

Thematic CND Intersessionals – access to essential medicines

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

Chair,

The international community must continue to strive to widen access to essential medicines. It is unacceptable that an estimated 30% of people living in developing countries, and 50% in sub-Saharan Africa, do not have access to essential medicines.

The World Health Organisation states that equitable access to ‘medical products, vaccines and technologies’ is one of the six building blocks required to establish strong health systems, which are necessary to achieve positive health outcomes.

We must strengthen efforts to make material progress here, in accordance with the roadmap set by the Sustainable Development Goals.

The UK is one of the biggest funders of essential health commodities (such as medicines, vaccines and contraceptives) through organisations such as the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM), Gavi, UNITAID, UNICEF and UNFPA, and is working to improve access to essential medicines by working with organisations such as the World Bank, the World Health Organisation, and the Gates Foundation to strengthen health systems in the poorest countries.

This includes promoting a stronger, evidence-based approach to the prescribing and dispensing of medicines.

Chair,

The UK supports joint, comprehensive action from relevant international organisations to enhance the global access to essential medicines, including the International Narcotics Control Board, the World Health Organisation, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the UN Development Programme.