

Resolution 62/3

Promoting alternative development as a development-oriented drug control strategy

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Reaffirming that drug policies and programmes, including in the field of development, should be undertaken in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹ and, in particular, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, all human rights, fundamental freedoms, the inherent dignity of all individuals and the principles of equal rights and mutual respect among States, as well as the principle of common and shared responsibility, recalling the Sustainable Development Goals, and taking into account the specific situations of countries and regions,

Reaffirming also that the world drug problem should be addressed in accordance with the provisions of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1953 as amended by the 1972 Protocol,² the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971³ and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988,⁴ which, together with other relevant international instruments, constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system,

Reaffirming further the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session⁵ and the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development,⁶

Recalling General Assembly resolution [68/196](#) of 18 December 2013, in which the Assembly adopted the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development and encouraged Member States, international organizations, international financial institutions, entities and other relevant stakeholders to take them into account when designing and implementing alternative development programmes, including, as appropriate, preventive alternative development programmes,

Emphasizing that alternative development should also be considered for implementation in the framework of a sustainable crop control strategy, which may, inter alia, include eradication and law enforcement, according to the national context, in the light of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem⁷ and the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, held in 2016,⁸ and taking into consideration the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development,

Reaffirming its commitment to addressing drug-related socioeconomic issues related to the illicit cultivation of narcotic plants and the illicit

¹ General Assembly resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1019, No. 14956.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1582, No. 27627.

⁵ General Assembly resolution [S-20/2](#), annex.

⁶ General Assembly resolution [S-20/4 E](#).

⁷ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 8* (E/2009/28), chap. I, sect. C.

⁸ General Assembly resolution [S-30/1](#), annex.

manufacture and production of and trafficking in drugs through the implementation of long-term, comprehensive and sustainable development-oriented and balanced drug control policies and programmes, including alternative development and, as appropriate, preventive alternative development programmes, which are part of sustainable crop control strategies,

Recalling its resolution 61/6 of 16 March 2018, in which it requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to convene an expert group meeting in Vienna in 2018, to further the dialogue on alternative development, including preventive alternative development, as appropriate, and the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development and related commitments on alternative development and regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented, balanced drug control policy addressing socioeconomic issues, as stipulated in the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, with the aim of contributing to the high-level ministerial segment of the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Welcoming the holding of the expert group meeting on alternative development, hosted by Germany, Peru and Thailand and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna from 23 to 26 July 2018, with the participation of Member States, international organizations, representatives of civil society, experts, academia and representatives of affected communities,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁹ and stressing that the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development should be aligned with the efforts to achieve those relevant objectives within the Sustainable Development Goals that are related to the issue of alternative development, which falls within the mandate of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and that the efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing,

Reaffirming that alternative development is an important, lawful, viable and sustainable alternative to the illicit cultivation of drug crops and an effective measure to counter the world drug problem and other drug-related crime challenges, as well as a choice in favour of promoting a society free of drug abuse, that it is one of the key components of policies and programmes for reducing illicit drug production and that it is an integral part of efforts made by Governments to achieve sustainable development within their societies,

Reiterating its commitment to respecting, protecting and promoting all human rights, fundamental freedoms and the inherent dignity of all individuals and the rule of law in the development and implementation of drug policies,

Expressing its concern at the global increase in the illicit cultivation of narcotic plants,

Taking note of the Council of the European Union conclusions on alternative development, entitled “Towards a new understanding of alternative development and related development-centred drug policy interventions: contributing to the implementation of the outcome of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly held in 2016 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals”,

⁹ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#).

1. *Encourages* Member States to apply the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development¹⁰ and to take into due consideration the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, held in 2016, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”,²⁷ as well as the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem²⁶ and the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action,¹¹ when designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating alternative development programmes and projects, including, as appropriate, preventive alternative development programmes and projects;

2. *Also encourages* Member States to continue sharing lessons learned, best practices and expertise and enhancing dialogues on development-oriented drug control policies and programmes and on the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development;

3. *Underscores* that alternative development measures should be designed and implemented bearing in mind all our shared commitments;

4. *Urges* Member States to promote data collection, research and the sharing of information for identifying the root causes of illicit drug crop cultivation and other illicit drug-related activities and providing evidence, in order to identify the factors driving illicit drug crop cultivation and design better impact assessments;

5. *Urges* relevant international financial institutions, United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, as appropriate, to consider increasing their support, including through long-term and flexible funding, for the implementation of comprehensive and balanced development-oriented drug control programmes and viable economic alternatives, in particular alternative development, including, as appropriate, preventive alternative development programmes, based on identified needs and national priorities, for areas and populations affected by or vulnerable to the illicit cultivation of drug crops, with a view to its prevention, reduction and elimination, and encourages States, to the extent possible, to stay strongly committed to financing such programmes;

6. *Encourages* Member States to intensify efforts in the context of long-term and sustainable development programmes to address the most pressing drug-related socioeconomic issues, including unemployment and social marginalization, conducive to subsequent exploitation by criminal organizations involved in drug-related crime;

7. *Takes note of* the conference room paper submitted jointly by Germany, Peru and Thailand and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, entitled “The future of alternative development”,¹² which summarizes the discussions and conclusions of the expert group meeting held in Vienna from 23 to 26 July 2018, bearing in mind its non-binding nature and that it does not necessarily reflect the positions of all participants, and expresses its appreciation for the efforts of the

¹⁰ General Assembly resolution 68/196, annex.

¹¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2014, Supplement No. 8 (E/2014/28)*, chap. I, sect. C.

¹² E/CN.7/2019/CRP.2.

co-sponsors of the expert group meeting. The discussions of the experts included, but were not limited to, the following points:

(a) Alternative development not only contributes to the goal of drug crop reduction but also to the enhancement of the overall well-being of affected communities;

(b) There is a direct link between alternative development as a development-oriented drug control strategy and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal targets;

(c) Alternative development needs to be part of the broader development agenda and involve multi-agency and multidisciplinary cooperation, under the leadership of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime;

(d) There is a need for better strategic coordination as well as a more comprehensive and balanced approach to addressing alternative development in the context of drug control and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;²⁸

(e) There is a need to address the different socioeconomic realities of communities and to consider human rights and gender dimensions;

(f) As drug crop cultivation and environmental degradation are closely related, alternative development programmes should include environmental aspects;

(g) More research is necessary to identify factors driving illicit drug crop cultivation in order to design better impact assessment;

(h) There is a need to measure the outcomes of alternative development through human development indicators, in addition to the traditional law enforcement indicators;

(i) Some lessons learned from rural alternative development programmes, including preventive alternative development programmes, could be applied to development in urban settings to tackle urban drug issues;

(j) International cooperation and partnership, including among other governments, the private sector and civil society, is important in increasing financial and technical support as well as ensuring the sharing of best practices;

8. *Encourages* the development of viable economic alternatives, particularly for communities affected by or at risk of illicit cultivation of drug crops and other illicit drug-related activities in urban and rural areas, including through comprehensive alternative development programmes, and to this end encourages the consideration of development-oriented interventions, while ensuring that all individuals benefit equally from them, including through job opportunities, improved infrastructure and basic public services and, as appropriate, access and legal titles to land for farmers and local communities, which will also contribute to preventing, reducing or eliminating illicit cultivation and other drug-related activities;

9. *Encourages* Member States to promote research by States, including through cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other relevant United Nations entities and international and regional organizations, academic institutions and civil society, to better understand factors contributing to illicit crop cultivation, taking into account local and regional specificities, and to improve impact assessment of alternative development programmes, including preventive alternative development programmes, as appropriate, with a view to increasing the

effectiveness of those programmes, including through the use of relevant human development indicators, criteria related to environmental sustainability and other measurements in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, and to ensuring that the outcomes of alternative development programmes and the above-mentioned research reflect accountable use of donor funds and truly benefit the affected communities;

10. *Encourages* Member States to ensure that measures to prevent the illicit cultivation of and to eradicate plants containing narcotic and psychotropic substances, respect fundamental human rights, take due account of traditional licit uses, where there is historical evidence of such use, and of the protection of the environment, in accordance with the three international drug control conventions, and also take into account, as appropriate and in accordance with national legislation, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;¹³

11. *Also encourages* Member States to promote partnerships and innovative cooperation initiatives with the private sector, civil society and international financial institutions to create conditions more conducive to productive investments targeted at job creation in areas and among communities affected by or at risk of illicit drug cultivation, production, manufacturing, trafficking and other illicit drug-related activities in order to prevent, reduce or eliminate them, and to share best practices, lessons learned, expertise and skills in this regard;

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

13. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to report to the Commission at its sixty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

¹³ General Assembly resolution 61/295, annex.