

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE 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 the adoption last year of the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 3 calls on countries to strengthen the prevention and treatment of narcotic drug abuse, end AIDS and combat hepatitis. Goal 16 is designed to help to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies and institutions that can address illicit drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism.

The Sustainable Development Goals also informed the deliberations of the UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem in April. They support the founding principle of the International Drug Control Conventions, which is to ensure the health and well-being of humankind. This requires a balance between interrupting drug supply and preventing and treating the harmful impact of drugs on people's health.

Addressing the world drug problem demands a considered and unified response by Governments. The illicit trade in drugs fosters transnational organized crime networks, systemic corruption and widespread violence. It is also a major public health menace. Millions of people are directly affected, especially the poor, vulnerable women and children, and those living in fragile communities.

The challenges posed by the world drug problem require a global response that is simultaneously effective, compassionate and humane. At the April Special Session on the World Drug Problem, tangible progress was made in promoting alternatives to incarceration, fortifying human rights commitments, strengthening the focus on illicit financial proceeds, and tackling corruption. On this International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, I call on countries and communities to continue to improve the lives of everyone blighted by drug abuse by integrating security and public safety with a heightened focus on health, human rights, and sustainable development.