



## **European Union**

### **Statement on the occasion of the 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

**Vienna, 18-22 March 2019**

Agenda Item 12: Inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem

Distinguished Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey<sup>§</sup>, North Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\*, Albania\*, Bosnia and Herzegovina\*, Ukraine, Iceland<sup>+</sup>, the Republic of Moldova, Andorra, Armenia, Georgia and San Marino.

The international community needs to strengthen its action, reinforce cooperation and accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem. The EU and its Member States therefore welcome the Ministerial Segment last week.

We strongly believe that equal efforts shall be invested in all areas of drug policy, in full respect of the UN Drug Conventions. Therefore, the EU and its Member States strongly encourage the concrete implementation of the UNGASS Outcome Document adopted in 2016 in order to strengthen the public health and human rights dimension of the world drug problem, which globally should be rebalanced to receive the same attention and commitment as the law enforcement side if we want to make substantial progress by 2030.

In order to obtain concrete improvements and measurable progress, our efforts should be also fully invested in tackling the emerging and persistent challenges and threats such as new psychoactive substances and the Darknet.

<sup>§</sup> Candidate Country

\* Candidate Countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

<sup>+</sup> Iceland is a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area

The EU and its Member States fully support the principal role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as the policymaking body in addressing and countering the world drug problem. In this context, we would like to emphasise the need to enhance coherence within the United Nations system at all levels and cooperation with other intergovernmental organisations as well as civil society. It is key for the CND and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to further engage in, and benefit from, synergies and cost effectiveness with all relevant UN entities, including the WHO, UNDP, UNAIDS, UN Women and OHCHR, as well as regional and international organisations such as INTERPOL.

We appreciate the efforts of the UNODC as the leading entity in the UN system in addressing and countering the world drug problem, and we reaffirm the treaty-mandated role of the World Health Organization and of the International Narcotics Control Board.

The EU and its Member States fully recognize the crucial importance of the access to, and availability of, controlled substances such as opioid medications in the treatment of pain and opioid dependence, whilst also acknowledging the potential for the diversion, trafficking and misuse of these medications. Therefore, we acknowledge and support the efforts of the WHO, UNODC and INCB in providing technical guidance and assistance to tackle existing barriers and to guarantee the availability of and accessibility to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes for those in need. We are glad that the topic of access to controlled medicines constitutes one of the six areas of the Memorandum of Understanding that was concluded between the UNODC and the WHO in 2016. The EU and its Member States support further coordination efforts on this issue among these competent organisations. We also underline the importance of working with civil society and scientific community, as well as the private sector in this area, given their role, expertise and networks.

We would like to once again underline the value and importance of the formalised cooperation between UNODC and WHO, in order to strengthen and expand existing cooperation on the public health dimension of the world drug situation. The EU and its Member States would warmly encourage this as a model for future increased cooperation between UNODC and other relevant UN entities.

In the same vein, we strongly encourage increased cooperation, information and data sharing between the CND, the UNODC, regional and inter-governmental organisations and other relevant UN bodies on-the implementation of all the recommendations of the Outcome Document of the 2016 UNGASS.

As regards Alternative Development, the EU and its Member States have recently renewed their political engagement on this topic. Alternative Development contributes to the reduction of illicit crops on the long term, and at the same time makes a clear contribution to meet the goals and indicators enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals, especially in the field of poverty reduction, food security, climate action, life on land and peace and justice. The EU and its Member States encourage and support the coordination between UNODC and UNDP, to give a coherent response to the challenge of illicit crops, while fostering security and development.

In order to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, including in relation to Health, and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, and in order to address the world drug situation, we need a balanced, integrated, multidisciplinary and evidence-based approach, putting people at the centre of the response and in particular those who are the most vulnerable. This is in line with the objectives of the three international drug control conventions, to which the EU and its Member States are committed.

Distinguished Chair, dear colleagues,

We welcome the Ministerial Segment last week, and we strongly encourage the contributions of relevant United Nations entities, international financial institutions and relevant regional and international organisations, within their respective mandates, to the work of the CND, to strengthen international and inter-agency cooperation, to enhance coherence within the United Nations system at all levels with regard to the world drug situation.

For the EU and its Member States, the UNGASS Outcome Document represents a pivotal reference and the most comprehensive document. We encourage the UNODC to include within the existing reporting obligations, including in the World Drug Report, a dedicated chapter regarding collaboration and coordination across the UN system in the global efforts to implement the UNGASS recommendations, in line with the Agenda 2030 and to ensure that no one is left behind.

Thank you very much, Distinguished Chair!