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Agenda item 13 (a)

**Round-table discussions of the high-level segment:
current and emerging challenges, new trends and
patterns of the world drug problem and possible
improvements to the evaluation system**

Outcome of the round table on current and emerging challenges, new trends and patterns of the world drug problem and possible improvements to the evaluation system, submitted by the Chairperson of the round table, Audronė Astrauskienė (Lithuania)

On 11 March 2009, the outcome of the round-table discussion on current and emerging challenges, new trends and patterns of the world drug problem and possible improvements to the evaluation system was presented by the chairperson of the round table, Audronė Astrauskienė (Lithuania). The outcome was as follows:

1. Scientific evidence should always form the basis of drug policies. There is a need to improve the capacity of Member States to collect the data and information necessary to formulate evidence-based drug control policies and responses.
2. Synthetic illicit drugs pose major new challenges for both control and monitoring.
3. There is a need to improve international data sources so that Member States can have the best possible understanding of trends in drug markets and their impact. There is a need for better monitoring and evaluation systems not only for trends in drug markets but also to evaluate the efficacy of supply and demand reduction programmes and policies.
4. A review of existing data collection tools at the international level may be constructive in improving the evidence base available for policy and programme development. The international community can benefit from the considerable body of scientific and analytical information that has become



available in recent years. Making those tools viable and cost effective requires effective regional and international partnerships.

5. There has been an increasing level of sophistication in the production of synthetic drugs and cannabis and in trafficking in all drugs and precursor chemicals. Organized criminal groups are increasingly exploiting elements of globalization and technology to expand into new markets and subregions and evade law enforcement authorities. Responding to that situation requires an integrated, international approach to ensure that there are no windows of opportunity available to organized criminal groups.

6. Addressing the world drug problem requires an integrated, balanced approach. The dichotomy of production and consumption, which has characterized the debate for so long, is no longer valid or helpful.

7. Respect for human rights, individual rights and the principle of shared responsibility is fundamental to drug control policy and programming. Working towards multilateral consensus on those issues is important for coming to an effective response to current and emerging challenges of the world drug problem.

8. Reducing the harm related to illicit drug use requires a complementary approach among health, social welfare and criminal justice service providers. The increase in injecting drug use and the spread of HIV associated with drug use need to be addressed seriously, and the efficacy of the related policies and programmes needs to be evaluated.

9. The supply of opiates originating in Afghanistan continues to pose serious challenges to the international community.
