



## United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Drugs (UNGASS 2016)

Side event:

### The Nexus of Human Rights and Drug Policies

Organized by the Government of Norway and the Council of Europe

Tuesday, 19 April 2016

2.30-3.30 PM

Conference Room B

#### Speakers:

- Mr. **Bent Høie**, Minister of Health and Care Services, Norway
- Mr. **Ivan Simonovic**, UN Assistant-Secretary-General for Human Rights
- Mr. **Jan Malinowski**, Executive Secretary, the Pompidou Group, Council of Europe
- Ms. **Luciana Pol**, Senior Fellow, CELS (Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales)

**Moderator:** Mr. **Fredrik Wang Gierløff**, Political Advisor to the Minister of Health and Care Services, Norway

The side event will explore the consequences of human rights for drugs policy, hereunder of the right of everyone to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and of access to medicines as a fundamental aspect of the right to health. The human rights dimension of drug policy is also closely linked to the development agenda and the sustainable development goals. Participation in policy development and implementation of civil society is also at the core of human rights.

The side event is co-organised by Norway and the Council of Europe drug policy cooperation platform, the Pompidou Group. The Pompidou Group was set up in 1971 at the initiative of the French President, and has today 38 member states including from outside Europe. The group was incorporated into the Council of Europe in 1980. The Council of Europe is an international organisation. Its objective is to promote and protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Council of Europe has 47 member states and serves over 820 million people across Europe.

In line with the Council of Europe's core values and aims, under its current Norwegian Presidency, the Pompidou Group agreed to bring human rights to the forefront of drug policy, and also to explore the unintended social and economic consequences and costs of drug policies. The enjoyment of human rights is closely intertwined with the impact of policy on social, economic and other rights of people affected in one way or another by drug policy. The side event is firstly expected to be a source of inspiration for the Pompidou Group in the preparation of a policy paper on human rights dimensions in drug policy and next and hopefully also for a wider range of states.