

**UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov:
Statement on the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit
Trafficking - 23 June 2016**

Today is the first International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking since April's UNGASS on the world drug problem. The Outcome Document adopted at UNGASS stresses a joint commitment to counter the world drug problem, and it has helped generate a global sense of purpose against this threat that menaces millions.

Perhaps most importantly, the document made a number of concrete recommendations on the way forward. These include: exploring alternative measures to conviction or punishment where appropriate; promoting international cooperation, chasing down the financial proceeds of drug related crime; the adoption of key international instruments on organized crime, corruption and terrorism; strengthening criminal justice systems, focusing on drug prevention and treatment; including HIV and hepatitis; and upholding fundamental human rights.

UNODC's *World Drug Report 2016* advances further understanding of the problem. In alarming detail the report shows a rise in the number of problem drug users from 27 to 29 million people aged 15-64; the disastrous resurgence of heroin in some regions; the use of the "Darknet" for drug trafficking; the appalling loss of life due to overdoses, and the disproportionate impact illicit drugs have on women, among many others challenges.

Today also follows the landmark adoption last September of the 2030 development agenda. The special session gave us the tools and the commitment to fight illicit drugs; but in the 17 Goals we now have the architectural blueprint for appreciating how work against drugs, crime and corruption fits into the much wider work of sustainable development.

One of the key recommendations of this year's *World Drug Report* is that achieving sustainable development and countering the world drug problem must not exist as distant cousins. Illicit drugs threaten the security and health of people, while weakening both communities and institutions. If targets are to be achieved under Goal 3 on health, and Goal 16, on peaceful societies, as well as many other goals, drug-related development initiatives should be mainstreamed into general development efforts.

On International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, I affirm that the UN Office on Drugs and Crime will continue to work with member states and civil society to confront the world drug problem.