

Background note on the joint meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

1. In 2010, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), in its report on the “Review of Management and Administration in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime” ([JIU/Rep/2010/10](#)), made the following recommendation:

“The Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice should hold joint reconvened sessions that would serve as an integrated governing body providing policy guidance to the Office, tasked to oversee budgetary and programmatic activities.”

2. The JIU considered that UNODC was influenced by a lack of timely and effective guidance by its governing bodies, resulting from a fragmentation of governance, given that the Office had been established as a merger of the entities responsible for the implementation of two different programmes on drugs and crime, while maintaining the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) as its governing bodies, operating in parallel, individually and separately. The JIU identified three possible options to create a more integrated and coherent governance mechanism, namely (i) the merger of both functional commissions, (ii) the creation of an executive body or (iii) the combining of the reconvened sessions of the Commissions.

3. The JIU chose to recommend the last option, which it considered the more actionable scenario at that point in time. The recommendation was further considered by Member States within the *standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC* and during informal discussions that led to the recommendation by the CND and the CCPCJ to the Economic and Social Council and the adoption by the Council of decision 2011/259 on 28 July 2011, entitled “Joint meetings of the reconvened sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice”.

4. In its decision 2011/259, the Economic and Social Council decided that, starting in 2011, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice should hold joint meetings during their reconvened sessions for the sole purpose of considering agenda items included in the operational segment of the agendas of both Commissions, with a view to providing integrated policy directives to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on administrative, budgetary and strategic management issues. The Council also decided that the practice of holding back-to-back reconvened sessions of the Commissions should be continued to enable each Commission to consider, in separate meetings, agenda items included in the normative segment of its agenda.

5. In accordance with that decision, the first joint meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

were held on 12 December 2011, the first day of their reconvened sessions. During the joint meeting, the Commissions considered administrative, budgetary and strategic management issues, particularly the work of the *standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC*, including the work on the elaboration of a strategy for the period 2012-2015 for the UNODC, and discussed the consolidated budget for the biennium 2012-2013 for the UNODC. The remaining items on the agenda were considered by the Commissions on the following day in separate meetings.

6. The holding of joint meetings does not provide a basis for merging in-session documentation, such as draft resolutions or draft decisions on issues that are common to both Commissions in their capacity as governing bodies of UNODC,. Since each Commission remains a separate body, the report and any draft resolutions are adopted by each Commission at their separate meeting on the second day of the reconvened session.

7. The reconvened sessions of the 55th session of the CND and the 21st session of the CCPCJ will be held on 6-7 December 2012. Following the organization of work established in 2011, the joint meeting will be held on 6 December followed by separate meetings by each Commission on 7 December.