



SOVEREIGN ORDER OF MALTA

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

Sovereign Order of Malta
Statement by H. E. Ambassador Günther A. Granser
Permanent Observer to the United Nations and other
International Organizations

Delivered on behalf by:

Minister Dr. Alberto Doná, Alternate Permanent Representative
64th regular session Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Vienna, 12 – 16 April 2021

Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

The Sovereign Order of Malta is pleased to participate at this 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in hybrid format due to the COVID19 pandemic. Furthermore, our delegation would like to congratulate you and the Bureau of the Commission for the extensive work you have done in preparing and now leading this session.

The Sovereign Order of Malta, existing for more than 950 years, is one of the oldest humanitarian entities worldwide and has diplomatic relations with more than 110 States on all continents and permanent observer status at the United Nations and other international organizations. The Order is neutral, impartial and apolitical, it has a specific mission in the protection of health and assistance for people in need, who are affected by disease and suffering in miserable living conditions. The Order is proud to support UNODC in several projects where it counts most: among the people that are vulnerable. We want to show this engagement also to future generations by our strong and long-lasting dedication to the UNODC Youth Initiative and related Youth Forum.

Substance use impacts everyone, and in particular young people. It is one of the leading causes of preventable death globally. It is rightly so high in the global political agenda, as manifested in the Sustainable Development Goal 3.5 that calls for strengthening of prevention and treatment of substance use as one of the global priorities.

Prevention based on science can effectively support young people to grow healthy and safe, especially in these challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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The Sovereign Order of Malta is committed to continuously working towards the safe and healthy development of young people. It is one of our key priorities, and the Order is proud to support the UNODC Youth Initiative in providing the youth with the opportunity to engage with each other; on how to better protect the health and wellbeing of their peers within the framework of SDG 3.5.

Youth are not just protective targets from substance use, but are also very important actors with a high potential for active contribution in bringing awareness to their environments. The Order is very much looking forward seeing the UNODC Youth Initiative to further grow by creating and supporting a sustainable environment-not just for youth but also together with youth to learn and collaborate and allow for stronger connections among the young people and policy makers.

In closing, the Sovereign Order of Malta reiterates its gratitude for the efforts already undertaken in tackling the immense drug problem. We assure full collaboration in every just effort to tackle the world drug problem, also from a humanitarian perspective and to promote a society free of illicit drugs.

Thank you chair, for your attention