



**European Union**

**Statement on the occasion of the  
Intersessional Meeting 25-28 September 2018, Commission on Narcotic Drugs 61st session**

**Vienna, 28 September 2018**

*Preparations for the ministerial segment to be held during the 62nd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 2019*

Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey<sup>§</sup>, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Iceland+, Serbia\*, Albania\*, Bosnia and Herzegovina\*, Norway+, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Andorra, Armenia, Georgia and San Marino.

For the EU and its Member States the ministerial segment during the sixty-second session of the CND is an important moment for the international community to have a general debate about international drug policy and to reflect upon future - what we want to achieve together. In this regard, this statement touches upon the current challenges and progresses in facing the world drug situation, where a thorough assessment will be needed, and highlights some areas for reflection towards the ministerial segment.

Madam Chair,

We need to recognise – as the world drug report 2018 has described that the drug situation is worsening in most parts of the world. Even if drug policy challenges differ from region to region, both the range of drugs and drug markets are expanding and diversifying as never before. We have a common and shared responsibility as well as an obligation to implement evidence-based measures, realistic aims and concrete public health-based policies that can make a significant improvement, which requires a long-term multidisciplinary approach.

In the European Union, the overall approach to drugs is set out in the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-

<sup>§</sup> Candidate Country

Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

\* Iceland and Norway are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

2020 and accompanying Actions Plans. The EU Strategy is achieved through an integrated, balanced and evidence-based approach. The recently published European Drug Report 2018 by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, based on sound and reliable data, shows some worrying market trends while also presenting a stabilization of consumption. The EU believes that this integrated, balanced and evidence-based approach is therefore valuable for addressing the drug phenomenon.

Findings show that the implementation of evidence-based programmes and policies contributes to reducing negative health consequences and promoting improvements in public health also reaching marginalized and vulnerable groups.

On the supply side, the EU law enforcement agency EUROPOL, in cooperation with other stakeholders, has stepped up its activities on the matter, notably to improve the operational response.

Madam Chair,

The EU and its Member States strongly believe that drug policies should be built upon a sound public health approach, based on scientific evidence and supported by reliable and objective monitoring systems and evaluation, in compliance with Human Rights recognised as such by international legal instruments.

The EU and its Member States would like to recall the important progress that has been achieved in the field of drugs with the successful outcome of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the World Drug Problem held in 2016. By calling for a more integrated, evidence-based and balanced drug policy, UNGASS reshaped and broadened global drug policy, through putting an adequate focus on the health side of the drugs problem, including prevention, treatment, and risk and harm reduction, on vulnerable members of society, on emerging and persistent challenges and threats, and on the link to Human Rights and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, whilst also reaffirming the unwavering commitment to supply reduction and related measures, including effective law enforcement; countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation. Therefore, we consider the UNGASS Outcome Document as a milestone and a progressive step to improve the current situation on international drug policy.

The EU and its Member States firmly believe that the 2019 ministerial segment of the 62nd CND should reaffirm the UNGASS Outcome Document as the pivotal reference document in the field of drugs, representing the latest global consensus. The UNGASS Outcome Document builds upon the commitments made 10 years ago, while retaining what has been achieved so far. Therefore, our collective efforts should be fully invested in the implementation of the UNGASS commitments.

As regards the 2019 target date, the EU advocates for a commitment for the next years in the upcoming Review Process and the Ministerial Segment on what we want to achieve by 2030, in line with the Agenda 2030. The EU recognizes the need for a concise document resulting from

the Ministerial Segment. The EU and its Member States would like to emphasize five elements that can ensure substantial progress in our collective endeavor towards 2030:

First, the EU fully supports the principal role of the CND and UNODC as respectively the CND and UNODC as the policymaking bodies and leading entities for addressing and countering the world drug problem, however it is key for the Commission and UNODC to further engage with other relevant UN entities and, within their mandates, jointly develop activities and strategies promoting implementation, including in designing and implementing integrated, evidence-based and balanced national drug strategies, policies and cooperation programmes. In this regard-we would also welcome closer UNODC cooperation with all relevant UN entities, such as WHO, UNDP, UNAIDS, OHCHR and with Interpol, including the question of proper means for an effective implementation.

Second, it is important to implement the UNGASS Outcome Recommendations in line with the relevant goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The efforts to achieve the relevant drug-related Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem complement and reinforce each other.

Third, the European Union and its Member States strongly supports an integrated, balanced and evidence-based approach which addresses both demand reduction and supply reduction – together, with equal efforts on both sides and in full compliance with the UN conventions on Narcotic Drugs.

Drug use is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that need to be addressed with its associated health and social risks, such as deaths, infectious diseases, dependency, mental health problems and social exclusion. In this context the EU would also like to recall that the principle of adequate, proportionate and effective response to drug-related offences has been highlighted in all UN drug control conventions.

On the supply side, responding to New Psychoactive Substances is one of the existing-and emerging challenges, as well as the fact that criminals continuously seek out new methods to increase profit margins.

Fourth, the Ministerial Segment of the 62nd CND should meaningfully involve civil society and the scientific community. We should reaffirm the crucial role of civil society in the formulation and implementation of drug policies at the local, national and international level. Without their insightful input, we would not have enough information on daily life with drug use. Civil society should be actively involved in the process leading towards the 2019 ministerial segment of the 62<sup>nd</sup> through the Civil Society Taskforce, and should also be invited to meaningfully participate in the Ministerial Segment of the 62nd CND session, including in its preparation.

Among other measures to actively involve civil society in this event, we support the Civil Society Taskforce intention to organise a civil society consultation in the margins of the 62nd CND session, which would report to the ministerial segment on the outcome of the Forum.

Finally, collecting relevant and reliable data is instrumental in getting a better overview of the drug situation worldwide reflected in the World Drug Report. We welcome the ongoing work on the improvement of the quality and the effectiveness of the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ).

If concrete targets are needed to measure the success of our respective activities, those should be reflecting the seven thematic areas of the UNGASS Outcome document.

As regards the themes for the two interactive, multi-stakeholder round tables to be discussed later today, the EU and its Member States suggest to look at:

- 1/ "Taking stock of the implementation of commitments made", and
- 2/ "The road ahead".

Madame Chair,

The European Union and its Member States strongly supports the concrete implementation of the UNGASS Outcome Document in order to continue our efforts and international cooperation on drug supply reductions, new challenges and threats, and to strengthen the prevention, public health, development and human rights dimension of the world drug problem. The seven thematic areas laid down in the UNGASS Outcome Document fully correspond to the need for an integrated, evidence-based, balanced and outreaching approach to drug policy. The efforts of the international community up to and beyond March 2019 should be focused on their practical implementation through the broad number of operational recommendations contained therein.

Therefore, Madam Chair,

The EU and its Member States aspire for our collective efforts to be fully invested in the implementation of UNGASS 2016, our strongest tool to embrace an effective and sustainable drug policy towards 2030.

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Finally, Madam Chair,

On behalf of the EU and its Member States, allow me to repeat that these five aforementioned aspects constitute the EU position on a holistic international drug policy, based on equal partnership with the whole international community to address the World Drug Problem. The EU and its Member States have reiterated as recently as last week on political level their common position on a holistic approach on global drug policy based on the seven chapters of UNGASS.

Thank you, Madame Chair.