Scientific consultation
“Science addressing drugs and health: State of the art”
11 March 2014, Vienna International Center, Vienna

Recommendations on Drug prevention, treatment and rehabilitation

Our recommendations are based on the recognition that the development, course and severity of substance use disorders are determined by the interface of developmental, biological, psychological, and psychosocial factors. We refer to substance use disorders as a range of drug use with various degree of severity.

1. Substance use disorders should be treated as medical and public health issue rather than a criminal justice and/or moral issue.
2. Evidence-based prevention interventions should be considered as the most effective way of addressing the problem of substance use disorders.
3. Health care systems should have the responsibility and capacity to deliver evidence-based preventive and treatment interventions for substance use disorders at all levels, according to the severity of the disorder and the associated health conditions. For example, primary health care systems must engage in screening, early recognition and intervention and serve as linkage to other treatment settings.
4. Ministries of Health in collaboration with other relevant Ministries should be supported in coordination and strengthening health service responses to substance use disorders, including allocation of necessary funds.
5. We consider that criminal sanctions are not beneficial in addressing substance use disorders and discourage their use.
6. Call upon the Commission of Narcotic Drugs to consider developing a global integrated strategy on prevention and treatment of drug use disorders with the support of UNODC in collaboration with WHO, and in close consultation with scientific community, in preparation for the 2016 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug problem
7. Consider the creation of Permanent Scientific Council with representatives from scientific community.