

Sovereign Order of Malta

Statement by H. E. Ambassador Günther A. Granser
Permanent Observer to the United Nations and other
International Organizations

Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 62nd session
Vienna, 14 – 22 March 2019

Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

The Sovereign Order of Malta is pleased to participate at this 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Furthermore, our delegation would like to congratulate both you and the Board of the Commission for the extensive work you have done in preparation and now leading this session.

After the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the world drug problem, the Order takes this opportunity to note the engagement and the efforts of the States to begin the implementation of the UNGASS Outcome Document. The demand for illegal drugs should be combatted by increased education, social, health and ethical understanding and discernment. This formation should be directed principally towards the most vulnerable in society, such as children and young people, but is also good to extend it to those who suffer some kind of marginalization.

The Sovereign Order of Malta, existing for more than 950 years, is one of the oldest humanitarian entities worldwide and has diplomatic relations with 108 States on all continents and permanent observer status at the United Nations and other international organizations. The Order is neutral, impartial and apolitical. It has a specific mission in the protection of health and assistance for people in need, who are affected by disease and suffering in miserable living conditions. The Order has been proud to support UNODC in several projects where it counts most: among the people that are vulnerable. We want to show this engagement also to future generations by our strong and long lasting dedication to the UNODC Youth Initiative.

The Sovereign Order of Malta is very proud to partner with UNODC Prevention Treatment and Rehabilitation Section' Youth Initiative for over six years and witness how this meaningful initiative is changing communities and impacting global policies by supporting youth engagement in drug policy fora and prevention initiatives for the wellbeing of youth.

Substance use impacts everyone and particularly young people. Prevention based on science effectively supports young people to grow healthy and safe. For the Sovereign Order of Malta it is a very personal matter to do everything to enable the young generation to grow healthy and safe while becoming active and contributing members of society. As such we are very proud to be supporting the UNODC Youth Fora that have so far hosted 229 youth leaders from 77 different countries in order to give them the opportunity to voice their perspective and speak to the Commission through their annual statement which was delivered yesterday at the opening of the Ministerial Segment.

Together with UNODC we feel our responsibility to advocate for youth, not only for their protection and their wellbeing but also for their active engagement. The Sovereign Order of Malta is committed to continue supporting UNODC and raising the profile of youth leaders in drug policy and invites Member States to join in this effort to ensure that young people grow healthy and safe.

In closing, the Order of Malta reiterates its gratitude for the efforts already undertaken by States to implement the UNGASS outcome document. We assure full collaboration in every just effort to tackle the world drug problem also from a humanitarian perspective and to actively promote a society free of illicit drugs.

Chairperson, thank you for your attention