



CHAPTER EIGHT

COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

AFGHANISTAN	EGYPT	POLAND
ALGERIA	FRANCE	REPUBLIC OF KOREA
ANGOLA	GERMANY	RUSSIAN FEDERATION
AUSTRALIA	GUATEMALA	SAINT VINCENT & THE GRENADINES
AUSTRIA	HUNGARY	SPAIN
BELGIUM	INDIA	SURINAME
BENIN	INDONESIA	TAJIKISTAN
BOLIVIA	IRAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF	THAILAND
BRAZIL	ISRAEL	TOGO
CAMEROON	ITALY	TURKEY
CANADA	JAPAN	TURKMENISTAN
CHINA	KAZAKHSTAN	UKRAINE
COLOMBIA	MEXICO	UNITED KINGDOM
CROATIA	NAMIBIA	UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
CUBA	NETHERLANDS	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
CZECH REPUBLIC	NIGERIA	URUGUAY
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO	PAKISTAN	ZIMBABWE
DENMARK	PERU	

PURVIEW OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) is the central policymaking body of the United Nations on drug-related matters. As a functional Commission of the Economic and Social Council, CND monitors the implementation of the three international drug control conventions and is empowered to consider all matters pertaining to the aim of the conventions, including the scheduling of substances to be brought under international control. It also advises on all matters pertaining to the control of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors. CND submits reports to the Economic and Social Council on its proposals to strengthen the international drug control system.

Website: www.unodc.org/

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON THE WORLD SITUATION REGARDING DRUG TRAFFICKING

From opium to cocaine, the production and trafficking of illicit drugs netted over \$320 billion in 2014. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) defines drug trafficking as a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws. Increased drug trafficking, particularly along southern maritime routes, has presented the Economic and Social Council's Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) with a new set of challenges. Both a 2014 report from the Brookings Institution and the World Drug Report noted an increase in seizures of heroin (originating from Afghanistan) along the southern coasts of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan and down to the coastal regions of Africa, trafficking through the Balkans to Western Europe and the Russian Federation increased as well. Worldwide opium trafficking—from drugs originating in Southeast Asia—was also cause for concern.

While the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea gives States a mandate to act in response to threats to global trade, the

authority to deal with narcotics trafficking is less clear. The Convention does not outline specifics for dealing with narcotics trafficking, and it remains unclear who is responsible for prosecution: the States to whom that stretch of sea belongs or the perpetrator's country of origin. Furthermore, in international waters that lack clear oversight and patrol, there is even less clarity regarding who should capture and prosecute traffickers. Even so, CND and Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) officials note that there is a known relationship between narcotics trafficking, the funding of terrorist activity, political instability and disruptions to legal trade. These disruptions are global, not just regional in nature.

In 2009, the fifty-second session of CND adopted the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation Towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, reaffirming CND's responsibility to monitor the state of the world's production and trade of illicit drugs, including narcotics, and their attempts to combat this. The Plan of Action focuses on three facets of drug control efforts: demand, supply and money laundering. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), under the governance of the Commission, acts as an international repository of counter-drug information and also is tasked with supporting Member States in implementing the structures needed to contribute to counter-trafficking efforts. The International Narcotics Control Board ensures Member States conform to the drug-related treaties and agreements to which they are parties. While these oversight boards and committees often focus on States and their involvement in narcotic trafficking, non-State actors are often the perpetrators; they are much more difficult to identify, monitor and capture.

In conjunction with UNODC, the Combined Maritime Forces began a series of meetings in 2014 to establish stronger partnerships; these meetings also focused on increasing United Nations support for CMF's work in counter-trafficking through information sharing, security and global cooperation. At a special event on maritime crime in September 2014, UNODC officials noted that the inability to prosecute traffickers



remains problematic. The CMF confiscated over 4,200 kilograms of heroin between 2013 and 2014 but, because the seizures were in international waters, officials were required to let the traffickers go free. The Indian Ocean in particular has seen a sharp increase in trafficking activity; the production and transport of chemical precursors is occurring at higher rates than previous years. According to UNODC, narcotics bound for Africa, Europe and Asia have increased the trafficking activity from the Makran coast in Pakistan to East Africa, with interim transfers to smaller vessels that are harder to detect.

Despite these concerns, combating narcotics trafficking has seen some success: the Maritime Crime Programme continues to work closely with East African States to successfully prosecute identified pirates and traffickers. It has also been working with countries of concern to develop programs to stop the flow of drugs from entering maritime routes—in other words, stopping drug trafficking at the borders of originating countries. These programs include information sharing, joint investigations and legal responses at a State and regional level. In particular, the Seychelles, Ecuador and Cuba have seen a reduction in drug trafficking due to heavy maritime patrols, mobile radar technology and bilateral counter-trafficking efforts. Other States have attempted stronger yet more controversial measures, including the death penalty for convicted traffickers. These attempts, however, have been criticized internationally as States and leaders have questioned whether drug offenses meet the threshold of the “most serious or extraordinary crimes” for which the death penalty may be applicable. There is also little proof that such measures have been successful deterrents.

Even with this balanced approach, efforts to control the drug problem remain complicated. Movements are active in nearly all regions of the globe to legalize certain drugs, especially cannabis. However, political instability and underdevelopment both contribute to the illicit drug trade and inhibit efforts to detain and prosecute traffickers, particularly in international waters with no set jurisdiction. This lack of oversight and confusion regarding prosecution mean current and future efforts need to focus on enforcement capacity in international waters, with coordination among other drug and crime prevention organizations on State and regional levels. Special attention must also be paid to countries lacking political and social infrastructures, as they will require international support for enforcement and deterrence of activities; without this support, non-State actors and individuals will continue to profit off the illicit drug trade, creating further political instability in already fragile regions. The future of the world’s drug problems will require a balanced approach and coordinated effort of global governance.

Questions to consider from your government’s perspective on this issue include the following:

- To what degree are individual Member States responsible for illegal drug activity within their own borders, before it reaches international waters? And how can the United Nations respect the national boundaries and laws of Member States while effectively combating the international drug problem?
- How can the United Nations encourage cooperation between organizations dealing with drugs and crime, and those dealing with development, humanitarian assistance and sociopolitical stability?
- What, if any, changes should be made to the international agreements to establish a mechanism for drug trafficking prosecutions?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Combined Maritime Forces (2014). UNODC Visits CMF to Discuss Counter Narcotics Fight. 28 January.
- Commission on Narcotic Drugs (2015). Political Declarations on the World Drug Problem.
- Felbab-Brown, Vanda (2014). No Easy Exit: Drugs and Counternarcotics Policies in Afghanistan. Brookings Institution.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2014). To stop impunity on high seas, drug traffickers must be prosecuted, says UNODC Chief.
- U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (2013). International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR).

UN DOCUMENTS

- United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime (2014). World Drug Report.
- United Nations, General Assembly (1991). United Nations International Drug Control Programme. A/RES/46/104.
- United Nations, General Assembly (2011). International cooperation against the world drug problem. A/RES/65/233.
- United Nations, General Assembly (2009). International cooperation against the world drug problem. A/RES/64/182.
- United Nations, General Assembly (2008). International cooperation against the world drug problem. A/RES/63/197.
- United Nations, Economic and Social Council (2011). Support for the development and implementation of an integrated approach to programme development at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. E/CN.15/2011/L.9.
- United Nations, Economic and Social Council (1999). Review of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme: strengthening the United Nations machinery for international drug control within the scope of the existing international drug control treaties and in accordance with the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations. E/Res/1999/30.
- United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988.
- Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971.
- Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982.

ADDITIONAL WEB RESOURCES

- www.incb.org/incb/index.html
- www.unodc.org/unodc/index.html
- <http://www.interpol.int/en>
- <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/index.html>
- <http://combinedmaritimeforces.com/>

SUPPORTING RECOVERY FROM SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

Substance use disorder, or a dependence on drugs and alcohol, is a serious health issue that affects people across the world. It is an issue that knows no borders and that impacts socio-economic development in all Member States, particularly middle and lower income countries. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates there are over 250 million users of illicit drugs worldwide, yet only 4.9 million of these users have access to drug-dependence treatment and care. While users may recognize their drug or alcohol dependence, fear of discrimination and the generalized stigma associated with substance



use disorders often prevent users from seeking out the help they need for recovery. Although major advances have been made by the international community to fight the world drug problem itself, there continues to be a significant deficit in support for recovery for substance use disorders.

The United Nations has been addressing the world drug problem since its inception and has produced three major conventions addressing the control of drugs: the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol; the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971; and the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. These Conventions build upon each other to address intervention and control measures along with the issue of drug trafficking. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) was created as a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to assist with the implementation of these Conventions.

In addition to these major drug Conventions, two additional political declarations addressing the world's drug problem have been passed by the United Nations. The Political Declaration and Plan of Action of 1998 and 2009 both focus on international cooperation to combat the world drug problem and outline specific goals to reduce the supply and demand for illicit drugs on the world market. In 2014, CND conducted a high-level review of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action at which they adopted a Joint Ministerial Statement continuing to focus on demand and supply reduction along with countering money-laundering and promoting judicial support to enhance international cooperation.

In the same year, at the 57th session of CND, the body passed a resolution titled Supporting Recovery from Substance Use Disorders. This marked the first time in the Commission's 50-year history that the specific issue of recovery had been addressed. The resolution focused primarily on addressing chronic relapse conditions and introducing recovery support initiatives, noting the importance of these issues to help prevent relapse. The resolution also expressed the importance of ending the stigma and discrimination toward those in recovery, in addition to the need for the international community to recognize substance use disorder as a public health issue. As the drug trade is an international issue, a specific focus was placed on international exchange and collaboration of the best practices for recovery support initiatives. The resolution called for several actions to be taken by Member States, including an improved understanding of substance use disorders, reforming applicable national policies and a continued effort by the international community to gather scientific evidence to support recovery. Moreover, there was a call for UNODC to spread information globally on evidence-based recovery support initiatives.

In 2015, UNODC launched Treatnet, an initiative which works "together for universal access to evidence-based, comprehensive and ethical drug dependence treatment and care." Treatnet currently has a presence in 27 countries in Africa, Central Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. By focusing on advocacy, capacity building and service improvement, Treatnet works within the UNODC to achieve the following goals: increase access to treatment services; reduce the consequences of drug use and dependence; and support staff in the countries in which they are based, to take ownership of the issue and implement best practices. At its core, Treatnet is committed to removing barriers to low-cost, effective drug treatment facilities.

CND is currently preparing for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem, which will take place in 2016. This Special Session will focus on the goals outlined in the 2009 Political Declaration and Action Plan and the Joint Ministerial Statement that Member States are expected to achieve by 2019.

While strides have been made in the area of drug use and trafficking, it remains clear that substance use disorders and recovery need a far more prominent place in international discussions on drugs. Developing countries face greater challenges, as funding for programs and informational distribution can be extremely tight or non-existent. Additionally, the stigma attached to substance use disorders and addiction in general needs to be combatted on a national and international level; otherwise, individuals suffering from these afflictions will not participate in programs or assistance, even if available. Lack of resources coupled with this stigma creates an environment that makes recovery difficult. Geographic location and individual's inability to travel to available programs presents an additional barrier.

As this is an international issue, Member States must work together to share information, suggestions and resources. Creating informed citizens is the first step in addressing substance use disorders and recovery, followed by effective, well-funded programs to assist those who desire to provide a better life for themselves and their families. Although resources and ability to seek treatment hinder this progress, Member States and governments must remain actively engaged in this issue to create a brighter future for global citizens.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective on this issue include the following:

- What role does the United Nations and the international community play in supporting State actions on this issue? Are there actions or integration with civil society groups that also deserve consideration?
- What additional information or research is needed to further understand substance use disorders? How can Member States obtain and exchange this information?
- What approaches to addressing substance abuse are effective, and how can the United Nations ensure that these approaches are used more widely?
- How can States work with civil society and the private sector to address substance abuse disorders?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Berk, Beth (2013). Effective Substance Abuse Prevention: Why it matters, what works, and what the experts see for the future. Community Prevention Initiative. March.
- Brody, Jane E. (2013). Effective Addiction Treatment. The New York Times: Personal Health. 4 February.
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (2012). Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research-Based Guide (Third Edition). December.
- Office of National Drug Control and Policy (2014). Recovery Movement Endorsed by United Nations. 25 March.
- United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime (2015). 2015 World Drug Report finds drug use stable, access to drug and HIV treatment still low. Vienna, Austria. 26 June.
- United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime. About Treatnet.
- United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime. Treatnet Brochure.



UN DOCUMENTS

- United Nations, Commission on Narcotic Drugs (2011). Promoting rehabilitation- and reintegration-oriented strategies in response to drug use disorders and their consequences that are directed at promoting health and social well-being among individuals, families and communities. Resolution 54/5.
- United Nations, Commission on Narcotic Drugs (2014). Supporting recovery from substance use disorders. Resolution 57/4.
- United Nations, General Assembly (1998). Political Declaration. 21 October. A/RES/S-20/2.
- United Nations, General Assembly (2015). Special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016. 26 January. A/RES/69/200.
- United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime (2013). The International Drug Control Conventions. November.
- United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime (2014). Joint Ministerial Statement. 13-21 March.
- United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime (2009). Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem. 11-12 March.
- United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime and World Health Organization. UNODC-WHO Joint Programme on drug dependence treatment and care: A brochure.