

**Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

Sixty-eighth session

Vienna, 10–14 March 2025

**Draft report***Rapporteur:* Mohamed Amine Boukhris (Morocco)**Addendum****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**

1. At its 5th and 6th meetings, on 12 March 2025, and 7th meeting, on 13 March 2025, the Commission considered agenda item 6, entitled “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”.
2. For its consideration of item 6, the Commission had before it the following:
  - (a) Report of the Executive Director on the activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ([E/CN.7/2025/2-E/CN.15/2025/2](#));
  - (b) Report of the Secretariat on the world situation with regard to drug abuse ([E/CN.7/2025/5](#));
  - (c) Conference room paper containing the Chair’s summary on the thematic discussions on the implementation of all international drug policy commitments, following up to the Ministerial Declaration of 2019 and the 2024 midterm review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, following up to the Ministerial Declaration ([E/CN.7/2025/CRP.1](#));
  - (d) Conference room paper containing a note by the Secretariat on the follow-up by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to the implementation of all international drug policy commitments ([E/CN.7/2025/CRP.3](#)).
3. Introductory statements were made by a representative of the secretariat of the Commission and by the Chief of the Drugs, Laboratory and Scientific Services Branch and the Chief of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch of UNODC. In addition, representatives of the Youth Forum, the UNODC-WHO Informal Scientific Network and the UNODC Young Doctors Network, and participants in the consultation between the International AIDS Society, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), WHO and UNODC on strategies to eliminate hepatitis B



and C briefed the Commission on the outcome of their consultations held on the margins of the session.

4. Statements were made by the representatives of Singapore, Kenya, Pakistan, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, South Africa, Argentina, Nigeria, Guatemala, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea, Bangladesh, China, Ghana, Thailand, Algeria, Morocco, India, Poland, Colombia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

5. Statements were made by the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer (on behalf of the European Union and its member States<sup>1</sup>) and by the observers for Egypt, Ecuador, the Philippines, the Niger, Brunei Darussalam, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Türkiye, Sri Lanka, Zambia, Germany, Antigua and Barbuda, Honduras, Malaysia, Kuwait and Namibia.

6. A statement was made by the representative of the Russian Federation on behalf of a group of countries.<sup>2</sup> A statement was also made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of a group of countries.<sup>3</sup>

7. Statements were made by the observers for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), UNAIDS and the Organization of American States.

8. Statements were also made by the observers for the Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association, Asociación Proyecto Hombre, Instituto RIA, Harm Reduction International, Harm Reduction Australia, Frontline AIDS and the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care.

9. The representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer, made a statement in exercise of the right of reply.

## A. Deliberations

10. Many speakers reaffirmed the commitment of their countries to the effective implementation of the international drug policy commitments as recalled in the high-level declaration by the Commission on the 2024 midterm review, following up to the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, and emphasized the importance of upholding those commitments in full conformity with the international drug control conventions, the Charter of the United Nations and other international instruments, including international human rights instruments. Many speakers recalled the central role of the Commission as the principal policymaking body of the United Nations with prime responsibility for drug control matters, and that the three international drug control conventions, together with other relevant international instruments, continued to constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system. A group of speakers underscored the role of INCB in monitoring Member States' compliance with their obligations under the three international drug control conventions. In response, one speaker noted that the primary function of INCB was to assist States in implementing the conventions rather than acting as a compliance-monitoring body.

<sup>1</sup> The following countries associated themselves with the statement: Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine.

<sup>2</sup> Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania (United Republic of), Tunisia, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe and State of Palestine.

<sup>3</sup> Belarus, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Myanmar, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe and State of Palestine.

11. A group of speakers highlighted that the flexibility of the drug control conventions enabled Member States to implement national drug policies that reflected their unique contexts while limiting drug use strictly to medical and scientific purposes. That group of speakers emphasized the sovereign right to tailor drug policies to national circumstances and rejected the idea that there is a one-size-fits-all approach, cautioning against an exclusive focus on harm reduction measures as a policy response to address the drug problem. Furthermore, speakers expressed concern over the legalization of cannabis for non-medical use, urging all Member States to comply with their treaty obligations.

12. Several speakers called for human rights-based, people-centred approaches that addressed the root causes of drug production and trafficking. Some speakers emphasized that efforts to fulfil all international drug policy commitments should be aligned with the goals and objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

13. Many speakers welcomed the “Pledge4Action” initiative as a means to mobilize concrete and impactful actions to enhance the implementation of the international drug policy commitments and address the challenges outlined in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of Our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem. Speakers provided updates on the implementation of their commitments under the “Pledge4Action” initiative across all key areas. The continued focus on thematic discussions under the Commission’s new workplan for the period 2024–2028 was welcomed by many speakers as an opportunity to address the implementation of all international drug policy commitments and respond to evolving drug-related challenges and other substantive matters.

14. A range of persistent and emerging challenges in implementing drug policies were highlighted by a number of speakers; they emphasized the evolving nature of the global drug threats. Those threats included the increasing proliferation and use of synthetic drugs, in particular synthetic opioids and cathinones, the shift of drug distribution to online platforms and the use of modern technologies for drug-related crimes. Concerns were also raised about the non-medical use of controlled medicines, the continued threat of new psychoactive substances, the risks associated with methamphetamine use, the emergence of new trafficking routes, the gaps in access to treatment and the environmental and societal impacts of illicit drug markets. An example was shared illustrating the growing challenge posed by money-laundering facilitated by modern technologies, which enabled anonymous transactions and the cross-border movement of illicit funds, thereby complicating efforts to track and disrupt drug-related financial flows. Speakers stressed the need for, inter alia, adaptive policy measures, technological innovations, stronger international cooperation, strengthened forensic capacities, and improved data collection to ensure evidence-based policymaking. The rising trend of polydrug use was identified as a challenge to traditional treatment interventions, and in that regard several speakers underscored the importance of enhanced health responses to address the consequences of synthetic drug use, in particular opioid overdoses, as well as stricter control over precursor chemicals. Concerns were also expressed about the impact of drug trafficking and organized crime on institutional stability and public security.

15. Many speakers emphasized the need for a balanced, integrated, multidisciplinary and evidence-based approach, highlighting national initiatives relating to legislation, policy development, institutional strengthening and capacity-building. Several speakers reiterated their commitment to zero-tolerance approaches to drug trafficking and the non-medical use of controlled substances, advocating for a world free from drug abuse. Several speakers underscored the importance of continuous evaluation as a means to assess the effectiveness of national policies and facilitate the exchange of best practices at the international level. The critical role of reliable data on different drug indicators in ensuring the effective implementation and assessment of drug policies was also highlighted, and emphasis was placed on the need for accurate, transparent and timely collection, analysis and sharing of data.

16. Many speakers shared insights on national demand reduction efforts, highlighting initiatives in the areas of prevention, treatment, care, recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration, as well as measures aimed at minimizing the public health and social consequences of drug abuse, referred to by many as harm reduction interventions.

17. Many speakers highlighted prevention, in particular early prevention, as a fundamental pillar of drug policies, and a strong focus was placed on national initiatives aimed at reducing the initiation of drug use and the progression to harmful patterns of drug use and drug use disorders. Many speakers shared examples of balanced approaches that integrated prevention and enforcement. Those initiatives, implemented in collaboration with municipalities, judicial partners and youth organizations, were presented as key elements of strategies to prevent the engagement of children and youth in crime.

18. The expansion of evidence-based prevention services was a recurring theme, and several speakers shared information on initiatives focused on supporting individuals, families and communities. Capacity-building programmes to enhance the capacities of the prevention workforce and strengthen quality assurance in the implementation of prevention strategies were also highlighted. Several speakers shared examples of successful outcomes of school-based programmes and the successful integration of prevention curricula, social media campaigns, media outreach efforts and public events, whereby young people and the general public had been effectively engaged in raising awareness of drug-related risks and consequences. Some speakers reported that implementing comprehensive drug demand reduction strategies had led to a better understanding of drug use disorders and had increased community engagement, as well as public interest in addiction-related expertise and certification. A number of speakers welcomed UNODC initiatives such as the Children Amplified Prevention Services (CHAMPS) initiative, which supported comprehensive prevention systems to strengthen the resilience of children.

19. Several speakers emphasized the need for accessible, high-quality treatment and rehabilitation as a key component of drug policies. Reference was made to national efforts focused on expanding evidence-based treatment, aftercare and community-based services, including targeted interventions for children and women, aligned with international standards. Some speakers highlighted efforts aimed at integrating psychosocial and medical interventions in order to provide comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation, while also ensuring the availability of those interventions in prison settings. Speakers highlighted the establishment of rehabilitation centres, including specialized facilities for children, as well as investments in capacity-building through specialized training and knowledge exchange to enhance professional expertise. Some speakers referred to comprehensive national initiatives to prevent the transmission of HIV, viral hepatitis and other infections associated with the use of drugs. Investments in evaluation, research and technology-driven interventions, including artificial intelligence-based tools and digital treatments, were also highlighted as factors contributing to more effective approaches to prevention and treatment.

20. A number of speakers reported on investments in vocational and skills development programmes, as well as partnerships with civil society organizations engaged in prevention and treatment services, as means to promote long-term recovery.

21. A number of speakers emphasized that international cooperation was essential to preventing the diversion of controlled drugs while ensuring their availability for medical and scientific purposes. Speakers highlighted the importance of sharing information on domestic regulatory frameworks and facilitating access to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for legitimate use while preventing their misuse and trafficking. In that context, several examples were shared, including with regard to the need for national policies and laws to remain adaptable to the evolving nature of drug markets and associated public health risks. In addition, the harmonization of national lists of controlled substances was highlighted as a way to prevent criminal

networks from exploiting regulatory discrepancies among jurisdictions. A number of speakers shared information on national initiatives related to the control of precursors and chemicals that were aimed at strengthening monitoring and regulation efforts in order to prevent the diversion of precursors and chemicals for illicit purposes.

22. Many speakers highlighted challenges encountered in supply reduction efforts, including the continued diversification of drug markets and the proliferation of synthetic opioids and cathinones, which posed significant risks to public health and security. Many speakers shared information on successful investigations, drug seizures and actions leading to the dismantling of organized criminal groups, including statistics on drug seizures. Some speakers detailed successful law enforcement operations, joint enforcement operations, expanded exchanges of intelligence and strengthened bilateral and regional partnerships to address illicit drug flows, which in some cases had resulted in significant seizures of controlled substances. A number of speakers highlighted ongoing efforts to enhance drug enforcement activities, including through the integration of advanced detection technologies, intelligence-sharing mechanisms and inter-agency collaboration, as well as by strengthening the enforcement of customs laws and regulations at key entry points and deploying high-performance scanning equipment and specialized enforcement units to counter increasingly sophisticated smuggling methods. With regard to addressing money-laundering facilitated by modern technologies, speakers reported on national measures such as financial intelligence-related collaboration, banking surveillance and literacy programmes.

23. Other reported interventions focused on how to address the links between drug-related offences and other crimes and how to achieve better results in the investigation of drug-related cases, with particular emphasis on addressing illicit financial flows, money-laundering and asset forfeiture. Strengthening financial investigations and enhancing cooperation between drug control and financial intelligence units were highlighted as key measures to dismantle drug-related criminal networks. The importance of addressing the challenges posed by the criminal misuse of virtual currencies as part of money-laundering schemes and in view of the association of such currencies with several predicate offences, including drug-trafficking, was highlighted.

24. Several speakers emphasized the need for long-term, sustainable alternative development programmes, highlighting community empowerment as a key strategy in reducing the illicit cultivation of and trafficking in drugs. Speakers shared examples of initiatives and national strategies aimed at supporting cultivators in transitioning to licit crop production, including by promoting sustainable livelihoods through alternative crops such as rice, cocoa, coffee, potatoes and tomatoes, as well as addressing vulnerabilities in urban populations – particularly among adolescents – to prevent the non-medical use of drugs and involvement in microtrafficking.

25. Recognizing the complex and multifaceted nature of drug-related challenges, speakers emphasized the need for strengthened cooperation and coordination among national authorities at all levels. In addition, the importance of international, regional and bilateral collaboration was underscored, and the principle of common and shared responsibility was reaffirmed. In that context, regional cooperation and meetings were highlighted as key platforms for facilitating intelligence-sharing, exchanging best practices and coordinating enforcement efforts. In addition, some speakers drew attention to the impact of the world drug problem on transit countries. A group of speakers called on Member States to refrain from unilateral measures that would undermine multilateralism and impede international cooperation on drug-related matters, stressing the importance of adhering to the Charter of the United Nations and international legal obligations. In response, it was noted that sanctions and restrictions, implemented in full conformity with international law, could serve as lawful and effective tools to promote peace and security.

26. The importance of early warning systems was underscored, and speakers called for Member States to utilize existing tools to detect and respond swiftly to emerging

drug-related threats. Strengthening those systems was recognized as essential to anticipating shifts in drug markets, identifying new psychoactive substances and mitigating public health and security risks before they escalate. Speakers also shared information on national efforts to enhance institutional capacities, including the establishment of forensic laboratories to improve drug analysis and detection and the creation of intelligence centres to strengthen inter-agency coordination. The use of advanced technologies, such as data integration systems, predictive analytics, artificial intelligence and information security tools, was highlighted as a means to enhance real-time monitoring and decision-making.

27. Many speakers also stressed the importance of ensuring the meaningful participation of civil society, the scientific community, communities, local stakeholders and affected populations in the development, implementation and evaluation of drug policies.

28. Meeting the need for enhanced technical assistance and resource mobilization was widely emphasized as a critical factor in strengthening responses to drug-related challenges. Many speakers underscored the importance of capacity-building efforts aimed at equipping law enforcement agencies, national laboratories, healthcare professionals and civil society service providers with the necessary skills and tools.

29. Many speakers reaffirmed their strong support for UNODC and its central role in coordinating international drug policy responses, providing technical assistance and capacity-building and conducting research to help Member States effectively address drug-related challenges.

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