

Joint Statement by Friends of UNODC Research at the reconvened CND/CCPCJ session on 3 December 2020

Chair,

I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of Chile, Colombia, the European Union, France, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, Sweden, Thailand, the United States of America and Singapore. We are an informal cross-regional group that supports strengthening the role of research, data and evidence-based analysis in UNODC's work and its policies.

We thank the Executive Director, H.E. Madam Ghada Waly, for presenting the UNODC Strategy 2021-2025, which will ensure that UNODC remains an effective and relevant actor in the field of drugs and crime.

We would like to highlight the **crucial significance of research** for UNODC, which generates highly respected analyses and provides critically important **evidence** to inform UNODC programmatic work.

Research should be considered as one of the **core activities** of UNODC, as mentioned in the last budget resolution as well as in the UNODC Strategy 2021-2025, and therefore should be embedded in all areas of UNODC's work.

Maintaining the integrity of research is crucial. UNODC research has to be **impartial, transparent, and based on verified and reliable data**, as well as the highest quality and scientific standards.

Research publications should benefit the countries of the respective region in assessing the national and regional drugs and crime situation, and should be prepared in **close consultation** with them, including by discussing the methodology and informing about funding issues, in order to ensure the highest standards relating to **impartiality and transparency**.

In order to ensure an appropriate level and sustainable flow of funding for research, **cost-sharing arrangements** with UNODC regional and thematic programmes, which have mandated research areas, should be explored.

Funding for UNODC must be predictable and kept as flexible as possible, including through providing core, "non-" or "soft-" earmarked funding, including through the General-Purpose Fund, to enable research and analysis to effectively support implementation of the UNODC Strategy.

As shown by the **COVID-19 pandemic**, drugs and crime threats can change rather quickly, so to maintain the role of providing timely evidence, UNODC research should invest in collecting real-time information from Member States and build on existing platforms, such as the Drug Monitoring Platform on opiates.

UNODC research should **regularly engage with Member States** to ensure the relevance of its work for their needs and priorities and in keeping up with new developments and trends in the field of drugs and crime.

UNODC research activities should reach out to **external stakeholders** to explore collaboration opportunities and secure the necessary resources for its work, including with international financial institutions, other UN entities, national, regional and international institutions, foundations, academia, relevant civil society organizations and the private sector, while retaining the highest standards relating to impartiality and transparency.

UNODC research should have as one of its main objectives to provide **technical assistance**, according to its mandate and comparative advantages, for helping Member States to strengthen their data collection and information analysis capacities.

Thank you, Chair.