

Resolution 62/2

Enhancing detection and identification capacity for synthetic drugs for non-medical use by increasing international collaboration

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Recognizing that the world drug problem, in particular the significant dangers posed by the illicit production and manufacture of and trafficking in synthetic drugs for non-medical use, including new psychoactive substances, synthetic opioids and amphetamine-type stimulants, continues to constitute a serious threat to public health and safety and to the well-being of humanity,

Gravely concerned by the increasing threat posed to public health and safety by synthetic drugs for non-medical use, including new psychoactive substances, synthetic opioids and amphetamine-type stimulants, and by the growing complexity and sophistication of the methods employed by transnational criminal groups, drug traffickers and other criminal groups to expand the illicit markets for those substances, including the misuse of information and communication technologies and the distribution of those substances through the international mail system and express consignment carrier shipments,

Recalling its resolution 57/9 of 21 March 2014, in which the Commission recognized the continued value to Member States of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime global Synthetics Monitoring: Analysis, Reporting and Trends programme, in particular the early warning advisory on new psychoactive substances, with regard to identifying, monitoring and reporting on a large number of new psychoactive substances,

Recalling also its resolution 58/9 of 13 March 2015 on promoting the role of drug analysis laboratories worldwide and reaffirming the importance of the quality of the analysis and results of such laboratories,

Recognizing the significant challenges for law enforcement and public health authorities posed by the rapid development of new synthetic drugs for non-medical use that have been illicitly produced, illicitly manufactured or otherwise obtained for illicit purposes, including new psychoactive substances, synthetic opioids and amphetamine-type stimulants, and the risks posed when authorities cannot accurately detect, identify or analyse those substances, including the health risk posed when persons are exposed to dangerous substances that cannot be identified,

Noting the risk posed to persons working on the front line of drug control efforts, including law enforcement and border control officers, and other relevant personnel, who may come into contact with such dangerous substances, and the importance of having appropriate scientific evidence-based frameworks to support good health and safety practices among persons who may be exposed to those substances in their work,

Recalling the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”,¹ in particular the following operational recommendations:

¹ Ibid.

(a) The recommendations on ensuring the availability of and access to controlled substances exclusively for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion;

(b) The recommendations on supply reduction and related measures, including the recommendation to strengthen coordinated border management strategies, as well as the capacity of border control, law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, including through technical assistance, upon request, including and where appropriate, the provision of equipment and technology, along with necessary training and maintenance support, in order to prevent, monitor and counter trafficking in drugs trafficking in precursors and other drug-related crimes such as trafficking in firearms, illicit financial flows, smuggling of bulk cash and money-laundering;

(c) The recommendations on cross-cutting issues in addressing and countering the world drug problem, including the recommendations on addressing new psychoactive substances, amphetamine-type stimulants, the diversion of precursors and pre-precursors and the non-medical use and misuse of pharmaceuticals containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances,

Noting the recommendation in that outcome document on enhancing the capacity of relevant agencies in forensic science in the context of drug investigations, including the quality and capacity of drug analysis laboratories to gather, preserve and present forensic evidence to effectively prosecute drug-related offences, through considering, inter alia, the provision of advanced detection equipment, scanners, testing kits, reference samples, forensic laboratories and training, as requested,

Recalling that in its resolution 57/9 it invited Member States to take appropriate measures to strengthen international cooperation in the exchange of information regarding the identification of new psychoactive substances, and recalling its resolution 56/4 of 15 March 2013 on enhancing international cooperation in the identification and reporting of new psychoactive substances,

Recalling also its resolutions 60/4 of 17 March 2017 on preventing and responding to the adverse health consequences and risks associated with the use of new psychoactive substances, 60/9 of 17 March 2017 on enhancing the capacity of law enforcement, border control and other relevant agencies to counter illicit drug trafficking through training and 61/8 of 16 March 2018 on enhancing and strengthening international and regional cooperation and domestic efforts to address the international threats posed by the non-medical use of synthetic opioids,

Emphasizing the need to promote the provision of technical assistance to States, in particular developing countries, including in the form of support and training, and where appropriate, the provision of equipment and technology, to detect, identify and forensically test synthetic drugs for non-medical use and to enhance the capability of law enforcement and border control authorities to detect, identify and prevent trafficking, inter alia, in synthetic opioids,

Acknowledging the outcomes and benefits of approaches to countering drug and precursor diversion and trafficking that involve the cooperation and coordination of competent authorities, including cooperation and coordination between law enforcement and border control authorities,

Reiterating the importance of approaches to countering drug and precursor trafficking that involve the cooperation and coordination among competent authorities, as well as industry and the private sector, while

highlighting the importance of the current International Narcotics Control Board platforms for real-time information exchange, specifically the Project Ion Incident Communication System, the global Operational Partnerships to Interdict Opioids' Illicit Distribution and Sales project and the Precursors Incident Communication system, as well as the current work of the global Synthetics Monitoring: Analysis, Reporting and Trends programme,

Noting the importance of collaboration and the exchange of data on synthetic drugs for non-medical use and their precursors between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Narcotics Control Board and Member States, and noting with concern the report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2018² and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Global SMART update on understanding the global opioid crisis,³ both of which highlighted the growing risks to public health posed by the emergence of new synthetic opioids with high potency, as evidenced by, inter alia, increased rates of non-medical use of opioids and the resulting increased number of overdoses and overdose deaths involving opioids in some regions,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/32 of 22 July 2003, in which the Council urged relevant international organizations, in consultation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to provide financing and other support for the training of experts in various subjects related to addressing and countering the world drug problem, with particular emphasis on preventive measures and areas such as precursor control, drug-testing laboratories and laboratory quality assurance,

Emphasizing the importance of ensuring that a human rights perspective and a gender perspective are incorporated in training for law enforcement, border control and other relevant authorities on countering the illicit production and manufacturing of and trafficking in synthetic opioids for non-medical use and preventing the diversion of precursors to illicit trade,

1. *Calls upon* Member States to take, as appropriate, additional steps to foster bilateral, regional and international efforts to support law enforcement, border control and other authorities involved in drug control, including, subject to national priorities, by providing technical assistance and training to enhance forensic detection and border management capability in relation to illicit drugs and precursors with a view to identifying and preventing the illicit production and manufacture of and trafficking in synthetic drugs for non-medical use, including new psychoactive substances, synthetic opioids and amphetamine-type stimulants;

2. *Encourages* Member States, within their national contexts, to develop frameworks for persons on the front line of drug control efforts, including law enforcement and border control officers, and other relevant personnel, to ensure that such officers are adequately trained and equipped to safely handle synthetic drugs; such measures may also include the provision of naloxone to front-line officers who are accidentally exposed to synthetic opioids and measures for the disposal of those drugs as described in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime *Guidelines for the Safe Handling and Disposal of Chemicals Used in the Illicit Manufacture of*

² E/INCB/2018/1.

³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Global SMART update", vol. 21 (March 2019).

Drugs,⁴ in order to safeguard such officers, other relevant personnel and the community against the harmful effects of those substances;

3. *Also encourages* Member States to consider enhancing the application of modern field identification technologies in order to improve field identification capacity and limit the exposure of front-line officers and other relevant personnel to potentially hazardous effects in handling these substances;

4. *Calls upon* Member States, in cooperation with regional and international organizations, to promote regional and international cooperation, including the sharing of best practices, to develop and deliver law enforcement and border control capability relating to synthetic drugs for non-medical use and precursors;

5. *Encourages* Member States, where appropriate, to share forensic information, through inter-agency, bilateral, regional and international mechanisms, in relation to preventing and disrupting global trafficking in synthetic drugs for non-medical use and precursors, in a manner consistent with international and domestic law;

6. *Encourages* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Narcotics Control Board, within their respective mandates, to continue to work with Member States to enhance regional and international capacity, capability and coordination, while acknowledging the continued importance of close cooperation between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Narcotics Control Board and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), within their respective mandates, to strengthen, upon request, the capacity of border control, law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, and the importance of Member States making use of readily available capabilities;

7. *Invites* Member States and other donors to consider providing extrabudgetary resources for the purposes described above, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations.

⁴ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.11.XI.14.