



**Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse  
and illicit trafficking in Drugs**

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**Pompidou Group Statement for the CND 2018**

Excellences, ministers, representatives of civil society – ladies and gentlemen,

The Pompidou Group is a Council of Europe entity that upholds the core values of the Council of Europe; those of human rights, democracy and rule of law.

The 39 members of the Pompidou Group find it of extreme importance and relevance to emphasise that drug policy – as all other policy fields – must be developed, implemented and evaluated in light of and in full respect of human rights.

The Pompidou Group would like to repeat the message we conveyed at the UNGASS 2016 where we highlighted that human rights must impact, among others, the following aspects of drug policy:

First and foremost, the application of the death penalty for drug related offences and the application of inhuman punishment and torture, as well as extrajudicial executions, is not in line with human rights obligations. Every person has the right for a hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law.

Secondly, people who use drugs have an uncontested right to equitable access to health care services for their drug use disorder and other drug or non-drug related health problems. The right to health and health care includes access to, and availability of, controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

The Pompidou Group notes that emphasis on human rights is one of the seven chapters / recommendations of the outcome document of the UNGASS 2016. The Pompidou Group urges Member States to implement the recommendations in the UNGASS outcome document, and – in order to avoid further unnecessary human suffering – expects that all steps taken by CND at this meeting and in the process towards 2019 and beyond acknowledge the need for full respect of all human rights.

The Pompidou Group also highlights the need to mainstream a gender perspective to the understanding of the drug problem and to the design and implementation of drug policies. In doing so, it welcomes all efforts in this area, including the International Conference on the subject that took place in Mexico City on February 22-23, 2018.

In order to achieve this, close collaboration and shared responsibility between states, international and regional relevant organisations, hereunder all relevant UN entities, including, but not limited to, the UNODC and the WHO, and the numerous NGOs working in the area, is of crucial importance.

To this end, the Pompidou Group is exploring the possibility to provide states with tools to facilitate evaluation of their policy steps from a human rights perspective. The group therefore in 2017 commissioned a report entitled "Drug Policy and Human Rights in Europe: Managing Tensions, Maximising Complementarities" and subsequently adopted a statement on bringing human rights into drug policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, both of which will be presented at a side event here at the CND.

In this context, the Pompidou Group is also working on increasing knowledge and awareness on the impact of different measures implemented to address the world drug problem. This is important in

order to make sure that drug policies are coherent and efficient in full respect of human rights. On this topic, the publication "Costs and Unintended Consequences of Drug Control Policies" was presented in 2017.

Furthermore, the Pompidou Group would like to underscore that civil society actors, including representatives of people who use drugs, and of those affected by the world drug problem, have a legitimate right to be heard and should be welcomed to voice their opinions in the debate and search for solutions. This led the Pompidou Group to adopt a policy paper entitled "Government interaction with civil society on drug policy issues: Principles, ways and means, opportunities and challenges". It is our goal that the policy paper will not only remain a useful tool for the Member States of the Pompidou Group, but also serve as an inspiration to other international organisations as well as all governments.

The Pompidou Group views the UNGASS outcome document, representing the most recent consensus, and the consensus achieved in CND resolution 60/1 as a constructive framework that provides the necessary springboard and a promising step to build further action upon for the process to be undertaken towards the next milestone in 2019.

The Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe is determined to continue and expand its efforts as a facilitator and platform for interagency cooperation as in this respect our cooperation with UNODC, WHO, EMCDDA, the European Commission and others amply demonstrates. The Pompidou Group stands ready and looks forward to continued collaboration with the CND and other UN entities towards our common goal to resolve in a humane way the challenges arising from the world drug problem.

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