

Agenda Item 5b. Challenges and future work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the World Health Organization in the review of substances for possible scheduling recommendations

Chair of the Commission, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

- Over the last ten years, the number of New Psychoactive Substances reported to UNODC has grown significantly - from 254 substances in 2013, to 1,182 substances as of today.
- Moreover, these harmful substances have been reported on a wide geographical basis, covering 141 countries and territories worldwide.
- In response, considerable progress has been made by Member States to change the control status of some of these substances, both through the commission and as well as through national actions.

- 71 of the most prevalent, persistent and harmful new psychoactive substances have been controlled by the Commission since 2014 under the 1961 and 1971 Conventions.
- Similarly, 10 precursors of methamphetamine, ecstasy and fentanyl have been added to the tables of the 1988 Convention.
- Member States have been both proactive and innovative in their responses to this challenge, which has included a variety of national legislative responses.
- As a result, we have seen a significant reduction in the number of these harmful substances and the emergence of new substances on illicit drug markets has stabilised.
- However, significant challenges remain. Synthetic opioids, in particular, have continued to increase. We have seen growth in the number of fentanyl analogues

reported as well as the emergence of other NPS with opioid effects.

- A total of 126 synthetic opioids have now been reported to the UNODC Early Warning Advisory.
- In addition, substances with sedative hypnotic effects have emerged, for example novel benzodiazepines. These are a current threat and are implicated in cases of drug use while driving.
- Although six such substances have been placed under International Control, they continue to persist in several countries.
- Strengthening national forensic capacity to generate and share the scientific evidence which is necessary to identify new harmful substances and emerging threats is key to effective national and international responses
- This week the Commission will consider changes in the scope of control of an

additional seven harmful substances that have been recommended for scheduling by the WHO

- Supporting Member States with the tools, resources and technical assistance to implement International Scheduling decisions is essential.
- The UNODC Synthetic Drug Strategy offers a balanced and comprehensive framework which is built on international cooperation, early warning systems, science-informed health responses and strengthening counter-narcotics capacity.
- Support is also provided through the UN Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs, which brings together over 330 practical resources and tools from a range of UN agencies to support Member States in their responses to this problem.

- I invite Member States to make full use of these useful resources to assist them in their efforts