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

Vienna, 10–14 March 2025

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

Follow-up to the implementation at the national, regional and international levels of all commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the world drug problem**Note by the Secretariat on the follow-up by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to the implementation of all international drug policy commitments*****Summary*

In line with the commitments made in the 2024 High-level Declaration, Member States reaffirmed in 2024 the role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) as the forum for following up on the implementation of international drug policy commitments. This Note by the Secretariat provides an overview of the Commission's efforts to enhance the practical implementation of these commitments, reflecting key measures implemented in 2024. The document highlights the follow-up work undertaken through the annual CND thematic discussions, the Pledge4Action initiative, the role of CND subsidiary bodies, efforts to strengthen information-sharing and knowledge platforms, the Commission's engagement to commemorate international days, CND's contributions to the Economic and Social Council, as well as efforts to enhance the horizontal cooperation with other functional Commissions of the ECOSOC.

The conference room paper is to be read in conjunction with the summary of the 2024 thematic discussions on the implementation of all international drug policy commitments. (E/CN.7/2025/CRP.1)

* [E/CN.7/2025/1](#).

** This document has not been edited.



I. Background



1. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at its fifty-second session in 2009, adopted the [2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem](#), structured into three parts: (a) demand reduction, (b) supply reduction, and (c) countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation. Member States set goals and targets and decided on a high-level review at the fifty-seventh session in 2014, recommending that the General Assembly hold a special session.
2. At its fifty-seventh session, the Commission conducted the high-level review and adopted the [2014 Joint Ministerial Statement](#), outlining achievements, challenges, and priorities. The General Assembly, in resolution 67/193 (2012), decided to hold a Special Session on the World Drug Problem in 2016, tasking the CND with leading the preparatory process. The [2016 UNGASS outcome document](#), adopted unanimously at the opening of the Special Session, contains operational recommendations in seven thematic chapters. The Commission subsequently initiated an intensive follow-up process to implement these recommendations.
3. In March 2019, Ministers and government representatives met in Vienna to take stock of progress in implementing commitments since 2009, adopting by consensus the [2019 Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels](#). While recognizing progress, Member States acknowledged persistent and emerging challenges and committed to accelerating implementation. The Declaration set a mid-term review in 2024 and a final review in 2029. Member States also ensured that the Commission-led follow-up would be continued in line with the approach adopted after the adoption of the UNGASS outcome document.
4. Five years later, in March 2024, the Commission conducted a mid-term review, and on the first day of the high-level segment of the sixty-seventh session, Member States adopted by consensus the [High-level Declaration on the 2024 midterm review](#), reaffirming the commitments of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, and emphasizing the need for accelerated, scientific evidence-based, and comprehensive actions to address persistent and emerging drug-related challenges. The document further calls for enhanced cooperation, highlights the importance of technological innovation and improved data collection, and underscores the need for capacity-building and resource mobilization to support implementation.

II. Implementation of all international drug policy commitments, following up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration

5. The Secretariat to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs has been actively supporting the Commission in the practical implementation of all international drug policy commitments through a range of initiatives and efforts. These include a) organizing thematic discussions, b) strengthening regional cooperation through the CND subsidiary bodies, c) facilitating the Pledge4Action initiative, d) enhancing information-sharing through dedicated platforms and tools, as well as e) fostering

cooperation and organizing dedicated special events. The Secretariat also works to ensure that policy discussions translate into action, supporting Member States in addressing emerging drug-related challenges and fostering international collaboration, in line with the commitments made in the above-mentioned documents. Many of these efforts are made possible through extrabudgetary contributions, which enable the development of innovative tools, programs, and targeted activities to assist Member States in their implementation efforts.

Supporting the implementation of drug policy commitments

- organizing thematic discussions
- strengthening regional cooperation through the CND subsidiary bodies,
- facilitating the implementation of the Pledge4Action initiative
- enhancing information-sharing through dedicated platforms and tools
- fostering cooperation and organizing dedicated special events

(a) Thematic Discussions

6. A core part of the Commission-led follow-up process to policy commitments are the thematic discussions that are focused on the exchange of good practices, challenges and lessons learned in the implementation of all international drug policy commitments. The annual thematic sessions were initiated after the adoption of the 2016 UNGASS outcome document, transforming the CND into a forum for exchange of expertise and experience among all interested stakeholders, including Member States, United Nations entities, intergovernmental and international organizations, and civil society.

7. In the 2024 high-level declaration, Member States expressed gratitude to the Chairs of the Commission who had facilitated the thematic discussions from 2019 to 2023. In line with the commitment made in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019 to foster broad, transparent and inclusive discussions, the Commission adopted, by silence procedure on 8 May 2024, a workplan for the thematic discussions to be held in the lead-up to the review in 2029. The workplan foresees for the period 2024–2028 the holding of one meeting each year focused on the implementation of all international drug policy commitments to address the challenges identified in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019. The Secretariat to the Commission has created dedicated websites for the follow-up to the policy documents, latest the 2024 Ministerial Declaration, including a website focused on the implementation of all international drug policy commitments. Statements and presentations delivered during the thematic sessions and intersessional meetings of the Commission are shared on this website.¹



¹ 2019 Ministerial Declaration Follow-up Portal.

Thematic discussions 2024

8. For the thematic discussions held from 12 to 14 November 2024, an updated format was introduced in line with the workplan, with a view to fostering more dynamic and inclusive exchanges. The discussions, based on three challenges identified in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019,² were structured into three thematic days, with two sessions each day. Key topics discussed during the three days included the expanding range of drugs and diversification of markets; challenges related to synthetic opioids and the non-medical use of prescription drugs; the illicit cultivation and production and trafficking in narcotic drugs; and regulatory challenges in scheduling substances under the international drug control conventions. Each session included introductory presentations by representatives of UNODC, expert panel discussions with experts nominated through the regional groups moderated by UNODC, and interactive debates moderated by the Chair of the Commission.

9. Under the newly introduced item on the agenda for the thematic discussions, entitled “Other substantive matters”, delegations had the opportunity to bring to the attention of the Commission persistent, new or emerging issues of particular concern to their governments. Under that item, discussions focused on challenges encountered in identifying new drugs emerging on the illicit market and enhancing forensic capacity; evidence-based harm reduction measures; the social determinants of drug policy and barriers to accessing services; the role of scientific evidence in the implementation of global drug policies; threats to the integrity of the international drug control system; and the current status of the critical review by WHO of coca leaf.

10. The hybrid format adopted for the thematic discussions allowed both in-person and online participation, and the sessions were broadcast live on UN Web TV.

11. A summary by the Chair, which was not subject to negotiations, has been made available in the form of a conference room paper to the sixty-eighth session, the Commission (E/CN.7/2025/CRP.1).

Thematic Discussions 2025

12. The next round of thematic discussions is scheduled to be held in the second half of 2025 and will be focused on another set of challenges identified in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, namely that drug treatment and health services continue to fall short of meeting needs and that deaths related to drug use have increased; that the rate of transmission of HIV, the hepatitis C virus and other blood-borne diseases associated with drug use, including injecting drug use in some countries, remains high; that the adverse health consequences of and risks associated with new psychoactive substances have reached alarming levels; and that the availability of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, including for the relief of pain and palliative care, remains low to non-existent in many parts of the world.

² Over the course of the three days of the thematic discussions, and in accordance with the workplan, the following challenges identified in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019 were discussed: that both the range of drugs and drugs markets are expanding and diversifying; that 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; and that 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) CND Subsidiary Bodies

13. To further cooperation in drug law enforcement activities at the regional level, the Economic and Social Council established the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) as subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The regions covered include Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, and Africa.³ The meetings take place annually, biannually in the case of HONLEA Europe, and aim to identify salient policy and enforcement issues in their regions. They establish working groups to analyse the issues, and then bring their reports and recommendations to the attention of the Commission. In addition, the Subcommission⁴ was established in 1973 to serve as a consultative body that would provide the Commission on Narcotic Drugs with a regional perspective on dealing with illicit drug activity in the Near and Middle East.

14. These practitioners' meetings discuss the implementation and follow-up to the Commission's policy documents from their own operational perspective, provide the regional input to the Commission, and are key to ensuring the effective implementation of international drug policy at the national and regional levels.

15. Owing to the ongoing financial constraints stemming from the liquidity crisis in the United Nations regular budget, the meetings of the above-mentioned subsidiary bodies planned for 2024 were postponed to 2025. The funding required to service those meetings was available neither for conference management services nor for substantive secretariat services. The inability to hold the 2024 meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission significantly impacts global drug policy discussions and implementation. These meetings ensure that regional challenges, trends, and good practices inform CND global discussions, translate policies into operational action on the ground, and help build trust among practitioners, which can speed up and facilitate international cooperation. Without these mandated meetings, regional input is missing, disrupting practitioner-driven exchanges of good practices. Moving forward, it is essential to ensure that these practitioners' meetings can be held as mandated, ensuring the link between policy discussions at the CND and regional, operational implementation, especially in the lead-up to the 2029 review.

(c) Pledge4Action initiative

16. At the high-level segment in March 2024, the Commission launched the "Pledge4Action" initiative, aimed at mobilizing Member States and stakeholders to undertake concrete, impactful actions to address the key challenges outlined in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019. The initiative generated significant engagement: since its launch, 69 pledges have been made by Member States, UNODC and stakeholders (of which 66 were made during the high-level segment, and 2 were made during the reconvened sixty-seventh session, in December 2024), reflecting a strong collective commitment to addressing persistent and emerging drug-related issues.

17. As part of the thematic discussions of the Commission in 2024, a dedicated segment, the "'Pledge4Action' Progress Spotlight", provided Member States with an opportunity to report on the progress made in fulfilling their pledges. A total of 17 Member States provided updates on the implementation of their pledges, showcasing advancements and highlighting best practices.

³ HONEUR: [ECOSOC resolution 1990/30](#); HONLAC: [ECOSOC resolution 1987/34](#); HONLAP: [ECOSOC resolution 1845 \(LVI\)](#); HONLAF: [ECOSOC resolution 1985/11](#).

⁴ SUBCOMMISSION: [6 \(XXV\)](#) and [ECOSOC resolution 1776 \(LIV\)](#).

18. Member States that have not yet joined the “Pledge4Action” initiative have the opportunity to make a pledge at the sixty-eighth session. Member States wishing to report on progress made in the implementation of their pledges may provide updates during their interventions under agenda item 6. The full list of pledges made and progress updates shared can be accessed on the Pledge4Action portal.⁵

(d) CND websites and tools

19. Information-sharing is key to delivering better and more efficient responses, facilitating decision-making and fostering innovation. Drawing on the wealth of information shared by the various stakeholders during the CND’s regular sessions and intersessional meetings, dedicated tools and platforms have been developed to enhance the implementation of all international drug policy commitments.

20. The Secretariat to the Governing Bodies has developed a set of tools to support the Commission. In addition to the Commission’s general website (cnd.unodc.org)⁶, the Secretariat has created dedicated websites for the follow-up to the policy documents, including the repository for information shared during the thematic discussions.⁷

21. The Commission further continues to use social media to reach out to interested stakeholders, thereby providing up-to-date information on meetings, documentation, links to UN Web TV and contributions posted on the Commissions websites (X: @CND_tweets).

E-LEARNING “INTRODUCTION TO SCHEDULING”

The Secretariat has created an online course on the normative functions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs under the three international drug control conventions. The course “Introduction to Scheduling” is targeting Member States’ delegates involved in the work of the Commission, as well as all other stakeholders interested in the CND and the international drug control system.



This course “Introduction to Scheduling” targets Member States’ delegates involved in the work of the Commission, as well as all other stakeholders interested in the CND and the international drug control system and is available on the Commission’s website. The tool is available in English⁸ and Chinese.⁹ In addition, the Secretariat made available a publication on the scheduling procedures, providing an introduction to the treaty-based function of the Commission.¹⁰

22. The Secretariat to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs further offers a range of eLearning tools and concepts for online training delivery, with a view to facilitating information and knowledge sharing in an online format. The provision of extrabudgetary resources allowed for the development of an *eLearning tool on the normative functions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs under the three international drug control conventions*.

BROCHURE ON SCHEDULING PROCEDURES

This publication provides an introduction to this treaty-based function of the Commission. The first part focuses on the scheduling procedure, which is divided into the processes involved before, during and after the voting on the scheduling recommendations. The second part explores the control regimes of the schedules of the 1967 and 1971 Conventions and the tables of the 1988 Convention.



⁵ https://www.unodc.org/unodc/commissions/CND/session/67_Session_2024/pledge4action-cnd-2024-midterm-review.html

⁶ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/Secretariat/publications.html>

⁷ 2019 Ministerial Declaration Follow-up Portal

⁸ Scheduling eLearning Tutorial (unodc.org)

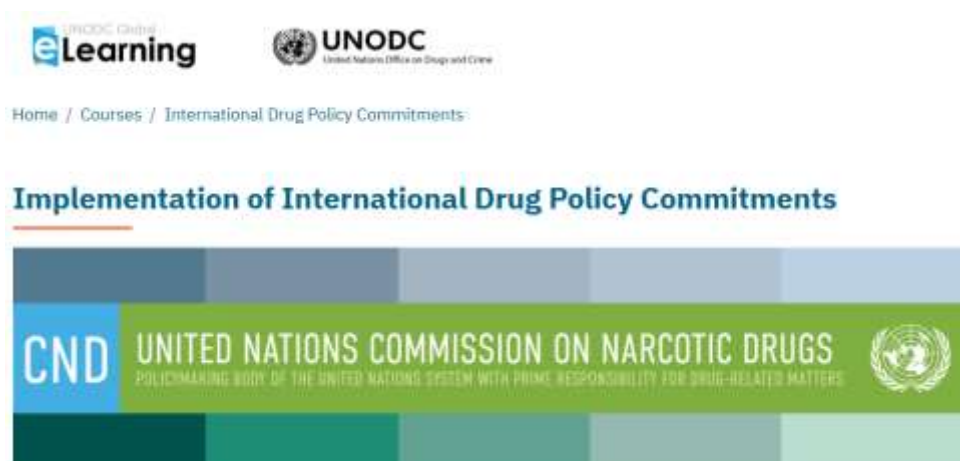
⁹ https://www.unodc.org/unodc/zh/commissions/CND/Mandate_Functions/scheduling-elearning-tutorial.html

¹⁰ https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/Scheduling_Resource_Material/19-11955_Drug_Conventions_eBook.pdf

23. In 2022 the Secretariat developed as part of the NoPatientLeftBehind initiative an *eLearning tool*, comprising 4 modules, which aims to raise awareness about the policy commitments and challenges related to the availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes¹¹, as well as to showcase the contributions of key international stakeholders in this area.



24. The Secretariat also developed an *eLearning tool on the “Implementation of all drug policy commitments”*. In the course, users learn about the work of the Commission, its relation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the substantive areas covered by drug policy recommendations made at the international level. The course consists of eight modules: an introduction to the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as well as modules on demand reduction, availability and access, supply reduction, cross-cutting issues, trends and new challenges, international cooperation, and alternative development. Under each module, users find the challenges identified as well as the recommendations and commitments made by Member States and examples of implementation of these recommendations. The user also learns about the support UNODC offers to Member States in achieving their commitments. Each lesson ends with links to documents referred to and contact information. The course, hosted on the UNODC eLearning platform, is publicly accessible through the CND website.¹²



25. Introductory videos on the work of the Commission have been made available to raise awareness about the work of the Commission and provide an introduction to the mandates, elections, membership, as well as substantive information on the policy-making and operational functions, as well as general logistical information. The videos target all who are interested in the work of the Commission, including representatives of Permanent Missions joining the Vienna community.¹³

¹¹ https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/session/65_Session_2022/availability_accessibility_e-learning.html.

¹² <https://elearningunodc.org/course/view.php?id=41>.

¹³ <https://www.youtube.com/@secretariattothegoverningb8451/videos>.

(e) Special Events

26. Every year the Commission organizes several side events and special events to commemorate international days or to foster cooperation including with other functional Commissions of the Economic and Social Council. Since 2020, the Commission continues to organize special events in a hybrid format, where possible, to ensure the broadest possible participation.

Fostering horizontal cooperation with the functional commissions of the ECOSOC

27. With a view to informing the preparations for the 2024 mid-term review and strengthening the horizontal cooperation with other functional commissions of the ECOSOC, the Secretariat to the Commission organized a roundtable discussion on 1 February 2024 with Chairs of ECOSOC Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies. During the event, the Chair of the CND briefed on the preparations of the mid-term review and invited Chairs or Bureaux Members of other subsidiary bodies to present relevant aspects of their work. The event aimed to foster collaboration and information-sharing between the CND and the ECOSOC functional commissions and subsidiary bodies that cover socio-economic and development issues of importance to the Commission. The following functional commission participated: the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on Population and Development, and the Statistical Commission. The event was opened by the President of ECOSOC and chaired by the CND Chair.

28. On 11 July 2024, at the margins of the ECOSOC High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Vice-First Chair of the CND, together with the CCPCJ Chair, led a side event on the importance of “Forging synergies for sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions: The Vienna-based Commissions cooperating with others to advance SDGs 3, 16 and the 2030 Agenda”. A number of subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC made substantive contributions, including the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Social Development, and the Commission on Science and Technology. As part of its contribution to the 2024 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), the CND Vice-Chair highlighted solutions to address drug-related challenges, including through promoting alternative development, ensuring access to controlled substances for medical use, and facilitating international dialogue on drug policies. The importance of enhancing data collection, strengthening international cooperation in criminal matters, and addressing the environmental impacts of the world drug problem was further underlined, reflecting the Commission’s commitment to fostering a comprehensive and balanced approach to drug-related matters while advancing the broader objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

29. On 22 November 2024, the Secretariat to the CND and CCPCJ organized a special event to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, under the leadership of the respective Chairs, and in cooperation with the Commission on the Status of Women. Marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+30), the event emphasized renewed global commitments to ending violence against women and girls. The discussions underscored the links between addressing violence against women and girls and the core mandates of the CND and CCPCJ. The event also emphasized the importance of collaboration among ECOSOC functional commissions, particularly with the CSW. The joint efforts of the two Vienna-based Commissions aim to promote integrated strategies to address violence against women and girls, demonstrating the Commissions’ commitment to fostering cross-sectoral cooperation on complex, cross-cutting issues. The program featured a keynote address by the Austrian Federal Minister for Women, Family, Youth, and Integration, opening remarks by the Executive Director of UNODC, and presentations by UNODC staff on key statistics and UNODC’s contributions to addressing violence against women and girls. Representatives from Member States and civil society shared insights, emphasizing the critical need for international cooperation and cross-sectoral strategies. With a

view to supporting the UN Women-led 16 days of activism campaign focused on the Beijing+30, SGB developed a social media awareness raising campaign, focused on the work of both Vienna-based Commissions in relation to addressing violence against women and girls. The campaign was held from 25 November to 10 December 2024.

Special events and side events

30. In cooperation with the UNODC Data Collection and Analysis Branch, the Secretariat to the Commission organized on 26 June 2024 the CND Special Event to commemorate the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, World Drug Day. As every year, the annual UNODC World Drug Report was launched at the Special Event. The Special Event entitled “Evidence to Impact – Powering Effective Drug Policy with Data Collection and Research” addressed the importance of data collection, research, and analysis as pillars for the development and implementation of effective drug policies. The 2024 High-level Declaration, adopted during the CND High-level Segment in March 2024, identified data collection and analysis as one of the four cross-cutting pillars, with Member States underscoring the crucial role of high-quality, timely, and comprehensive data, in formulating scientific evidence-based drug policies and understanding the evolving trends and dynamics of drug use and trafficking. The event was livestreamed on UN Web TV and has also been made available on demand.

31. In cooperation with the UNODC Office New York, and the Research and Analysis Branch, the Secretariat organized on 15 October 2024 in the margins of the meetings of the General Assembly Third Committee the "Evidence to Impact: Working Together to Drive Evidence-Based Drug Policies" event. The event brought together key stakeholders to discuss the findings of the 2024 World Drug Report and explore the role of evidence-based policies in addressing global drug challenges. The event, moderated by the Director of the UNODC New York Office, featured keynote remarks by the Chair of the CND, and the Secretary of the CND, and presentations from the Chief of the UNODC Research and Analysis Branch, who shared the latest data on global drug trends. Expert panellists included the Chair of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), the European Union (EU), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the New York NGO Committee on Drugs (NYNGOC). The panellists highlighted the importance of robust data collection and analysis, regional cooperation, and inclusive policymaking to combat drug trafficking and abuse. The event showcased the CND's efforts to align its work with global commitments, including those from the Summit of the Future, focusing on sustainability, digital technologies, and the protection of future generations. The event was livestreamed on UN Web TV and has also been made available on demand.