



Civil Society Task Force

- Joint Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs - New York NGO Committee on Drugs Initiative for UNGASS 2016 -

Building on the success of the Beyond 2008 initiative and after reviewing best practices of civil society involvement in other recent high-level United Nations General Assembly meetings, the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs (VNGOC) and the New York NGO Committee on Drugs (NYNGOC) collaborated on setting up the Civil Society Task Force (CSTF).

After a meeting with Mr. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, on the margins of the 57th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs High-level Review in March 2014 and extensive consultations within the NGO community working on drug related issues, a proposal outlining the terms of the CSTF was drafted and then finalised in November 2014:

Mission

To serve as the official liaison between the United Nations and civil society in the preparatory process of and at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the world drug problem in 2016.

Objective

To ensure a comprehensive, structured, meaningful and balanced participation of civil society during this process.

Structure

26 members, 18 regional representative, i.e. 2 per region (listed below) and 4 representatives of affected populations.

Regions to be represented: Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific; Eastern Europe; Latin America and the Caribbean; Northern Africa and the Middle East; North America; South Asia; South-East and East Asia; Sub-Saharan Africa and Western Europe.

To allow for efficient steering of the CSTF and in order to undertake its task more effectively, the CSTF would be chaired by a Steering Group, consisting of 1 Chair, 2 Vice-Chairs and 1 Secretary. The nomination of the Chair and one Vice-Chair will lie with the VNGOC, while one Vice-Chair and the Secretary will be nominated by the NYNGOC.

Activities

Working closely with the UNODC Civil Society Team, the CSTF will (i) identify speakers and participants for all relevant UNGASS 2016 preparatory events; (ii) lead regional consultations; (iii) host a fourth VNGOC Civil Society Hearing during the 58th session CND and (iv) co-host with the Chair of the CND and/or the President of the General Assembly an Interactive Civil Society Hearing for all stakeholders prior to the UNGASS, whose conclusions would be an officially recognized document of the UNGASS preparatory process.

Funding

While the members of the CSTF commit to identifying in kind and other resources to support their membership in this body, the proposal also asks that the United Nations assume costs as deemed acceptable by the President of the General Assembly, including the participation of a pre-determined number of other civil society participants to ensure geographic diversity, travel and personnel support costs.

For further information, please contact: info@vngoc.org.