



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 27 April 2021
(OR. en)

7910/21

CORDROGUE 16
SAN 224

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	EU Statement on the occasion of the 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (Vienna, 12-16 April 2021) - Agenda item 7: Inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem

Delegations will find in the Annex the above-mentioned statement as expressed on behalf of the EU and its Member States at the 64th CND Session (12-16 April 2021).



European Union

**Statement on the occasion of
the 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Vienna, 12-16 April 2021**

Agenda item 7: Inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem

Madam Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*, Albania*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Iceland+, Norway+, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Andorra and San Marino.
2. We are holding this 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, a time that has demonstrated how multilateralism, coordination of efforts and interagency cooperation are key to overcoming common threats.
3. Indeed, the coronavirus outbreak has brought major challenges to our societies and economies and put the multilateral system under serious strain. However, it has also created opportunities for new and innovative ideas and methods to strengthen our engagement to address global challenges.

* Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
+ Iceland and Norway are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

4. Five years after the adoption of the UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) 2016 Outcome Document, today's reality emphasises, more than ever, that the international community needs to step up its responses to cope with these challenges. We need to accelerate the implementation of the UNGASS 2016 Outcome Document, which remains the most comprehensive international drug policy document and which incorporates broader human rights, health and development perspectives, demonstrating a commitment to embed drug policies into the wider UN framework and the priorities of protecting human rights, promoting peace and advancing development.
5. Importantly, we believe that ensuring synergies and complementarity through inter-agency cooperation and coordination and thus engaging other United Nations bodies, including human rights bodies, in relevant drug policies issues is key to strengthening our action to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug situation.

Distinguished Chair,

6. In December 2020, the Council of the EU adopted a new Drugs Strategy 2021-2025. The Strategy fully embraces the importance of international cooperation, including at multilateral level, and of coordination among relevant actors, to address drug-related challenges. It has dedicated chapters to that effect.
7. In particular, our Strategy explicitly calls for coordination with agencies, bodies or organisations that have relevance for the drugs field within their respective mandates, and promotes coordination among actors in the UN context.

Madam Chair,

8. The EU and its Member States reaffirm the principal role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as the policymaking body of the United Nations responsible for addressing the world drug situation and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as the leading entity in the UN system in these matters, while underlining the need to enhance coherence within the United Nations system and cooperation with other intergovernmental organisations as well as civil society. We would like to emphasise also the need to strengthen cooperation between the CND and UNODC with other United Nations entities, within their respective mandates. These include the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), but also the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). It is therefore crucial for the CND and UNODC to further develop and benefit from synergies and cost-effectiveness with all relevant UN entities, as well as international and regional organisations.
9. In this regard, the EU and its Member States support that the UN System Common Position on drug policy as well as its Task Team focus on stepping up efforts to ensure that no one is left behind, in line with the overarching Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Common Position inspires us with a framework to work together to support the development and implementation of our joint commitments, including of policies that put people, health and human rights at the centre. We should now make progress on the implementation of the relevant parts of the Common Position and accelerate our efforts to ensure that no one is left behind.
10. As an example of the spirit of inter-agency cooperation, allow me to draw your attention to the International Guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy, which were released in March 2019 in Vienna. The Guidelines can in some ways provide a comprehensive set of international legal standards for guiding governments to develop human rights compliant drug policies.

Madam Chair,

11. We acknowledge and support the efforts of the WHO, UNODC and the INCB in providing technical guidance and assistance to tackle existing barriers and to guarantee the availability and accessibility of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes for those in need.
12. We also underline the value and importance of the cooperation between UNODC and WHO, in order to strengthen and expand existing cooperation on the public health dimension of the world drug situation.
13. In the same sense, the collaboration between UNODC and OHCHR is essential to bring human rights to the forefront of drug policy and to ensure that drug control efforts are effectively designed to protect people and thus promoting the health and the welfare of humankind.
14. As regards Alternative Development, which contributes to the reduction of illicit crops in the long term, and at the same time makes a clear contribution to meet the goals and indicators enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals, especially in the field of poverty reduction, food security, climate action, life on land and peace and justice, coordination between UNODC and UNDP is crucial to give a coherent response to the challenge of illicit crops, while fostering security and development.

To conclude, Madam Chair,

15. The EU and its Member States strongly encourage the contributions of relevant United Nations entities, international financial institutions and relevant regional and international organisations, within their respective mandates, to the work of the CND, to strengthen international and inter-agency cooperation and to enhance coherence within the United Nations system at all levels with regard to the world drug situation.

16. In this regard, we encourage UNODC to report, including in the World Drug Report, on collaboration and coordination across the UN system in the global efforts to implement the 2016 UNGASS recommendations, in line with the Agenda 2030, and to ensure that no one is left behind.

Thank you for your attention.
