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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Horizontal Working Party on Drugs
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Subject:	EU contribution for the UNGASS outcome document to be prepared by the UNGASS Board

Delegations will find below the EU contribution for the UNGASS outcome document to be prepared by the UNGASS Board.

European Union**contribution for the UNGASS outcome document**

The European Union and its Member States would like to put forward the following recommendations to be consequently included into the UNGASS outcome document, which should be concrete and focused, providing solid input as a stepping stone towards the target date of 2019 and beyond.

Overarching recommendations to be reflected in the preamble of the UNGASS outcome document

1. The three UN Drug Control Conventions, which provide the international legal framework for addressing the drugs phenomenon, and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights are the cornerstones of the global response to the world drug problem.
2. The promotion of health and welfare and the access to essential medicines are key objectives of the three UN Drug Conventions.
3. There is sufficient scope and flexibility within the provisions of the Conventions to accommodate a wide range of approaches to drug policy in accordance with national and regional specificities.
4. The guiding principle of drug policies should be scientific evidence and best practices supported by reliable and objective monitoring and evaluation systems.
5. In the formulation and implementation of their drug policies, States Parties should duly take into account that drug-related issues are of cross-cutting nature and that drug policies have proved to be more effective when they strike an appropriate balance between drug demand and drug supply reduction.
6. Meaningful and active participation of civil society, including the scientific community, should be promoted and encouraged in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of drug policies.

Operational recommendations to be reflected in the UNGASS outcome document

(a) Demand reduction and related measures, including prevention and treatment, as well as health-related issues; and ensuring the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion (“Drugs and Health”)

1. Dependant drug users should be first and foremost considered as people in need of attention, care and treatment to improve their health condition and social integration, tackling marginalization and stigmatization.
2. Drug demand reduction policies should be elaborated and implemented on the basis of the collection and analysis of scientific evidence and best practices.
3. National drug strategies should guarantee wide and non-discriminatory access to prevention, early intervention, risk and harm reduction, diagnosis, treatment and care, rehabilitation, social reintegration and recovery (including housing and employment support), and support services relating notably to blood-borne diseases associated with drug use, but not limited to HIV and viral hepatitis for drug users.
4. There is a need to improve the availability and effectiveness of evaluated and evidence based prevention measures to achieve a reduction in demand in various settings and target groups.
5. The availability and coverage of risk and harm reduction measures should be widely increased, due to its prominent role in minimising health and social consequences of drug use and in preventing and reducing drug-related deaths and notably blood-borne diseases.
6. Access to different treatment options, such as opioid substitution treatment, should be expanded, given that available scientific evidence strongly supports their efficiency. Research in the field of drug treatments should be encouraged and promoted.

7. Access to drug treatment services and other health care measures in prisons needs to be substantially improved, guaranteeing drug users during imprisonment and after release continuity of treatment, with the aim of achieving a quality of care equivalent to that provided in the community.
8. Access to and availability of controlled medicines should be improved, while unnecessary obstacles to access to essential medicines should be avoided.
9. The international scheduling of substances at the CND should prioritise scientific evidence provided by the WHO recommendations, in order to ensure that scheduling decisions do not undermine public health objectives.
10. States Parties should recognize the important roles of the World Health Organization, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in ensuring the adequate availability and access of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion and misuse.

(b) Supply reduction and related measures; responses to drugs-related crime; countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation (“Drugs and Crime”)

International drug supply reduction should be promoted by:

1. encouraging law enforcement authorities to work in partnership with public health institutions to achieve better community safety as well as health outcomes;
2. intelligence-sharing, closer cooperation between existing law enforcement platforms and the exchange of best practices;
3. adopting preventive measures to help address the vulnerabilities that drive, enable and perpetuate organised crime;
4. strengthening of international counter-narcotics and border control capacities and developing expertise of origin and transit countries;

5. implementation of law enforcement and judicial cooperation mechanisms and mutual legal assistance instruments applicable to drug trafficking and related crimes, while ensuring that the strengthening of international cooperation and intelligence sharing do not undermine international human rights standards;
6. raising awareness and strengthening the technical capacity of judges, public prosecutors and law enforcement officials in the field of drugs, as well as creating, strengthening or developing the mechanisms for the identification, tracing, freezing, seizure and confiscation of financial assets, property, equipment or other instrumentalities obtained through or derived from drug trafficking and related crimes;
7. improving monitoring systems capable of assessing the magnitude of the drug market, new threats and developments.

(c) Cross-cutting issues: Drugs and Human Rights, Youth, Women, Children and Communities

1. States Parties should consider abolishing the death penalty in all circumstances, including for drug-related offences, and implement effective drugs policies based on respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, solidarity, the rule of law and human rights.
2. States Parties should ensure that their legal framework for drug-related offences is in line with international recommendations concerning the principle of proportionality.
3. States Parties should consider developing and implementing, when appropriate, alternatives to incarceration and coercive sanctions that are applicable to persons who have committed drug-related offences of a minor, non-violent nature, with a view of promoting their rehabilitation and social reintegration.
4. There is a need to integrate a gender perspective into drug policies, both regarding demand and supply, by ensuring that national strategies and plans promote the full participation, protection and access to treatment, harm reduction and related services for women.
5. Prevention strategies should also take into account the rights of children and young people to be protected from the dangers associated with drug use.

(d) Cross-cutting issues: New challenges, threats and realities in preventing and addressing the world drug problem in compliance with relevant international law, including the three drug control conventions; strengthening the principle of common and shared responsibility and international cooperation

New psychoactive substances

1. The UNODC Early Warning Advisory on New Psychoactive Substances should be further developed and strengthened, while ensuring closer collaboration and developing synergies with regional centres such as the EMCDDA.
2. States Parties should support the international scheduling system by supplying data to the World Health Organisation to support risk assessment procedures and evidence based recommendations.
3. Law enforcement cooperation and the exchange of information and operational data on NPS, such as through the International Narcotics Control Board's Project ION, should be enhanced.
4. Exchange of data, experience and best practice between UNODC and other regional organisations, such as EU/EMCDDA, should be intensified.
5. States Parties should share information on effective prevention, treatment and legislative responses to this threat to promote a balanced, evidence-based response.

The use of Internet

1. States Parties should respond swiftly and effectively to the emerging threat posed by the illicit sale of drugs and new psychoactive substances over the Internet and enhance international cooperation in tackling this new challenge.
2. States Parties should examine opportunities for using the internet to advance treatment and prevention objectives.

The use of alternative precursor chemicals

1. States Parties should take into account the growing threat stemming from substitute or alternative precursor chemicals used to replace traditional precursors under international control in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. To this end, a better implementation of the existing legal provisions, stemming from the requirements set out in the 1988 Convention, and an increased use of the available tools should be pursued in order to prevent the diversion of these substances.
2. Interagency cooperation and cooperation between authorities and industry should be further strengthened.

(e) Alternative development; regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented, balanced drug control policy; addressing socioeconomic issues

1. Viable economic alternatives to illicit cultivation of crops in source countries should be elaborated, developed and implemented in close cooperation with local, national and international actors.
2. Drug issues being interlinked with sustainable development, a holistic approach of rural development for drug crop areas is required, that does not only seek to replace illicit drug crops, but which addresses the framework conditions that enable the emergence of illicit drug economies.
3. States Parties should be encouraged to significantly increase long-term investment in sustainable crop control strategies targeting the illicit cultivation of crops.

The European Union and its Member States reiterate their commitment to provide further inputs as regards the preparation process for the UNGASS 2016.