

## European Union

### Statement on the occasion of the CND intersessional meeting

Vienna, 25 June 2018

Agenda Item 3: Preparations for the ministerial segment to be held during the sixty-second session of the Commission in 2019

Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: Bosnia and Herzegovina\*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, Liechtenstein, Montenegro\*, Ukraine, Norway.

The EU and its Member States would like to highlight the successful outcome of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the World Drug Problem held in 2016 and to stress the important progress that has been achieved in the field of drugs. By calling for a more integrated, evidence-based and balanced drug policy, UNGASS reshaped and broadened global drug policy, through putting an adequate focus on the health side of the drugs problem, including prevention, treatment, and risk and harm reduction, on vulnerable members of society, and also on the link to Human Rights and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), whilst also reaffirming the unwavering commitment to supply reduction and related measures. Therefore, we consider the UNGASS Outcome Document as a milestone and a progressive step forward in the discussions on international drug policy.

The 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action were adopted almost 10 years ago. While recognizing the value of knowing how much have been advanced in the 2009 objectives, we have to recognize also that practice (including best practices), knowledge and the threats of drugs have evolved since then. The UNGASS Outcome Document, adopted in 2016, represents the latest global consensus in drug policies and underscores the UN drug conventions as the corner stone of the international drug control system.

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\* Candidate Countries former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The EU and its Member States would also like to note that the UNGASS outcome document incorporates all major topics outlined in the 2009 Political Declaration (notably on supply reduction: with the mention of an effective law enforcement cooperation, the necessity to counter money laundering and promote judicial cooperation). It also recognizes that the drugs challenge has evolved over time and it complements the Political Declaration regarding new challenges such as new psychoactive substances and the use of the Internet in relation to drug-related activities. Also, the UNGASS outcome document builds on the Political Declaration regarding issues which have not been included before but have to be included in order to more appropriately reflect the complexity of current drugs challenges and the comprehensiveness of drug policy responses. Through implementing the UNGASS outcome document, we are effectively implementing the provisions set out in the Political Declaration, as well as addressing the general challenges and priorities for action identified in the Joint Ministerial Statement adopted at the high-level review in March 2014.

As such, the EU and its Member States firmly believe that the 2019 ministerial segment of the 62<sup>nd</sup> CND should reaffirm the UNGASS recommendations highlighted in the Outcome Document. In our opinion, there is no need to negotiate another major new policy document.

The European Union and its Member States strongly support the concrete implementation of the UNGASS Outcome Document in order, not only to continue our efforts and international cooperation on drug supply reductions, but also to strengthen the public health and human rights dimension of the world drug problem. The seven thematic areas laid down in the UNGASS Outcome Document fully correspond to the need for an integrated, evidence-based, balanced and outreaching approach to drug policy. The efforts of the international community up to and beyond 2019 should be focused on their practical implementation through the broad number of operational recommendations contained therein.

While recognizing the need for a comprehensive, balanced and outreaching approach to drug policy and our commitment to the 2009 Political Declaration and its Plan of Action, and striving to advance implementation of the UNGASS Outcome Document, the EU and its Member States would like to emphasize five of the many factors that can ensure success for this endeavour.

First, the EU fully supports the principal role of the CND and UNODC as the policymaking body and leading entity for addressing and countering the world drug problem, however it is important for the Commission and UNODC to further engage with other relevant UN entities and, within their mandates, jointly develop activities and strategies promoting implementation, including in designing and implementing integrated, evidence-based and balanced national drug strategies, policies and cooperation programmes. In this regard we would like to underline the role of WHO as the directing and coordinating authority on international health work, including public health aspects of drug policy, and we would also welcome further discussions on the issue of closer UNODC cooperation with other relevant UN entities such as UNDP, UNAIDS, OHCHR and with Interpol, including the question of proper means for an effective implementation.

Second, it is important to bring the implementation of the UNGASS Outcome Recommendations in line with the relevant goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The efforts to achieve the relevant Sustainable Developments Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem complement and reinforce each other.

Third, the 2019 global drug policy review should be cost-effective and transparent. It must include all relevant UN agencies under the auspices of UNODC and CND and involve civil society and the scientific community.

Fourth, we should not forget the crucial role of civil society in the elaboration and implementation of drug policies at the local, national and international level. Without their insightful input, we would not have enough information on daily life with drug use. Civil society should be actively engaged in the process leading towards the 2019 ministerial segment of the 62<sup>nd</sup> through the Civil Society Taskforce, and should also be invited to meaningfully participate in the Ministerial Segment of the 62<sup>nd</sup> CND session, including in its preparation.

Among other measures to actively engage civil society in this event, we support the Civil Society Taskforce intention to organise a civil society hearing in the margins of the 62nd CND session, which would report to the ministerial segment on the outcome of the Forum.

Finally, collecting relevant and reliable data is instrumental to get a better overview of the drug situation worldwide, reflected in the World Drug Report, and to provide relevant and evidence-based response to the world drug phenomenon. We encourage [and support] all possibilities to strengthen and streamline existing data collection and analysis tools at the international, regional and national level mindful of the importance of good and effective inter-agency cooperation. We welcome the ongoing work on the improvement of the quality and the effectiveness of the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ).

In order to ensure the success of this process, we propose that efforts focus in two main areas in particular:

- A: the ARQ should be updated to enable reporting on the new aspects of the drugs policy introduced by the UNGASS Outcome Document;
- B: the reporting rate to the questionnaire should be substantially enhanced by streamlining the questionnaire, where possible by resorting to already existing mechanisms, and by also investing in targeted capacity building to be able to increase compliance where limited capacity exist in order to get a better overview of the world drug problem.

Madam Chair,

The EU and its Member States consider the UNGASS Outcome Document as the pivotal reference document in the field of drugs, representing the latest global consensus. It takes into account the broad developments and emerging threats since the adoption in 2009 of the Political Declaration and its Plan of Action. The UNGASS Outcome Document builds upon the commitments made 10 years ago, while retaining what has been achieved so far. Therefore, our collective efforts should be fully invested in the implementation of the UNGASS commitments.

Thank you, Madam Chair.