

1 April 2021

English only

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

Vienna, 12–16 April 2021

Items 6 of the provisional agenda*

Follow-up to the implementation at the national, regional and international levels of all commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the world drug problem**Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit opiates originating in Afghanistan through continuous and reinforced support to the Paris Pact initiative******Report of the Secretariat***Summary*

In its resolution 56/3 entitled “Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit opiates originating in Afghanistan through continuous and reinforced support to the Paris Pact initiative”, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs welcomed and reiterated its support to the Paris Pact initiative as one of the most important international frameworks and a unique platform for genuine partnership between States, competent international organizations and other relevant stakeholders in the fight against opiates originating in Afghanistan. The Commission continued to call upon Member States, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other entities, to ensure the full implementation of the Vienna Declaration, the outcome document of the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan, held on 16 February 2012. As requested by the Commission, the present paper describes the steps taken by UNODC to implement the resolution in 2020, the fifth year of implementation of the fourth phase of the initiative.

* [E/CN.7/2021/1](#).

** This document has not been edited.



I. Background

1. The Vienna Declaration adopted at the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan, held in February 2012,¹ is a statement of international commitment to act in a balanced and comprehensive manner against the menace of opiates originating in Afghanistan. In the Declaration, participants prioritized four main areas, also known as pillars, for enhanced cooperation: (a) regional initiatives; (b) financial flows linked to traffic in opiates; (c) preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals; and (d) reducing drug abuse and dependence. The Conference signified an important landmark for the Paris Pact, as partners reaffirmed their common and shared responsibility towards combating opiates. The Vienna Declaration serves as a blueprint for the activities of the Paris Pact partnership and reflects the partnership's commitment to strengthening international and regional cooperation to counter, in a balanced manner, the global challenge and threat that opiates pose to international peace and stability in different regions of the world.

2. In its resolution 56/3 entitled "Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit opiates originating in Afghanistan through continuous and reinforced support to the Paris Pact initiative", the Commission on Narcotic Drugs recognized the initiative's importance as one of the most significant international frameworks and a unique platform for genuine partnership between Member States, competent international organizations and other relevant stakeholders in the fight against opiates originating in Afghanistan.²

3. The Paris Pact has two dimensions. The first is the partnership itself, made up of 58 countries and 23 organizations, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The partnership is responsible for defining priorities and implementing measures in line with the Vienna Declaration, based on the principle of shared responsibility. The second dimension is the global programme established by UNODC on behalf of the partnership to provide coordination support through the programme's three components developed during the preceding phases: the consultative mechanism, the liaison officer network, and the information management. The programme facilitates the initiative's intergovernmental process of dialogue on opiates. Currently, the fourth phase of the programme is underway.

4. The Paris Pact partnership continues to play a pivotal role as a global platform for concrete action aimed at reducing trafficking in opiates, including the cultivation of opium poppy and the production and global consumption of opiates. The partnership serves as an advocacy platform at the highest political level. It is a forum for global dialogue promoting good practices, adapting responses to evolving threats along drug trafficking routes, encouraging interregional collaboration, and providing stronger evidence for coordinated action.

5. The Paris Pact is the only global cooperation mechanism dedicated to illicit opiates and recognized in multiple resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as one of the most important frameworks in the fight against opiates originating in Afghanistan as part of a comprehensive approach to peace, stability and development in Afghanistan, in its neighbouring region, and beyond.

6. Concerted efforts, political will, cooperation and support of the international community for mutually reinforcing, effective counter narcotics measures are required to address the nexus between transnational organized crime and narcotics and respond to challenges to security and development in the region. In that context, the Paris Pact remains a vital international mechanism, together with other relevant initiatives led by Paris Pact partners in the area of drug control and regional

¹ See [E/CN.7/2012/17](#).

² See [E/CN.7/2013/14](#).

cooperation such as the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan.

7. As also evidenced by the outcomes of the Geneva Conference on Afghanistan, held in November 2020,³ the magnitude of the illicit opiate market and the links between drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime are among the most significant international policy challenges faced today. The increased complexity of, and current challenges to, drug control and demand clearly demonstrate the need to continue strengthening the partnership and adapting its approach to shifts in opiate trafficking patterns and trends within the broader context of combating transnational organized crime.

8. The Paris Pact partnership's support to the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration significantly contributes towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets.⁴ Under the Paris Pact global programme, the 81 members of the partnership receive assistance in prioritizing their support in line with the Sustainable Development Goal 3 (To ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) and Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), in particular.

9. The Vienna Declaration provides a framework for the partnership's response to the current international challenges outlined in 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",⁵ which are aimed at countering trafficking in narcotic drugs and addressing links with other forms of organized crime.

II. Status of implementation of Commission resolution 56/3

A. Strategic and expert-level dialogue

10. The rapidly evolving landscape of transnational organized crime and, more specifically, the emerging new challenges for combating drug trafficking require that the Paris Pact partnership must continually refine its focus. Since the beginning of the fourth phase the partnership's efforts have focused on supporting development of adequate operational responses. Most recently, that approach led to conducting a gap analysis in order to identify priority gaps under each of the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration and develop concrete actions for addressing them. Its results continued to be discussed in Paris Pact's expert dialogues in 2020.

11. In its current, fourth phase, the Paris Pact initiative has been operational in three action areas. The Paris Pact: (a) functions as a forum for a global dialogue to adapt responses to evolving threats along the opiate trafficking routes; (b) enables the promotion of good practices; and (c) enhances the evidence-based policy and strategy formulation.

12. The recommendations put forward by the expert working groups will be considered and endorsed at the fifteenth Policy Consultative Group meeting to be held in 2021.

Global dialogue

13. In the reporting period, the global COVID-19 pandemic severely affected the normal operation of the initiative and hindered organizing the in-person meetings at expert and policy level as envisaged in the workplan. As a way of overcoming these

³ See [Communiqué](#) of the 2020 Geneva Conference on Afghanistan

⁴ See General Assembly resolution [70/1](#).

⁵ General Assembly resolution [S-30/1](#), annex.

obstacles, most consultations with partners were held via videoconferencing and a major event in December 2020 was organized in a hybrid (partially virtual) format.

14. The global dialogue remained focused on stock taking and prioritization of recommendations previously adopted under specific thematic pillars of the Vienna Declaration. This modality was initiated at the expert working group meeting on Regional Cooperation in November 2018 in Beijing as reported in the Conference Room Paper prepared by the Paris Pact Secretariat for the 62nd session of the CND. It was followed by three Paris Pact expert-level meetings organized in 2019 and 2020.

15. The third expert-level meeting, organized in Vienna on 15 and 16 December 2020, was on “Investing in families for effective drug prevention and treatment” in support of the fourth pillar of the Vienna Declaration (Comprehensive Approach to Drug Prevention and Treatment). The first-ever event conducted in a hybrid format in the framework of the Paris Pact initiative brought together nearly 150 delegates from 33 countries and eight international and regional organizations. The outcomes of the two-day meeting, organized jointly with UNODC’s Drug Prevention and Health Branch, included 11 specific recommendations, which will be further considered for endorsement at the fifteenth Policy Consultative Group meeting in 2021.

Promoting good practices

16. At the expert working group meeting on drug prevention and treatment in December 2020, the participants acknowledged that identifying and sharing of good practices are key to any successful drug demand reduction strategy. The participants of the meeting called upon partners to fully utilize the documented good practices related to family-centred prevention and treatment programmes, making full use of the technical support available through relevant international and regional organizations.

Enhancing evidence-based policy and strategy formulation

17. In collaboration with UNODC’s Research and Trend Analysis Branch, the Paris Pact Coordination Unit, through its liaison officer network, continued to improve the availability of data for the purpose of enabling partners’ evidence-based responses to the opiate threat.

B. Update on the UNODC Paris Pact programme

18. Through its Paris Pact Coordination Unit, UNODC acts as the coordinator for the Paris Pact partnership and supports the partnership in realizing its goals through the Paris Pact programme. The Paris Pact programme brings together relevant UNODC’s operational capacities at global, regional and country levels, supporting the formulation of recommendations at expert meetings and identification of priorities for action.

19. During the reporting period, the UNODC Paris Pact Coordination Unit supported inter-thematic and interregional coordination and institutionalization of partnerships, held consultations with Paris Pact partners, facilitated sharing of information about the threat posed by illicit opiates in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and promoted partnership’s priorities in support of the Vienna Declaration.

20. Together, the expert and policy meetings make up the first component of the UNODC Paris Pact programme, the consultative mechanism. The two other components consist of the field-based liaison officer network, and the information management.

Consultative Mechanism

21. Through the consultative mechanism the Paris Pact programme fosters dialogue among the 81 partners of the Paris Pact initiative by coordinating the implementation of expert and policy meetings in which the priorities of the partnership are identified

and endorsed. The programme facilitates leveraging comparative advantages of UNODC and supports streamlining effective responses to the opiate threat.

22. In view of the restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Paris Pact Coordination Unit modified the programme's modus operandi regarding consultations and maintained informal dialogue with stakeholders and partners mostly via videoconferencing.

Liaison Officer Network

23. The network of the Paris Pact liaison officers, under supervision of the Paris Pact Coordination Unit, continued to function as the primary point of contact in the field for the Paris Pact programme and its consultative mechanism. The field network, deployed along the main opiates trafficking routes, continued facilitating the work of multiple UNODC programmes covering a variety of inter-thematic issues in support of the Vienna Declaration.

24. The liaison officers contributed to a number of studies conducted and reports disseminated by the Research and Trend Analysis Branch of UNODC, including the *2020 World Drug Report* and the study on the impact of COVID-19 on the regional crime situation and beyond. The liaison officers also supported the mandated annual data collection carried out by UNODC assisting Member States to comply with their reporting responsibilities.

25. The liaison officers updated the Paris Pact country fact sheets for 2020 with data on national and regional level drug and precursor indicators for countries located in Central Asia, South Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and West Asia. The updated fact sheets were also used for the *2020 World Drug Report*.

26. In collaboration with relevant global, regional and country programmes of UNODC, the Paris Pact liaison officers located in Central Asia delivered specialized training for law enforcement practitioners in West and Central Asia to strengthen their research and analytical skills, including on the use of statistical and spatial analysis.

27. The Paris Pact Coordination Unit initiated the realignment of the liaison officer network's geographical coverage in line with the major opiates trafficking routes, including the southern route, and designed new liaison officer positions to be located in Turkey and East Africa as of 2022.

Information Management

28. The third component of the programme comprises a Paris Pact online portal that captures the information management work of the programme.

29. In line with the recommendations of the independent mid-term evaluation of the Paris Pact programme and following the discussions at the fourteenth Policy Consultative Group meeting, a decision was made to transform the Paris Pact's information system, previously known as Automated Donor Assistance Mechanism (ADAM), into a Paris Pact information hub. The information hub is intended to provide Paris Pact partners with updated information related to the four thematic pillars of the Vienna Declaration and enable its users to access detailed information on all the events organised in the framework of the partnership, including the specific recommendations adopted by the partners. The web portal is currently being developed by UNODC's IT service.

C. Synergies

30. The Paris Pact continues to serve as an advocacy platform at the highest political level and a vehicle for a global dialogue, adapting to evolving threats along the opiate trafficking routes, promoting good practices and enhancing evidence-based policy and strategy formulation.

31. Since its creation in 2003, the Paris Pact process has given rise to an interregional, interdivisional and inter-thematic approach adopted by UNODC, the technical lead organization of the Paris Pact. The Paris Pact programme contributes to the implementation of the “One UNODC approach” by coordinating engagement of relevant UNODC programmes in the Consultative Mechanism. Over the reporting period, coordination with relevant sections, units, programmes and partner organizations was further strengthened and new synergies were identified.

32. The Paris Pact programme closely interacts with UNODC at the global, regional and country levels, including through the Regional Section for Europe, West and Central Asia (through the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, the Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe and the Programme for Central Asia), the Justice Section (through the Global Maritime Crime Programme), the Organized Crime and Illicit Trafficking Branch (through its Implementation Support Section, the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism, the global Container Control Programme, and the Global Programme on Building Effective Networks against Transnational Organized Crime), the Drug Prevention and Health Branch (through its Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Section), and the Research and Trend Analysis Branch (through its Drug Research Section, Laboratory and Scientific Services and Data Development and Dissemination Section).

33. The regional programmes, the main operational vehicles of UNODC for the Paris Pact, continued to play an important role in putting Paris Pact driven recommendations and strategies into action. The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, with support of the respective country programmes, continued to improve coherence and effectiveness of Paris Pact partner interventions in the region.

34. The strategic priorities of the Paris Pact, as defined at its Policy Consultative Group meetings, are subsequently operationalized by multiple organizations, programmes, funds, and projects managed and implemented by members of the partnership, including UNODC.

35. The growing importance of the southern route requires more intense involvement of the Paris Pact in coordination with the relevant UNODC thematic and regional programmes (such as the Global Maritime Crime Programme and the regional programmes in the Arab States and East Africa), and other partners. Paris Pact programme can adapt to shifts in opiate trafficking routes by adjusting its liaison officer network and rapidly start addressing the knowledge gaps and supporting operational responses.

D. Sustainability of the UNODC Paris Pact programme

36. The current fourth phase of the Paris Pact programme has been financially supported by Austria, France, India, Norway, the Russian Federation, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The programme looks forward to expanding its donor base in order to further strengthen the collective response of the initiative in the spirit of shared responsibility.

37. In the reporting period, the Paris Pact Coordination Unit has revitalized its operational modalities and initiated the development of new strategic programme components in consultation with its partners. These are aimed at promoting a more holistic approach towards achieving the thematic objectives of the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration with a focus on issues identified by the Paris Pact partners that remain to be addressed in respective settings. The Paris Pact Coordination Unit will initiate donor consultations during the second quarter of 2021 to seek funding for the new Paris Pact regional and interregional activities in order to accelerate achieving the objectives of the Vienna Declaration.

38. The Paris Pact initiative welcomes all interested States and organizations to attend the fifteenth Policy Consultative Group meeting to be held in 2021. The meeting provides an opportunity to actively participate in strategic dialogues and benefit from an exchange of best practices along the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration for a more effective response to the global challenge and threat that opiates pose to international peace and stability in different regions of the world.
