

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

**CND Chair's One-Day Special Forum
10 October 2022, approx. 5:00 PM
Plenary Hall B, M-Building, V.I.C.**

**Closing Remarks John BRANDOLINO
Director, Division for Treaty Affairs**

Mr. Chair,

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to deliver closing remarks at your event.

Excellencies, distinguished panelists, and participants,

In the course of today's One-Day Special Forum on Availability and Access to Controlled Substances for Medical and Scientific Purposes, we have seen extremely engaging and fruitful discussions on challenges faced in terms of availability and access, as well as good practices and strategies to overcome those challenges. We know that the global crisis of lack of access to controlled medicines is not a problem that can be solved by any one country or party alone – it requires a joint global effort. Today, we have heard from an array of experts representing a range of stakeholders – including Member States, United Nations entities, academia, and civil society – as well as members of the audience hailing from across the globe. This forum, and the overarching Chair's initiative on availability and access that has been undertaken throughout the year, is part of the joint effort needed to address and counter this problem, alongside all other aspects of the world drug problem.

Let me recall that Ambassador D’Hoop’s initiative on availability and access, supported by the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies, kicked off with the Joint Call to Action here in Vienna in March. It was then taken to New York and Geneva, with events held at the United Nations offices in those cities. The initiative has gone global through complementary online efforts, including the social media information campaign on Twitter, and now, the Secretariat’s e-learning tool on availability and access. With today’s One-Day Special Forum, held here in Vienna, the initiative has come full circle. But our job does not end here. It is now up to Member States and the international community to act on the information exchanged and knowledge gained in the course of the initiative, to bring about positive change.

In closing, I hope that this issue is kept high on the international agenda, to ensure it received the necessary attention. Mr. Chair, I thank you for so skillfully steering this initiative and for advancing an area of the world drug problem where much more needs to be done.

Thank you very much.