

## **Statement by The Netherlands on the occasion of the CND thematic discussions on UNGASS implementation**

**4<sup>th</sup> Intersessional meeting**

**Vienna, 10-11 October 2016**

### **Operational recommendations on Ensuring the availability of and access to controlled substances exclusively for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion**

- The Netherlands associates itself with the statement made by the EU delegation on behalf of the European Union and its member states.
- "Indispensable, adequately available and not unduly restricted" these are the words used in the international drug conventions to underline the importance of making controlled substances available for medical purposes. With data indicating that 75% of the world population have limited or no access to proper pain relief treatment we clearly did meet this commitment. So the Netherlands is very satisfied that the UNGASS again underlined the urgency of this important matter.
- One, often difficult but effective way to lift unnecessary barrier, is legal reform. Mr Chair, let me state that the Netherlands believe that we have implemented a legal solution that helps us to prevent possible conflict between the international control and availability of controlled substances.

- We have implemented two separate laws that deal with narcotic substances to ensure that we can deal with them, based on their different use. One Act to deal with substances that have recreational use as drugs and another Act that deals with substances that allow for the medical use of substances. Therefore, we are able to control substances as illegal for consumers, but we maintain the possibility that these substances can still be used for medical purposes.
- That means that treatment with these substances can also be covered by health insurance to ensure easy and affordable access. Those substances include morphine and methadone but also psychotropic stimulants like amphetamines.
- The Netherlands likes to stress that availability of substances is also urgent to address the growing global impact of mental health disorders and the poor access to the relevant medication in many lower income countries. Our system with separate laws allows us to well regulate access to those substances to those in need.
- I thank you mr. Facilitator