

Proposed organizational arrangements of the 2024 Thematic Discussions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

3rd intersessional meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
at its sixty-seventh session

Vienna, 12-14 November 2024

Non-Paper by the Secretariat

A. Background

In the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, Member States identified challenges to the effective implementation of the international drug policy commitments contained in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, the 2014 Joint Ministerial Statement and the 2016 UNGASS outcome document. In the Declaration, Member States further committed to fostering broad, transparent and inclusive discussions within the Commission on effective strategies to address and counter the world drug problem at all levels, including through the sharing of information, best practices and lessons learned. Based on the challenges identified in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, the Commission adopted in June 2019 a multi-year workplan for 2019-2023 to discuss how these challenges can be addressed through effectively implementing the provisions contained in the policy documents.

In March 2024, the Commission adopted the High-level Declaration on the 2024 midterm review, following up to the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, expressing gratitude to the Chairs that facilitated the thematic discussions from 2019 to 2023, and extending appreciation to all participants for their contributions to the review process. Following the adoption of the 2024 High-level Declaration, and in line with the commitment made in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration to foster broad, transparent and inclusive discussions within the CND, the Commission adopted, by silence procedure on 8 May 2024, a workplan for the CND Thematic Discussions 2024-2028.

B. Programme of work

For 2024, the workplan foresees 3 days of discussions on the following topics:

- a) Thematic discussions on challenges identified in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration
 1. both the range of drugs and drugs markets are expanding and diversifying;
 2. the abuse, illicit cultivation and production and manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as the illicit trafficking in those substances and in precursors, have reached record levels, and that the illicit demand for and the domestic diversion of precursor chemicals are on the rise;
 3. synthetic opioids and the non-medical use of prescription drugs pose increasing risks to public health and safety, as well as scientific, legal and regulatory challenges, including with regard to the scheduling of substances;
- b) Other substantive matters

The agenda item **“Other substantive matters”** allows Member States to bring to the attention of the Commission persistent, new, or emerging issues of particular concern. For issues to be discussed under **“Other substantive matters”** the Secretariat would invite delegations to submit topics, if they wish to do so, at least **six weeks prior to the session, so latest by 1 October 2024** (unodc-sgb@un.org)

Proposed Agenda

12 November 2024: Expanding Range of Drugs and Synthetic Opioids and Non-medical Use of Prescription Drugs

It is proposed to focus the first day on the expanding range of drugs, drug demand reduction challenges as well as the challenges posed by synthetic opioids to explore the evolving drug landscape. The *morning session's emphasis* on market diversification would address the global nature of drug trade expansion, while the *afternoon's focus* on demand reduction challenges, synthetic opioids and the non-medical use of prescription drugs would focus on one of the most pressing public health crises, reflecting recent trends and emergencies in non-medical drug use. The first day would address challenge 1 (both the range of drugs and drugs markets are expanding and diversifying), part of challenge 2 (the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is on the rise) and part of challenge 3 (synthetic opioids and the non-medical use of prescription drugs pose increasing risks to public health and safety, as well as scientific, legal and regulatory challenges).

- *Morning Session:* Expanding Range of Drugs and Diversifying Markets
- *Afternoon Session:* Synthetic Opioids and Non-medical Use of Prescription Drugs

13 November 2024: Illicit Cultivation, Production, and Trafficking

It is proposed to focus the *second day* on the supply side, starting with the challenges related to illicit cultivation and production, with a view to discussing and understanding the root of the drug supply chain. The *afternoon session* would complement this by focusing on trafficking and the diversion of precursors, with a view to addressing the entire supply chain and identifying intervention points for reducing supply. The second day would mainly address the supply elements of challenge 2 (the illicit cultivation and production and manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as the illicit trafficking in those substances and in precursors, have reached record levels, and that the illicit demand for and the domestic diversion of precursor chemicals are on the rise).

- *Morning Session:* Challenges in Illicit Cultivation and Production of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances
- *Afternoon Session:* Illicit Trafficking in Substances and Precursors, and Domestic Diversion of Precursor Chemicals

14 November 2024: Scheduling Challenges and Other Substantive Matters

It is proposed to *start* the third day with a discussion on the normative functions of the Commission, the scheduling of substances under the three international drug control conventions, and the related challenges. This discussion would address an element in challenge 3 (scientific, legal and regulatory challenges, including with regard to the scheduling of substance).

The *afternoon session* would be dedicated to “*Other Substantive Matters*”, allowing for flexibility to address urgent or emerging issues not covered in the earlier sessions, providing space to highlight and discuss pressing concerns of Member States. As mentioned above, the Secretariat would invite delegations to submit topics, if they wish to do so, at least six weeks prior to the session, so latest by 1 October 2024 (unodc-sgb@un.org).

- *Morning Session:* Legal, Scientific, and Regulatory Challenges in Scheduling Substances
- *Afternoon Session:* Other Substantive Matters

C. Format and organization of work

The thematic discussions will be organized, in line with past practice, **in English only** and **in a hybrid format** (in-person participation combined with online participation through the InEvent platform). The discussions will be webcast on UN Web TV, thanks to the availability of dedicated XB resources for this purpose.

The morning meetings will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Vienna time), and the afternoon meetings from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Vienna time).

On 12 November, there will be an opening session, which the Executive Director of UNODC will be invited to address. There will be a short closing session in the afternoon of 14 November.

Each session of the thematic discussions (morning and afternoon sessions) will be organized in different components:

- Introductory statements by UNODC
- Expert panel discussion
- Pledge4Action Progress Spotlight
- Discussion with interventions from the floor

As outlined in the workplan, each thematic session would, amongst others, provide a unique opportunity to **encompass**, when discussing the challenges under consideration, **cross-cutting issues, including those identified in the “way forward”-part of the 2024 CND High-Level Declaration.**

- a) **Cooperation at all levels**
- b) **Data collection and analysis**
- c) **Technological innovation**
- d) **Capacity building and resource mobilization**

Introductory statements by UNODC

In line with the format of the Commission’s thematic discussions held since 2016, each of the thematic sessions will start with introductory presentations by UNODC.

Expert Panel discussion

After the introductory presentations, the sessions will continue with a panel discussion with national experts to be nominated by the Regional Groups, experts from other relevant United Nations entities and specialized agencies, and one expert to be nominated by civil society (through the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs and in cooperation with the UNODC Civil Society Unit). The expert panel discussions would be moderated by UNODC.

The Chairs of the Regional Groups are encouraged to hold consultations within their groups and to share the nominations for the thematic sessions (up to two experts per regional group per meeting day to ensure geographical representation throughout the day) (unodc-sgb@un.org), **as soon as possible and latest by Tuesday, 15 October 2024, noon**, indicating whether the panellist will be participating in person or online.

To ensure a dynamic and inclusive discussion, it is proposed to invite experts that have substantive expertise and experience in the relevant thematic areas.

Guidelines for Speakers:

Preparation: There would be no initial presentations, experts would receive a set of guiding questions in advance to help them prepare for the expert panel discussion. These questions would focus on the thematic issues of the session. Speakers would therefore reply orally to questions.

Interaction: During the panel discussion, experts would be expected to engage with questions from the floor and from the moderator. This will ensure an interactive and dynamic exchange of ideas and perspectives.

Profile Information: Along with the nomination, please provide a recent picture and a short biography of the nominated expert. The biography should highlight the expert's relevant experience and expertise in the thematic area of the session.

Pledge4Action Progress Spotlight

In line with the workplan adopted on 8 May, the thematic discussion would also provide an opportunity for Member States to report to the Commission on progress in the implementation of their pledges made during the high-level segment of the 67th session of the CND as part of the Chair's Pledge4Action initiative.

It is proposed to provide right after the panel and before the discussion with the floor, space for Member States wishing to report on progress made in the **implementation of their pledges related to the challenges under discussion**. The presentations should not be longer than 3-5 minutes, providing an opportunity for other Member States to ask questions. This section would only be held if Member States express interest before the session to the Secretariat to provide updates on the implementation of their pledges. Member States can choose the format of their presentation.

Interactive debate

After the Pledge4Action Progress Spotlight, the floor would be opened for interventions for an interactive discussion on the topics of the day. Those delegates participating in person can raise their flag to indicate their wish to speak. Participants joining the meeting online can indicate in the meetings' chat if they wish to intervene. The interactive discussion would be moderated by the Chair.

Statements during the interactive discussions should be no longer than 2-3 minutes. As was the case for the previous thematic discussions held by the Commission, it will be at the discretion of the Chair presiding over the meeting to determine the order of speaking during the interactive debate.

D. Documentation

A discussion guide will be prepared by the Secretariat, including a list of guiding questions. It will be shared in advance of the meeting to facilitate the discussion.

The discussion guide will be published in English on the website of the meeting.

E. Outcome

In line with past practice, the outcome of the meeting will be a short Chair's summary, not subject to negotiations, which will be brought to the attention of the Commission at the next regular session of the Commission in 2025, under the respective agenda item.

F. Registration

A note verbale will be sent to Member States in due course with details on registration.

Any questions can be addressed to the Secretariat to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, P.O. Box 500, 1400 Vienna, Austria, email: unodc-sgb@un.org.