.3 (Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services) and 8.5 (By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value).

Sustainable Development Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

³⁰ See UN Office on Drugs and Crime, *World Drug Report 2016* (Vienna).

Operational recommendations of the 2016 UNGASS outcome document can effectively address and counter the world drug problem as well as contribute to achieving SDG 10 and its targets. Chapter 4 for example lists operational recommendations on cross-cutting issues involving youth, children, and women who often suffer the brunt of inequalities. Implementing the recommendations helps to achieve targets 10.2 on promoting the social inclusion of all and 10.3 of ensuring equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

Sustainable Development Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 16 is pivotal, as it recognizes that, for development to be inclusive and sustainable, it will require peace, stability, and good governance based on the rule of law. In General Assembly resolution 70/1, Member States highlighted the importance of building peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights, on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels, and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions. In this regard, Member States identified violence, insecurity and injustice as factors giving rise to inequality, corruption, poor governance and illicit financial and arms flows. The targets associated with SDG 16 related to the rule of law and access to justice and reducing violence, organized crime and illicit financial flows all have significant links with the world drug problem and with the response to it and are closely linked to efforts to build sustainable and resilient societies.

In the UNGASS outcome document, Member States stressed the need to address the links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime, including trafficking in persons, trafficking in firearms, cybercrime and money-laundering, and, in some cases, terrorism, including money-laundering in connection with the financing of terrorism, through promoting and supporting reliable data collection, research and intelligence-and analysis-sharing to ensure effective policymaking and interventions. They also recommended the adoption of rules and regulations to prevent transnational organized criminal networks involved in drug-related activities from trafficking and acquiring firearms.

The CND confirmed in its resolution 60/9 its commitment to enhanced capacity building of law enforcement, border control and other relevant agencies, to counter illicit drug trafficking through training, with a view to strengthening the capacity to identify, disrupt and dismantle criminal groups operating transnationally that are involved in any activities related to the illicit production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the diversion of their precursors and other drug-related criminal activities.

Both in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action and the UNGASS outcome document, Member States recognized that transit States faced multifaceted challenges and their capacity needed to be enhanced to address and counter the world drug problem. With its resolution 60/2, the CND called for increased international cooperation to assist

the States most affected by the illicit transit of drugs, especially developing countries, and acknowledged that those States have made important contributions to and sacrifices in countering illicit drug trafficking and preventing illicitly trafficked substances from reaching end markets.

Sustainable Development Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Regarding SDG 17, calling to “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” the CND has and will continue to invite relevant UN entities and specialized agencies, regional organizations as well as NGOs to its meetings and encourage them to actively contribute to its work. There is a Youth Forum and a Scientific Forum held at the margins of the main March meeting and representatives of those fora inform the CND about the outcome of their respective meetings, for the CND to use that input for its own deliberations.

With UNGASS 2016, Member States reaffirmed the principal role of the CND, as the policy-making body of the United Nations with prime responsibility for drug control matters, and the role of the UNODC, as the leading entity in the United Nations system for addressing and countering the world drug problem, while encouraging UNODC to further increase cooperation and collaboration with all relevant United Nations entities, within their respective mandates, when assisting Member States in designing and implementing comprehensive, integrated and balanced national drug strategies, policies and programmes.

In its resolution 60/10 on “Preparations for the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 2019”, the Commission decided to continue that follow-up process in an inclusive, transparent and comprehensive manner and making use of tools to enhance remote participation. To facilitate the participation of stakeholders outside Vienna who are not in a position to participate in person, modern communication tools are used to enable remote participation such as webcasting of meetings and displaying of pre-recorded video-messages. A broad bandwidth of stakeholders participated in the most recent thematic discussions conducted in the fall of 2018. More information on thematic discussion held during the CND intersessional meetings can be found on: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/2019/2019-high-level-ministerial-segment-preparatory-process.html>

In its resolution 61/10, entitled “Preparations for the ministerial segment to be held during the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in 2019”, all Member States and relevant entities of the United Nations system were further encouraged to actively participate in the discussions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in preparation for the 2019 ministerial segment in order to foster an in-depth exchange of information and expertise on efforts, achievements, challenges and best practices to address and counter the world drug problem.

The agenda of the 61st session of the Commission included an item entitled “inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world

drug problem”³¹. During that item, the Commission was informed about the implementation of its resolution 60/6 by which the Commission had encouraged the continuation of efforts between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization and the International Narcotics Control Board, within their respective roles and mandates, to improve coordination and collaboration on international drug policy. At the 61st session of the CND in 2018 a joint tri-partite side event was held, and a joint statement was issued³². The Commission was also informed about UN-system wide activities undertaken: With a view to enhancing a coherent approach, the Secretary-General had tasked UNODC with leading the coordination among relevant United Nations entities in assisting Member States with the implementation of the recommendations contained in the UNGASS outcome document. Through a network of focal points, a number of United Nations system-wide activities were initiated in response to that request, inter alia, the development of a matrix of UNGASS-related action at HQs and in the field and a joint calendar of events. Reference was also made to the fact that during the thematic discussions on the UNGASS implementation, experts from various UN entities participated along with national experts and representatives of other intergovernmental and international organizations as well as civil society organizations and shared their expertise on the practical implementation of the respective UNGASS chapters.

It is also noteworthy that the CND has also been enhancing its cooperation with other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, including the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Statistical Commission. During the 60th session of the CND, a representative of the Statistical Commission addressed the CND and reiterated its readiness to work with the CND to improve drug statistics. A special event was held jointly with the Statistical Commission at the time of the reconvened session in 2017. The Commission at its 61st session was connected via video conference to the session of the Commission on the Status of Women and exchanged views on their joint work.

More information on the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs can be found on: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/index.html>

More information on the contributions made by the Commission to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be found on: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/commissions-2030.html>

³¹ See E/CN.7/2018/CRP 7 (Note by the Secretariat on inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem)

³² <http://www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/en/pressrels/2018/unisnar1345.html>