

“BEYOND 2008”: AN UPDATE

What’s this about?

“Beyond 2008” is an initiative of the Vienna Non Governmental Organization Committee (VNGOC) aimed at providing a platform for civil society to contribute to the 1998-2008 review of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Illicit Drugs (UNGASS). “Beyond 2008” is undertaken in partnership with the *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime* (UNODC) and is made possible by the generous financial support of several governments. The primary function of “Beyond 2008” is not to advocate any specific philosophy or approach to drug control. Rather, it is intended to provide the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and UNODC with the experience of NGOs in achieving the targets set by the 1998 UNGASS and to offer proposals for the principles which should govern future action and the engagement of all stakeholders in the development of drug control measures and activities. “Beyond 2008” is a two stage process focused around three specific objectives

Objectives

Launched in September 2007, this unique process involved regional consultations in 13 cities across all 9 regions of the world. Led by regional coordinating organizations, NGO representatives from over 140 countries discussed and made recommendations on the three objectives:

1. **To highlight tangible NGO achievements in the field of drug control, with particular emphasis on contributions to the 1998 UNGASS Action Plan such as achievement in policy, community engagement, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration;**
2. **To review best practices related to collaboration mechanisms among NGOs, governments and UN agencies in various fields and propose new and/or improved ways of working with the UNODC and CND;**
3. **To adopt a series of high order principles, drawn from the Conventions and their commentaries,**

that would be tabled with UNODC and CND for their consideration and serve as a guide for future deliberations on drug policy matters.

Achievements and future goal

Each regional consultation was structured to elicit the experience and ideas of a representative sample of NGOs from that region. A presentation on the progress to date and general findings was provided to CND members at the 2008 Commission.

Complementing the qualitative data collected through the regional consultations, a questionnaire was developed based on the Biennial Reporting Questionnaire. This questionnaire was translated into the six official languages and was available for completion either online or in hard copy. The questionnaire sought to collect quantitative data related to the action plans and targets established at the 1998 UNGASS. At the time of writing 444 completed questionnaires have been received and partial data has been received from around 600 organizations.

“Beyond 2008” will culminate with a global summit in July 2008 in Vienna where 300 NGO representatives from all 9 regions will come to debate and adopt a recommendations around each of the three objectives. These recommendations will subsequently be tabled with the CND for consideration as part of their deliberations towards the 2009 High level segment.

Beyond 2008 represents a focused and serious effort to provide the CND with unique insight and forward looking recommendations from NGOs across the globe who see the UNGASS review as a critically important point in time in global drug policy stewardship.

The VNGOC is very confident that all members of the CND will benefit from this initiative and looks forward to the opportunity of substantively contributing to your reflection on the progress made since 1998 and equally important, how we as a global community of governments and NGOs, wish to shape our future path.

Please visit www.vngoc.org to review progress to date and preparations for the Beyond 2008 Summit to be held in Vienna from July 7-9, 2008. We also welcome your comments and inquiries by email at info@vngoc.org

“Beyond 2008” is made possible through the generous financial contributions of the European Commission, and other governments, non-governmental organizations listed at www.vngoc.org.



“BEYOND 2008” NGO FORUM 7-9 JULY

Programme

DAY 1

08:00 - 09:30 Registration (Gate 1) and Welcome

10:00 - 10:45 Welcome from Chair of the NGO Committee - Opening Remarks from: The Executive Director of UNODC, Special Guest Chair, Beyond 2008 Steering Committee

10:45 - 13:00 Presentation of Regional Reports:

- Australia / New Zealand
- Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- North Africa and the Middle East
- North America
- South Asia
- South East Asia, East Asia and the Pacific
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- Western Europe

13:00 - 14:30 Lunch

14:30 - 15:00 Outline of Global Summary:
Objective 1: Achievements
Objective 2: Best practices
Objective 3: Conventions

15:00 - 17:30 Plenary discussion on Objective 1

18:00 Vin d'honneur - hosted by UNODC Executive Director in the Rotunda and formal opening of the NGO exhibition.

DAY 2

09:00 - 12:00 Plenary discussion of Objective 2

12:00 - 13:00 Lunch

15:00 - 18:00 Plenary discussion of Objective 3

19:30 Reception offered by Vienna City Hall

DAY 3

09:30 - 12:30 final plenary discussion

12:30 - 16:00 Lunch

14:30- 16:00 UNODC side event

16:00 - 17:30 Final adoption of resolution and declaration

17:30 Closing ceremony

18:00 Close of session