



Contribution of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to the Economic and Social Council Integration Segment addressing the theme “Innovative communities: leveraging technology and innovation to build sustainable and resilient societies”

This contribution is submitted on behalf of H.E. Ambassador Alicia Buenrostro Massieu (Mexico), the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) at its 61st session, and has been prepared in response to a letter from the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council inviting the Commission to provide substantive inputs in preparation for the Integration Segment on “**Innovative communities: leveraging technology and innovation to build sustainable and resilient societies**”, which will convene under the auspices of ECOSOC at UN Headquarters in New York from 1 to 3 May 2018.

As the main policymaking body of the United Nations with prime responsibility for drug control matters, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, touching upon a number of specific goals and targets. From illicit cultivation and production to trafficking and drug abuse, the world drug problem, with all its ramifications is intertwined with a vast array of social, economic and environmental issues. The importance of this interaction is increasingly being recognized by the international community. The outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem (UNGASS), held in April 2016, highlights these important linkages and notes that efforts to achieve the SDGs and to effectively address the world drug problem were complementary and mutually reinforcing.

CND’s work is based on the principle of common and shared responsibility and it addresses different aspects of the world drug problem in an inclusive and comprehensive manner, thereby encouraging all relevant UN entities and specialized agencies, regional organizations as well as civil society and academia to actively contribute to its work. In addition, the CND has further been enhancing its cooperation with other functional commissions of the ECOSOC, in particular with the Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations Statistical Commission, and underlines the important role that can be played by the private sector.

The CND is taking action to making the implementation of the UNGASS outcome document (www.ungass2016.org), and its over 100 operational recommendations, a truly “joint effort”, also with a view to supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, thereby promoting a balanced, rights-based, comprehensive approach. Living up to the 2030 commitments requires the international community to jointly address challenges, including those related to the world drug problem.

In this regard, both the Commission and the General Assembly have reiterated that the efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address and counter the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing, underlined that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should contribute to the global follow-up and support the thematic review of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals related to its mandate, and in this regard decided to continue to provide input to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, including by providing relevant

data, as implementation of the recommendations contained in the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly may contribute to the attainment of the related Sustainable Development Goals.

A dedicated website has therefore been created to showcase the contributions the CND is making to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/commissions-2030.html>.

The use of technology to effectively enhance resilience and manage risks is also a key element in the Commission's efforts to address and counter the world drug problem. The CND's policy documents and resolutions clearly underline its strong commitment to promoting the implementation of a broad range of interventions conducive to building sustainable and resilient societies and increasing resilience to drug use, in particular among children and young people, targeting the most vulnerable members of society.

At its 59th session in March 2016, the Commission adopted resolution 59/6, focused on promoting prevention strategies and policies, reiterating the importance of implementing prevention measures to strengthen resilience among youth and children, encouraging the promotion of healthy lifestyles, such as through physical activity, sport and recreation programmes, the development of social skills and other protective factors, the promotion of education and awareness programmes in multiple settings, involving families, teachers, students, health professionals, community leaders and social workers.

Enhancing resilience – the use of the Internet for drug prevention

While in relation to the world drug problem the use of the Internet might predominately be associated with illicit activities, including drug trafficking, the Commission also promotes the use of the Internet, social media and other platforms, for demand reduction efforts. In its resolution 58/3, for example, the Commission encouraged Member States to develop and implement, prevention strategies, programmes and measures aimed at protecting children and young people from the potential risk associated with the illicit sale and purchase of internationally or nationally controlled substances and of new psychoactive substances via the Internet, including via social media and other social networks.

The use of the internet for prevention purposes is further highlighted in Chapter I of the UNGASS outcome document, with Member States committing to increase the availability, coverage and quality of prevention measures and tools that target relevant age and risk groups in multiple settings, through drug abuse prevention initiatives including by using the Internet, social media and other online platforms. During the Commission's thematic discussions on the practical implementation of the UNGASS outcome document, Member States shared good practices in using the Internet for drug prevention activities. In particular, social media is being considered by many delegations as an important tool to reach in particular youth, including those young people outside of the school system.

At the occasion of the UNGASS in April 2016, UNODC, WHO and the governments of France and Sweden launched the "Listen First" campaign (<http://www.unodc.org/listenfirst>), an initiative aimed at increasing support for prevention of drug use that is based on science and is thus an effective investment in the well-being of children and youth, their families and their communities. Many Commission's Members have since joined the initiative, benefitting from the social media and multimedia material provided to implement the campaign at the national level.

Managing risks through early warning systems

With a view to managing risks through technology, the Commission strongly promotes the use of early warning systems as well as international electronic import and export authorization systems. In the UNGASS outcome document, Member States underscored the importance of strengthening the exchange of information and, as appropriate, drug-related intelligence and analysis-sharing to ensure

effective policymaking and interventions, including through UNODC multilateral portals and tools, such as the Global SMART (Synthetics Monitoring: Analyses, Reporting and Trends) Programme. These tools support Member States by serving as a reference point and platform for collating and coordinating existing information at the global level; providing knowledge and reference material; showing a real-time picture on the global emergence of illicit substances, including new psychoactive substances, as well as providing information on the different types of legislation in place around the world.

Innovative partnerships and community involvement

Also in the field of alternative development, technology and innovative partnerships play an important role. In the UNGASS outcome document Chapter VII, Member States agreed to promoting partnerships and innovative cooperation initiatives with the private sector, civil society and international financial institutions to create conditions more conducive to productive investments targeted at job creation in areas and among communities affected by or at risk of illicit drug cultivation, production, manufacturing, trafficking and other illicit drug-related activities.

UNGASS also targeted the socioeconomic issues in relation to comprehensive and balanced development-oriented drug policies and viable economic alternatives, with Member States committing to implement comprehensive strategies aimed at alleviating poverty and strengthening the rule of law, accountable, effective and inclusive institutions and public services and institutional frameworks, as appropriate, and by promoting sustainable development aimed at enhancing the welfare of the affected and vulnerable population through licit alternatives. The need to consider the development of sustainable urban development initiatives for those affected by illicit drug-related activities to foster public participation in crime prevention, community cohesion, protection and safety and to stimulate innovation, entrepreneurship and employment; was also highlighted in the outcome document.

At the recommendation of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the General Assembly adopted with resolution 68/196, the United Nations Guiding Principle on Alternative Development, which inter alia call for the involvement of local communities and relevant organizations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all alternative development programmes in order to truly reflect the needs of targeted communities. The guiding principles further underline that alternative development programmes should include measures to protect the environment at the local level, according to national and international law and policies, through the provision of incentives for conservation, proper education and awareness programmes so that the local communities can improve and preserve their livelihoods and mitigate negative environmental impacts.

As negotiated within the CND and adopted by the General Assembly in December 2017, resolution 72/197 focuses on further promoting the implementation of the Guiding Principles, thereby underlining the importance of empowering and encouraging ownership by local communities, including women, children and young people, taking into account their specific needs, and on strengthening local capacities, as ensuring the effective cooperation of all stakeholders in the entire alternative development process is crucial for the success of alternative development, thereby contributing to building sustainable and resilient communities.