

26 March 2021

English only

Commission on Narcotic Drugs**Sixty-fourth session**

Vienna, 12–16 April 2021

Items 7 and 9 of the provisional agenda*

Inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem**Contributions by the Commission to the work of the Economic and Social Council, in line with General Assembly resolution 72/305, including follow-up to and review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development****Note by the Secretariat on inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem******I. Introduction**

1. With the COVID-19 pandemic the world is facing an unprecedented crisis, a crisis that also poses a number of challenges to the well-established intergovernmental and inter-agency processes in the United Nations system. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, ensuring business continuity has been the top priority of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, which has been working on innovative solutions, to ensure international and inter-agency cooperation during these challenging times. COVID-19 related restrictions, inducing travel impediments, quarantine requirements and limitations to the numbers of meeting participants, have put in particular intergovernmental processes at risk, processes that have been established to allow for inclusive decision-making and the exchange of views, ensuring that all voices are heard.

II. International cooperation

2. In the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, whose title underscores the importance of international cooperation, Member States committed to increasing cooperation at the regional and international levels. In the Joint Ministerial Statement, adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its 2014 high-level review of the implementation of the 2009 Political

* E/CN.7/2021/1.

** This document has not been edited.



Declaration and Plan of Action, Member States reiterated their strong commitment to addressing and countering the world drug problem based on the principle of common and shared responsibility. In the outcome document of the 2016 special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the world drug problem (UNGASS 2016), Member States included a stand-alone chapter on strengthening international cooperation. The title of the outcome document, “*Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem*” acknowledges that the world drug problem remains a common and shared responsibility that needs to be addressed in a multilateral setting through effective and increased international cooperation.

3. In the 2019 Ministerial Declaration on “*Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of Our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem*”, adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) by consensus at the opening of the Ministerial Segment of its 62nd session in March 2019, Member States committed to accelerating, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility, the full implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, the 2014 Joint Ministerial Statement and the 2016 UNGASS outcome document, aimed at achieving all commitments, operational recommendations and aspirational goals set out therein.

4. In the Declaration, Member States committed to ensuring that no one affected by the world drug problem was left behind by enhancing efforts to bridge the gaps in addressing the persistent and emerging trends and challenges through enhanced cooperation at all levels – national, regional and international.

5. Member States also reaffirmed the principal role of CND, as the policymaking body of the United Nations with prime responsibility for drug control matters, and the role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as the leading entity in the United Nations system for addressing and countering the world drug problem, and encouraged contributions of relevant United Nations entities, international financial institutions and relevant regional and international organizations, within their respective mandates, to the work of the Commission. The call for enhanced cooperation was also addressed to the United Nations system. In the 2019 Ministerial Declaration and General Assembly resolution [75/198](#) “*International cooperation to address and counter the world drug problem*”, encouraging UNODC to further increase cooperation and collaboration with all relevant United Nations entities, within their respective mandates, when assisting Member States in designing and implementing comprehensive, integrated and balanced national drug strategies, policies and programmes. The COVID-19 pandemic poses a number of challenges to the well-established intergovernmental processes in the United Nations system, including those of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). Since the first lockdown in March 2020 in Austria, ensuring business continuity of the Commissions was the top priority of the Secretariat to the UNODC Governing Bodies. To facilitate an exchange within the United Nations system including on remote and hybrid working modalities, the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies works through an informal United Nations system-wide network of Secretariats to governing bodies (*see chapter III for additional information*).

6. Cooperation also takes place among United Nations intergovernmental bodies (*see chapter IV for additional information*). The Commission actively seeks to strengthen horizontal cooperation with the other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, including with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Through the organization of joint events on cross-cutting issues, CND proactively reaches out to the other functional commissions in order to expand ongoing collaboration, interaction and an active exchange on issues of common interest.

7. In line with Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, CND is conducting its work, including its follow-up to the implementation of the policy documents, in an inclusive and comprehensive manner, inviting relevant United

Nations entities and specialized agencies, regional organizations as well as relevant non-governmental organizations to its meetings and encouraging them to actively contribute to its work. The hybrid meeting format, combining an in-person component with online participation, introduced in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, greatly facilitated the participation of stakeholders based outside Vienna.

III. Inter-agency cooperation

8. Following a decision by the Executive Committee established by the Secretary-General (EXCOM) dated 20 April 2017, UNODC was tasked by the Secretary-General with leading the coordination of relevant United Nations entities in assisting Member States with the implementation of the recommendations contained in the UNGASS outcome document. Entities involved include the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNAIDS, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), WHO, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.

9. Through a network of focal points, established on the basis of the decision of the Executive Committee, UNODC maintained a close dialogue with the relevant United Nations partners and has been providing regular updates on the work of the Commission. UNODC also actively reaches out to United Nations entities to contribute to the CND thematic discussions on the implementation of international drug policy, in the follow-up to the adoption of the 2016 UNGASS outcome document and following-up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration. Experts from UN-Women, WHO, UNAIDS, UNDP, OHCHR, and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), participated along with national experts and representatives of other intergovernmental and international organizations as well as civil society organizations in CND thematic discussions.

10. A number of United Nations system-wide activities were initiated in response to that EXCOM decision, including the development of a matrix of UNGASS-related action at HQs and in the field and a joint calendar of events, providing a comprehensive overview of joint and individual activities undertaken in supporting Member States with the practical implementation of the UNGASS outcome document. In addition, UNODC worked closely with United Nations entities on a unified United Nations-wide messaging and on ways of integrating ongoing efforts into a system-wide strategy across the three pillars.

11. During the internal meeting of the Chief Executives Board in November 2018, principals of the United Nations agencies discussed how the system could most effectively support the implementation of international drug control policy through effective inter-agency collaboration. At that meeting, principals adopted a United Nations Common Position, in which they committed to harnessing synergies and strengthening inter-agency cooperation, making best use of the expertise within the United Nations system, as well as to supporting each other's activities, within established mandates, and to delivering balanced, comprehensive, integrated, evidence-based, human rights-based, development-oriented and sustainable support to Member States in implementing joint commitments.

12. With a view to ensuring coherent efforts to realize the commitments under the United Nations System Common Position and, in particular, coordinated data collection to promote scientific, evidence-based implementation of international commitments, a United Nations-system Coordination Task Team, led by UNODC, was created within the framework of the Secretary-General's Executive Committee. Through a network of appointed focal points, the Task Team worked in 2019 through face-to-face and web meetings. It prepared the conference room paper E/CN.7/2019/CRP.10 submitted by the Secretary-General to the 2019 Ministerial

Segment entitled: “*What we have learned over the last ten years: A summary of knowledge acquired and produced by the UN system on drug-related matters*”. During the second half of 2019, the Task Team briefed Member States on its work in Brussels, Vienna and Geneva.

13. In General Assembly resolution [75/198](#), Member States invited the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to increase efforts to pursue joint initiatives at the policy and programmatic levels with other relevant United Nations agencies and entities, within their existing mandates, as well as regional organizations, and to update and report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on progress, including on joint initiatives, at its upcoming sessions.

14. In 2020, the task team conducted several online meetings and one face-to-face meeting on the occasion of the sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. In those meetings, the task team decided to focus its attention on a strategic communication to United Nations resident coordinators to encourage a United Nations coordinated approach to the drug problem in line with the United Nations system common position supporting the implementation of the international drug control policy through effective inter-agency collaboration. The task team also envisages designing joint topical projects that could involve all members.

15. With the COVID-19 pandemic, inter-agency cooperation to exchange on remote and hybrid working modalities within the United Nations system also took centre stage. In addition to the regular exchange with the Secretariat of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies is also part of an informal United Nations system-wide network of Secretariats to governing bodies. The United Nations Governing Body Secretariats network (UNGBS) ensures coordination and exchange of good practices in the United Nations Governance system and meets once a year to discuss issues specific to governance of their respective organization. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic the UNGBS exchanged online information including on remote and hybrid working modalities, the use of different online platforms, the use of the INDICO registration system and on virtual decision-making processes in the governing bodies. The Secretariat to the Governing Bodies is contributing experiences and challenges related to the work of the Vienna-based functional commissions of the ECOSOC. Participating entities in that network include among others the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Bank, the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

16. A number of concrete examples of joint efforts to support Member States with the implementation of all international drug policy commitments, undertaken by United Nations entities and international partners, are provided below:¹

¹ The examples are taken from the Report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation against the world drug problem (A/75/99): <https://undocs.org/A/75/99>.

Demand reduction and related measures, including prevention and treatment, as well as other health-related issues

17. UNODC continued the dissemination of the UNODC/WHO International Standards on Drug Use Prevention including through a series of regional and national dialogues that aim to strengthen knowledge of 751 policymakers from 36 countries of the nature of drug use and drug use disorders and their prevention and treatment. Moreover, UNODC organized, together with the International Society for Substance Use Professionals, the International Conference on Drug Prevention, Treatment and Care: Inspiration and Direction, bringing together over 400 experts in substance use prevention, treatment and care from 100 countries for training and sharing of experiences.

18. At the sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, UNODC and WHO presented the final version of the UNODC/WHO International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders, following the field testing of the initial draft in more than 10 countries.

19. UNODC, often jointly with WHO, supported Member States in expanding and/or improving the services for the treatment, health care, social protection and rehabilitation of people with drug use disorders in 22 countries, reaching an estimated 51,000 patients, including children exposed to drugs at a very young age, as well as pregnant women with drug use disorders.

20. Together with WHO, UN-Women, UNAIDS and civil society, UNODC addressed the needs of women who inject drugs by training more than 1,400 service providers in 13 countries. UNODC jointly with WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund, UN-Women and the UNAIDS secretariat and in consultation with experts nominated by Member States, developed the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV in Prisons: A Technical Guide and disseminated that guide through the training of nearly 120 key implementing partners from 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Europe.

21. UN-Women, jointly with UNAIDS, WHO and UNODC, supported, in 2020, the national HIV response of Viet Nam in the areas of prevention, testing, treatment, protecting human rights, reducing stigma and discrimination and improving gender equality, in particular taking into account the needs and vulnerabilities of women who use drugs.

22. In the area of data collection, UNODC continues to collaborate with WHO, UNAIDS and the World Bank in gathering strategic information on people who inject drugs and on the prevalence among them of HIV, the hepatitis C virus and the hepatitis B virus.

23. UNODC, WHO, UNAIDS and OHCHR issued a joint statement on COVID-19 in prisons and other closed settings, urgently drawing the attention of political leaders to the heightened vulnerability of prisoners and other people deprived of liberty.

Ensuring the availability of and access to controlled substances exclusively for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion

24. Access to and availability of essential controlled medicines at the international and national levels continues to be a critical issue that UNODC addresses jointly with WHO and the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC). UNODC has also fostered ongoing partnerships with INCB, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and civil society partners such as the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care, the African Palliative Care Association and Indiana University.

25. The UNODC/WHO/UICC joint global programme on "access to controlled drugs for medical purposes while preventing diversion and abuse", continued to provide technical guidance in Panama, Nigeria and Timor-Leste and held regional meetings in Latin America and Central Asia. Work focused on three areas: (a) analysis of legislation and development of comprehensive national policies and regulations;

(b) building the capacity of the existing and new health-care workforce to screen, assess and care for persons living in pain; and (c) strengthening a regulatory system with a supply chain that is responsive to the needs of patients.

26. Under the leadership of WHO, UNODC, as well as over 40 United Nations agencies, the World Bank and regional development banks continued to be actively involved in the work of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases. Issues related to pain management for cancer patients, in particular cervical cancer, have been on the agenda of the coordination efforts of the Task Force. UNODC participated in two high-level events organized by IAEA to highlight the importance of cancer patients having access to adequate medication. In turn, IAEA presented its work on increasing access to controlled medicines at side events held at the last five sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

27. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNODC advocated, together with partners, for access to controlled medicines as they are instrumental for patients on ventilators and for patients with other symptoms requiring pain management and provided basic guidance for the consideration of policymakers.

Supply reduction and related measures; effective law enforcement; responses to drug-related crime, and countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation

28. Through the UNODC-World Customs Organization (WCO) Container Control Programme, UNODC continued to support Member States in establishing port control units and air cargo control units at seaports, dry ports, land borders, railway stations and airports. Training was provided to front-line law enforcement officers on profiling and inspecting cargo containers suspected of containing illicit goods. To date, over 775 tons of various drugs have been seized in Container Control Programme operations.

29. In an effort to improve coordination and exchange of information between organizations working in the field of border management, UNODC has embarked upon an informal consultation mechanism with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, the International Organization for Migration, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (FRONTEX) and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. These meetings usually take place on a monthly basis and have led to increased cooperation and proposals for joint programme delivery and have been widely recognized by participating organizations as an area of good practice which could be replicated elsewhere.

30. UNODC organized with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) the law enforcement operation KAFO, which targets firearms trafficking networks in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, and is co-organizing the Trigger operations in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, Africa, Europe and the Western Balkans. The operations are part of joint efforts to strengthen the criminal justice chain to prevent and counter illicit firearms trafficking and related crimes, especially their links to drug trafficking, from detection to prosecution and adjudication.

Cross-cutting issues: drugs and human rights, youth, children, women and communities

31. The cooperation between UNODC, UNICEF, WHO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UN-Women, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children and other stakeholders within the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children was strengthened. In the framework of the partnership, UNODC, UNICEF

and WHO led the development and implementation of INSPIRE, a set of seven evidence-based strategies for countries and communities working to eliminate violence against children, three of which can directly improve the situation of children with substance use-related problems. UNODC co-organized a first regional workshop on INSPIRE in the Americas, held in El Salvador and participated in several implementation meetings.

32. As victims of trafficking in persons can be, and have been, forced to work in the illicit drug industry, UNODC continues to support the training of investigators and prosecutors in identifying and responding to suspected victims of trafficking, in close cooperation with the United Nations system-wide Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons.

Cross-cutting issues in addressing and countering the world drug problem: evolving reality, trends and existing circumstances, emerging and persistent challenges and threats, including new psychoactive substances, in conformity with the three international drug control conventions and other relevant international instruments

33. In support of Sustainable Development Goal 3, on health, UNODC collected information on recent health threats posed by new psychoactive substances, utilizing data from toxicological casework collected through a new module of its early warning advisory. Information on the most harmful, prevalent and persistent new psychoactive substances was also provided to WHO for the review of substances during the meetings of its Expert Committee on Drug Dependence.

34. The global Synthetics Monitoring: Analyses, Reporting and Trends (SMART) programme continues to support existing research, collection and scientific analysis of data related to synthetic drugs, including amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances. The UNODC early warning advisory on new psychoactive substances continues to provide the basis for effective evidence-based policy responses and collaboration with national, regional and international partners, including the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission of the Organization of American States (OAS), WCO and WHO and its Expert Committee on Drug Dependence.

35. The United Nations Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs, a joint effort of UNODC, WHO, UPU and INCB, launched in March 2019, was expanded to offer additional information on addressing key challenges presented by synthetic drugs, including in relation to prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, access to medicines, regulation, detection and interdiction. The resources are offered in an interactive way and include guidelines, technical information, training, e-learning courses and data. To reduce the risk for United Nations staff and national security and forensic personnel, guidance, including instructional videos on the safe handling of substances and management of the risk of exposure during the COVID-19 pandemic, was released in 2020.

36. UNODC, in cooperation with WHO and with the involvement of many partners, including UNAIDS, EMCDDA, the African Union and the Organization of American States, has continued to collaborate within the inter-agency technical working group on drug epidemiology to review international data collection and standards in drug epidemiology and to develop common standards and synergies, including those for the monitoring for target 3.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Alternative development; regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented balanced drug control policy; addressing socioeconomic issues

37. To further evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, UNODC conducted baseline and midterm surveys for three UNODC and UNDP alternative development projects, one of them with a focus on women in Afghanistan, to obtain statistically valid impact assessments of the projects. The impact assessment uses

a comprehensive approach, taking into account changes in the approximately 1,000 socioeconomic indicators, as well as changes in the type of land coverage analysed via remote sensing, differentiating between a dozen different uses of land including licit and illicit crops. These changes are evaluated over time in more than 500 villages.

Strengthening international cooperation based on the principle of common and shared responsibility

38. Every year, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs organizes a special event to commemorate the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and launch the UNODC World Drug Report. 26 June 2020 also marked the 75th anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations. To commemorate this important anniversary, the online CND Special Event on the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking started with a commemorative event, with the UNODC Executive Director and the Austrian Federal Minister for European and International Affairs, addressing the event. Following the commemorative opening, the event continued with the launch of the 2020 World Drug Report, and a dedicated discussion, co-sponsored by the European Union and UNODC, on the impact of COVID-19 on the world drug situation, from various regional perspectives. The discussion included a panel on the regional impact of the pandemic, with interventions by representatives from Europol, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (SICAD) of the Organization of American States (OAS), the African Union Commission (AU), the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) of Thailand, and a representative from the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs (VNGOC).

39. During the pandemic, UNODC also supported, together with the WHO and INCB, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in its considerations on the WHO recommendations on cannabis and cannabis-related substances in accordance with CND decision 63/14. The Commission held three online topical meetings, focused on the exchange of views among Member States regarding the implications arising from economic, social, legal, administrative and other factors. The meetings were held on 24 and 25 June, on 24 and 25 August 2020 and on 6 and 7 October 2020. On 8 October 2020, the Commission organized an intersessional meeting in a hybrid format, with the participation of Member States and other stakeholders. With its topical meetings, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs was the first intergovernmental body supported by the United Nations Secretariat to hold meetings in all six official United Nations languages using an online interpretation platform. Each of the CND topical meetings on the WHO recommendations on cannabis and cannabis-related substances brought together on average over 600 national experts discussing the impact of the recommendations.

40. From 19 to 21 October 2020, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs held the second round of Thematic Discussions, following the adoption of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration. Focused on the exchange of good practices, challenges and lessons learned in the implementation of the international drug policy commitments, the 2020 CND Thematic Discussions brought together national practitioners and policymakers from over 100 United Nations Member States, United Nations entities partners including from WHO, UNAIDS, INCB, OHCHR and IAEA, as well as other intergovernmental and international organizations and civil society experts from around the world. This year's thematic discussions, held in a hybrid format, enabled an interactive and inclusive exchange of good practices and lessons learned in addressing the following challenges identified in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration: insufficient levels of drug treatment and health services; increased number of deaths related to drug use; high rate of transmission of HIV, the hepatitis C virus and other blood-borne diseases associated with drug use; adverse health consequences of and risks associated with new psychoactive substances; and low or non-existent level of availability of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes. The CND annual thematic discussions, that were held in a hybrid format in October 2020, enjoyed the participation of over 500 experts from over 100 Member

States, United Nations entities, international and intergovernmental organizations, and civil society. Over 20,000 visits to the livestream of the discussions were recorded over the three days' meeting.

IV. Inter-commissions' cooperation

41. In 2020, the CND continued its efforts to enhance vertical cooperation with the Economic and Social Council and horizontal cooperation with other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, including the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, including through organizing joint events on cross-cutting issues.

42. In contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the CND continued to submit annual substantive contributions, including on the 2021 theme "*Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development*", for consideration by the Economic and Social Council High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. For its 64th regular session, the Commission decided to work on a joint statement on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world drug report, which would also be submitted as a substantive contribution by the Commission to the High-level Political Forum.²

43. On 12 June 2020, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had hosted a joint online high-level special event in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The special event was organized with a view to raising awareness for the commitments made in 1995 in Beijing, in particular in relation to the work of the Vienna-based Commissions and discussing how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting women and girls. After introductory remarks by the CND and CCPCJ Chair as hosts of the meeting, the UNODC Executive Director addressed the Commission. The meeting was also addressed by the Minister of Employment, Economy and Consumer Affairs, in charge of Combating Poverty, Equal Opportunities, and Disabled People, of Belgium, the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women, the President of the Human Rights Council, and the Deputy Executive Director of UN-Women. The high-level discussion further benefitted from the interventions of the Vienna-based International Gender Champions, as well as representatives of Member States and non-governmental organizations. Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls (SDG5) is a goal very important in the work of the Vienna-based Commissions, both in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, as well as drug-related matters. Both Commissions have in recent years considerably increased the attention devoted to the issue of gender equality through the adoption of a number of targeted resolutions as well as through their policy documents and leadership.

44. On 25 January 2021, the Economic and Social Council Bureau convened a meeting with the Chairs of ECOSOC's Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies, with the objective of guiding and coordinating the work of the ECOSOC system, ensuring that its work is coherent, avoids overlap and adequately covers the 2030 Agenda. The meeting further aimed to explore how the subsidiary bodies can best contribute to the theme of the 2021 session of the Council and the 2021 High-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF), and to review how subsidiary bodies have been implementing General Assembly resolution [72/305](#), on the strengthening of ECOSOC, and discuss possible proposals for reinvigorating the Council and its relationship with its subsidiary bodies. From Vienna, the Chair of the CND at its 64th session, and the Chair of the CCPCJ at its 30th session participated

² The discussions on the joint statement were ongoing when the CRP was drafted.

online in the joint meeting. The CND Chair briefed the meeting on how the Commission contributed to the HLPF review of the theme for 2021 as well as to the work of ECOSOC and provided key messages can be offered on the work of the CND in relation to the main topic of the HLPF. The CND Chair further briefed on ongoing cooperation efforts with other intergovernmental bodies, particularly the brother and sister functional commissions, as well as stressed that the CND, as the main policymaking body for drug-policy matters, produced policy recommendations, and contributed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda – with key annual action-oriented negotiated outcomes, including such outcomes which provide mandates to the United Nations Secretariat. The importance of further enhancing horizontal cooperation among the subsidiary bodies was highlighted, and ECOSOC was called upon to enhance the visibility and relevance of the work of all subsidiary bodies; to create opportunities for the Chairs to meet and participate in joint panels or events; to take into account that maintaining an effective framework for intergovernmental meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic is very labour-intensive; and to help ensuring the availability of the required resources in an adequate and predictable manner.³

³ Conference Room Paper E/CN.7/2020/CRP.21-E/CN.15/2020/CRP.2 on the working methods of the Commissions during the COVID-19 pandemic, was brought to the attention of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its reconvened sixty-third session, and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its reconvened twenty-ninth session, in December 2020.