



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
4 March 2022

English only

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Sixty-fifth session

Vienna, 14–18 March 2022

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

General debate

Statement submitted by Public Association “Zhasylai”, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* [E/CN.7/2022/1](#).

** Issued without formal editing.



Statement

Dear Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

As the Public Association Zhasilay, we thank UNODC for the opportunity to raise our voices on the impact of Covid-19 on the world drug problem.

Drug demand is rising every day around the world, and more people are becoming vulnerable as a consequence of enhanced use and accessibility to drugs. Furthermore, the supply of illicit drugs has never been more abundant, complex, or diverse, and the Covid-19 pandemic has brought a slew of new challenges to current problems. With the disruptions in the drug treatment services caused by the pandemic, people who use drugs have become more vulnerable; the challenges they faced have gotten more complex and multi-faceted. To overcome current challenges and reach the Sustainable Development Goals, we, as the Public Association Zhasilay, are working on prevention activities, treatment, and rehabilitation services.

According to EMCDDA's overview of the drug situation in Kazakhstan (2014), the number of people dependent on drugs is 1.7 per cent of the total population; of which 81.3 per cent are dependent on cannabis and 31.6 per cent are dependent on opioids. In addition, the youth should be at the focus of the prevention activities considering 4.8 per cent of the students aged between 14–16 have had used drugs at least once in their lifetime, according to ESPAD Reports.

The accessibility of high-cost drugs, such as cocaine, amphetamine, and methamphetamine is limited in our region. But, this feature causes an increase in the use of desomorphine which is a homemade product and other synthetic opioids in Kazakhstan.

As reported, Kazakhstan has the potential to increase the drug demand in accordance with its youth population. Therefore, we should increase the prevention and early prevention activities which would prevent the society from harms of drugs, and to achieve SDGs without leaving no one behind.

The illicit drug routes have shifted as a result of the pandemic, and we have learned from the hard way that international organized crime has adapted to the new reality faster than most of us. The absence of the data on drug use and supply caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has created a great threat to prevention activities and tailor-made treatment services and blocked the way to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, to overcome these crises, we believe that NGOs have a critical role to play, in terms of reaching out to society and sharing the weaknesses and challenges to international platforms. We call UNODC, and other partners to increase the role of NGOs and promote their contribution to public policymaking.

Lastly, we would like to share our willingness to cooperate with other NGOs and international organizations in our country and our region to build a better and healthier future for everyone.

Thank you.
