

**Norwegian statement on the occasion of the  
Special segment on the preparations for the UNGA Special Session on the World Drug  
Problem of the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs  
Vienna, 9-17 March 2015**

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Let me congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on the election as well as members of the Board tasked by the CND with UNGASS preparations. We look forward to constructive deliberations under your able leadership. Norway will support our common efforts to achieve a positive result both at this session of the CND and in the preparations for next year's special session of the General Assembly in New York.

2. This 58<sup>th</sup> session of the CND is of particular importance. Not only because it represents a milestone on the road towards the UNGASS 2016, but also because we still have a long and challenging road ahead in order to deal with the World Drug Problem in an effective and balanced manner, mirroring global, regional and national needs.

3. Despite our common efforts; illicit drug production, illicit drug trade, illicit drug demand, illicit drug use is as big a problem as ever.

4. We have to realize that there is not one single recipe to solve the problems. We need a balanced, comprehensive and evidence-based approach. For Norway Drug policy is a health issue, it is a human rights-issue, but it is also a criminal justice-issue and a global security-issue. We have to strike the right balance between these elements of World Drug policy. Next year's important special session should be forward-looking and address all aspects in a comprehensive

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and integrated manner, including issues where there are differing views. We should not refrain from debating the difficult topics, being it harm reduction, death penalty for drug related offences, respect for human rights-obligations and -norms and evidence-based health measures that help improving the situation for drug users. We should not forget that drug policy is about individuals, about human beings!

5. UNGASS 2016 constitutes an opportunity to sum up the experiences, achievements and remaining challenges of the world drug problems, and to outline a roadmap for further measures within the framework of the international treaties.
6. This requires a good process and broad involvement to ensure functional preparations. However, preparations and procedures have little value themselves. What really matters is the outcome. We look forward to a short and precise document with core recommendations pointing out the main challenges and way forward.
7. To arrive there we are totally relying on thorough and broad reviews and analysis from a broad range of actors and sectors. Not only the core UN agencies, but also the scientific and civil society. Norway applauds the establishment of the Civil Society Task Force and the informal international scientific network and welcomes their significant involvement and contributions.
8. We should not lose sight of the true intention of the treaties; that is the health and wellbeing of humankind. This must guide our work.
9. We need to develop an international system and implementation of the existing treaties that not only ensures law enforcement, but equally

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important is to secure access to medicines. Lack of such access is one of the most serious health and humanitarian challenges today. As stated by INCB in the debate,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the world's population has no or limited access to necessary medication. We must improve the situation of millions of people through our policy decisions of the CND and UNGASS.

10. Furthermore, our response to the world drug problem must be in full compliance with the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as the cornerstone of international legal framework. As many other previous speakers we strongly oppose the death penalty under all circumstances, including for drug-related crimes. We support the abolition of other practices that are not in line with the principles of human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, solidarity, the rule of law and human rights.

11. Norway wishes to emphasize that the implementation of the drug control treaties must respect the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Such implementation cannot be done in isolation, but must reflect the competence of other UN bodies such as the WHO.

12. We share the view expressed by the INCB that socioeconomic aspects as poverty, food insecurity, economic inequality, social exclusion, are some of the factors that have an impact on both the supply and demand side of the world drug problem. This has to be taken into account when preparing the UNGASS.

13. The treaties governing our work have two main objectives; to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes on the one side, and to prevent their diversion into illicit channels on the other. Our actions must balance these objectives to the benefit of people.

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14. Addressing substance use disorder with all its adverse health and social consequences requires a lot of resources. We must of course help those in need. But, we must also increase our prevention efforts within a public health approach including efforts from environmental and universal prevention - to harm reduction.

15. We need an inclusive approach. We need to encourage the active participation of civil society, including non-governmental organisations and the scientific community. We must engage young people, drug users, and clients of drug-related services, in the formulation, development and implementation of drugs policies at all levels. Our ability to do so, will be an important measure of our credibility and success.