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### **Statement submitted by World Federation Against Drugs (WFAD), 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.

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

\*\* Issued without formal editing.



# Strengthening the Role of Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery NGOs in Global Drug Policy and Human Rights Debates<sup>1</sup>

## I. Introduction

The global landscape of drug policy and human rights discussions continues to evolve, emphasizing the importance of a balanced approach that integrates prevention, treatment, and recovery. However, the underrepresentation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in these areas remains a critical challenge. Addressing this imbalance is essential to ensuring a holistic, evidence-based response to drug-related challenges worldwide. This statement highlights the need for the inclusion of prevention, treatment, and recovery NGOs in key international platforms, outlines specific recommendations for enhancing their role, and advocates for policies that uphold human dignity and public health.

## II. The Role of Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery NGOs

NGOs specializing in prevention, treatment, and recovery play a fundamental role in reducing drug demand and mitigating the negative health and social consequences of substance use. Their work encompasses:

1. **Community-Based Prevention Initiatives** – Implementing culturally sensitive education and outreach programs to reduce drug use initiation and promote healthier and safer behaviours.
2. **Accessible Treatment Services** – Providing antiretroviral therapy (ART), rehabilitation, and psychosocial support to individuals with substance use disorders.
3. **Recovery and Reintegration Support** – Facilitating social reintegration, vocational training, and mental health services for individuals overcoming addiction.
4. **Advocacy for Holistic Drug Policies** – Promoting evidence-based policies that balance prevention, treatment, and recovery with harm reduction approaches.
5. **Addressing Stigma and Discrimination** – Combating stigma associated with substance use disorders to ensure equitable access to healthcare and rehabilitation services.

## III. Current Gaps in Representation and Participation

Despite their significant contributions, NGOs working in prevention, treatment, and recovery face considerable barriers to meaningful participation in international decision-making processes. Key challenges include:

- **Limited Representation in UN Bodies and Policy Dialogues** – Existing mechanisms for NGO engagement, such as the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) the World Health Organization (WHO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the UNAIDS, do not adequately reflect the diversity of civil society actors.
- **Insufficient Capacity-Building and Funding Opportunities** – Many NGOs lack the necessary resources and training to effectively advocate for their priorities at the international level.
- **Lack of Coordinated Advocacy** – The fragmented nature of global civil society networks limits their ability to influence drug policy discussions cohesively.

## IV. Recommendations for Enhanced Inclusion and Impact

To ensure that prevention, treatment, and recovery NGOs have a greater impact on global drug policy and human rights debates, the following actions are recommended:

### 1. Diversify NGO Representation in International Forums

- Expand the participation of prevention, treatment, and recovery NGOs in the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB), OHCHR, CND, WHO, and INCB discussions.
- Establish designated working groups within international bodies to focus on prevention, treatment, and recovery.

### 2. Advocate for Human Rights-Based Drug Policies

- Ensure that international drug policies recognize the right to health and dignity, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the WHO's global health framework.
- Support gender-sensitive and trauma-informed approaches that address the specific needs of women and marginalized communities.

### 3. Facilitate Sustainable Resource Mobilization

- Establish partnerships with private and public donors (including the Member States) to secure long-term funding for prevention, treatment, and recovery programs and other initiatives, such as UNODC's CHAMPS initiative.
- Provide financial assistance and travel grants to support NGO participation in key policy dialogues.

## V. Conclusion

A balanced, evidence-based global drug policy must include robust support for prevention, treatment, and recovery initiatives. Ensuring the systematic inclusion of NGOs working in these fields within international policy and human rights discussions will lead to more comprehensive strategies that protect public health, uphold human rights (including the rights of children and young people), and promote social reintegration and recovery. We urge international bodies, Member States, and civil society networks to adopt the recommendations outlined in this statement to foster a more inclusive and effective global response to substance use challenges.

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<sup>1</sup> World Federation Against Drugs (special ECOSOC status since 2016):  
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