

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
5 March 2024

English only

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

Vienna, 14–22 March 2024

Item 5(e) of the provisional agenda*

Implementation of the international drug control treaties: other matters arising from the international drug control treaties**Statement submitted by DRCNet Foundation, Inc., 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.7/2024/1](#).

** Issued without formal editing.



Statement of DRCNet Foundation aka StoptheDrugWar.org submitted for the sixty-seventh session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, March 2024

DRCNet Foundation, also known as StoptheDrugWar.org, has engaged with drug policy at the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs since preparations began for the 2016 UNGASS. In partnership with nearly 350 organizations, we called for a significant shift to bring global drug policy more in line with international human rights standards. Our coalition critiqued drug control policies that heavily emphasize criminalization, noting that these have often involved large-scale abuses and discriminatory practices.

Since that time, the world has seen atrocities committed in the drug war, including tens of thousands killed extrajudicially in situations that have shattered the rule of law. It may be that the basis of the global drug control system, which is drug prohibition, inevitably leads to serious human rights abuses.

Concerned that drug prohibition may be incompatible, in practice if not in principle, with principles of human rights or public health, some countries – or jurisdictions within them – have begun to pursue policies that depart from that model and to seek alternative means for addressing the health and human safety concerns associated with drug use. Most notably, several countries or their constituent provinces have begun to experiment with regulation systems (e.g. “legalization”) for cannabis.

Our UNGASS coalition asserted that some of these experiments may require that the United Nations drug conventions are interpreted in light of countries’ international human rights and other obligations, and argued that in case of irreconcilable conflict, human rights principles, which lie at the core of the United Nations Charter, should take priority over provisions of the drug conventions. We also argued that United Nations Member States should initiate a process of reforming and modernization of the drug conventions.

To address the injustices and the harms that are currently associated with drug policy in much of the world, we continue to call for an open dialogue on these matters, and for action on them, at the CND, Human Rights Council and other international gatherings. We call for full engagement by all United Nations treaty bodies and agencies with the recommendations of the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and the extensive framework laid out in the International Guidelines on Drug Policy and Human Rights.
