

Resolution 61/9

Protecting children from the illicit drug challenge

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Reaffirming its commitment to the goals and objectives of the three international drug control conventions, including concern about the health and welfare of humankind, as well as the individual and public health-related, social and safety challenges posed by the use of illicit drugs and, when relevant, drug-related crime, in particular to children,

Recalling the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and of facilities for the treatment of illness and the rehabilitation of health, and striving to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health-care services,

Recalling also the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁵¹ which stipulates in its article 33 that States parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances,

Recalling further the obligation of parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to respect and to ensure the rights of every child, without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status of the child and his or her parent or legal guardian,

Reaffirming the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”,⁵² in which Member States reaffirmed their determination to tackle the world drug problem,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁵³ in which Member States committed themselves to striving to provide children with a nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities, including through safe schools and cohesive communities and families, and to putting an end to abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children,

Bearing in mind that children, by reason of their physical and mental immaturity and vulnerability, need special safeguards, care and protection,

Recalling that, consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children,

Recalling also its resolution 59/6 of 22 March 2016, in which it recognized that children are particularly vulnerable to individual or environmental risks related to the use of illicit drugs,

Recalling further its resolution 60/7 of 17 March 2017, in which, inter alia, it highlighted the necessity of scientific evidence-based and age-appropriate community, family and school drug prevention programmes and strategies addressing the needs of children, and the importance of using the *International Standards on Drug Use Prevention*, which constitute a relevant tool by summarizing the currently available scientific evidence and describing interventions and policies and their characteristics that have been found to result in positive prevention outcomes,

⁵¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

⁵² General Assembly resolution S-30/1, annex.

⁵³ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

Recalling its resolution 60/8 of 17 March 2017 on promoting measures to prevent HIV and other blood-borne diseases associated with the use of drugs, and increasing financing for the global HIV/AIDS response and for drug use prevention and other drug demand reduction measures,

Acknowledging that scientific evidence-based prevention is one of the main health responses to the world drug problem and that effective age-appropriate and gender-sensitive prevention interventions, policies and systems should continue to be developed and implemented and enhanced, as appropriate, in an integrated manner, taking into account the specific needs of children, and should be centred on and tailored to the needs of individuals, families and communities as part of comprehensive and balanced national drug policies, with full respect for human rights,

Expressing concern at the dangers, risks and consequences posed to children, including by accidental intoxication and, additionally, the use of illicit drugs that are made to be attractive and available to children,

Noting with concern the fact that some children continue to be actively involved, used and exploited in the illicit cultivation of crops, the illicit production and manufacturing of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and other drug-related crimes in some regions of the world and that such illicit activities are likely to negatively affect their development or to be harmful to their health and well-being,

1. *Reaffirms* that taking appropriate measures to protect children from the dangers, risks and consequences of the use of illicit drugs and trafficking is conducive to the development and well-being of children and is consistent with the best interest of the child;

2. *Calls upon* Member States to effectively implement relevant existing international legal instruments and national legislation to protect children from the use of illicit drugs and trafficking and to take all appropriate measures to ensure that national and international drug control strategies are developed and implemented in an age-appropriate and gender-sensitive manner and taking into account the best interest of the child;

3. *Invites* the International Narcotics Control Board, in cooperation with relevant United Nations entities, within their respective mandates, to further explore how the current international legal drug control framework could be used more efficiently, taking into account, as appropriate, for States parties, the relevant human rights conventions, to protect children from the use of illicit drugs and prevent the involvement, use and exploitation of children in the illicit cultivation of crops, illicit production and manufacturing of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and other forms of drug-related crime;

4. *Calls upon* Member States to take effective, practical and scientific evidence-based age-appropriate and gender-sensitive measures aimed at preventing children's initiation of the use of illicit drugs by providing them with accurate information about the risks of use of illicit drugs, by promoting skills and opportunities to choose healthy lifestyles and develop supporting parenting and healthy social environments, by ensuring equal access to education and vocational training, and by delivering scientific evidence-based prevention programmes in a range of settings, including in families, schools and communities;

5. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue to collect and analyse data disaggregated by age and gender and to support further research into the dangers, risks and consequences associated with the use of illicit drugs by children and the involvement, use and exploitation of children in the illicit cultivation of crops, illicit production and manufacturing of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and other forms of drug-related crime;

6. *Also requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to assist Member States, upon their request, in developing effective national, regional and

international strategies that are age-appropriate and gender-sensitive, to protect children from dangers, risks and consequences associated with the use of illicit drugs, and to prevent the involvement, use and exploitation of children in the illicit cultivation of crops, illicit production and manufacturing of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and other forms of drug-related crime, in order to ensure that the rights of the child, including the right to the highest attainable standard of health, are promoted and protected;

7. *Encourages* Member States to share best practices in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of age-appropriate and gender-sensitive strategies to protect children from the dangers, risks and consequences associated with the use of illicit drugs and to prevent the involvement, use and exploitation of children in the illicit cultivation of crops, illicit production and manufacturing of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and other forms of drug-related crime, and invites the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to assist Member States, upon request, in this regard;

8. *Invites* Member States to consider the use of the *International Standards on Drug Use Prevention* in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community, family and school drug prevention programmes and strategies, to exchange best practices and to formulate effective drug use prevention programmes and strategies aimed at children;

9. *Invites* Member States further to consider the use of the *International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders* in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of drug treatment programmes and strategies, to exchange best practices and to formulate effective drug treatment programmes and strategies aimed at children;

10. *Invites* Member States to promote comprehensive care plans for children, particularly orphans and street children, with HIV and other blood-borne diseases associated with drug use and to consider implementing and expanding programmes to address drug-related dangers, risks and consequences to children in an age-appropriate and gender-sensitive manner, and also invites Member States to take into account, as appropriate, the WHO, UNODC, UNAIDS Technical Guide for Countries to Set Targets for Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment and Care for Injecting Drug Users;

11. *Urges* Member States to take effective measures to protect children from dangers, risks and consequences associated with the use of illicit drugs, including accidental intoxication and, additionally, the use of illicit drugs that are made to be attractive and available to children;

12. *Also urges* Member States to continue to enhance criminal justice responses to those responsible for the involvement, use and exploitation of some children in the illicit cultivation of crops, illicit production and manufacturing of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and other forms of drug-related crime, and to enable penalties, in accordance with national legislation, that are proportional to the gravity of the offence;

13. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to report to the Commission within the existing reporting obligations on the implementation of the present resolution at its sixty-second session;

14. *Invites* Member States and other donors to provide extrabudgetary resources for the purposes described above in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations.