



Drug Commissioner of the Federal Government of Germany Marlene Mortler  
Member of the German Bundestag

National Statement, 60th CND

Madame Chair,

On behalf of the German Delegation, allow me to warmly congratulate you on your election to the chair of the 60<sup>th</sup> Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

You have our best wishes and our full support.

I also want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the Commission at its opening session here today.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

"Placing people at the centre"- with all the consequences involved. This is my credo, and this is the concept around which I want to build my statement.

Allow me to cite just two examples to illustrate what a people-centred drug policy means for us in Germany.

It means help in addition to protection – both indispensable to an equitable drug policy.

It used to be that our legal amendments struggled to catch up with the designers of new psychoactive substances.

We put an end to that.

A new law that bans entire substance groups of NPS is now effective in Germany. Currently, this ban covers synthetic cannabinoids and phenethylamines.

As new trends emerge, however, and in the light of new scientific findings, more substance groups can be brought under the ban, and the groups can be broadened or narrowed down.

However, no less vital than keeping people safe, is giving assistance to those who need our help.

This includes ensuring proper access to narcotic substances for medical purposes. That is why I felt very strongly about championing the improved supply of cannabis-based medicines.

Successfully, as it turned out.

A new Act is about to take effect in Germany.

It allows seriously ill persons, who have no treatment alternative left, to access cannabis flowers and extracts of standardised quality -- on medical prescription and paid entirely by the health insurance funds.

Incidentally, this option is fully in line with the Single Convention: medical cannabis yes, recreational cannabis, no.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

"Placing people at the centre."

This is also our benchmark as regards international drug policy – and not only ours.

I am sure that many of you also identify with this statement.

This became evident one year ago in New York, when we jointly signed the UNGASS declaration.

A document that is much more informed by scientific findings than many declarations before it and that -- not least because of this -- takes our drug policy a major step forward.

Specifically, because

- it gives health policy measures a prominent place
- it includes extensive harm reduction measures
- it stresses the benefits of alternative development strategies and calls for their expansion
- and – last but not least – the respect of human rights plays a central role.

In the light of this, ladies and gentlemen, I cannot, and will not, look on quietly while the shared principles and values we reaffirmed last year, in New York, are being trampled underfoot.

I cannot stay calm while drug users and small-time dealers are punished with death – without a semblance of due process – or even murdered.

With the apparent collusion, or even involvement, of government entities.

And this is why I appeal to you: Let us not stand by in silence while people who are only vaguely suspected of being involved in drugs are being killed.

In front of their parents, spouses, even their own children.

Drug dependence is an illness that calls for treatment.

Dealing drugs is a crime that must be brought before a proper court of law.

Drug economies are often a result from a lack of development that should be addressed with the toolbox of development co-operation.

Nothing justifies a contrary approach!

We all know that the UNGASS outcome document does not involve any directly binding legal commitments.

And yet we must abide by it.

While our commitment to uphold the values we agreed on last year was not strictly speaking a legal one, it certainly was a political, as well as an ethical and moral commitment.

A commitment made by each of us towards the other.

Individually, collectively and, most importantly – towards the people in our countries for whose good and benefit we have come together here.

Therefore, I have this to say to you: Anyone in this room who wants to preserve their credibility, should feel bound by what was agreed last year – and walk the walk!

While Germany is not perfect, we take this mutual pledge seriously.

And we expect others to do the same!

Madame Chair,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let us use the coming days to place people at the centre, to ensure that “all people can live in health, dignity and peace, with security and prosperity“ – just as we urged in the UNGASS outcome document.

Let us muster the courage to say what needs to be said!

Thank you very much for your attention.