

Special Event: UN International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

Report



Conference Hall

On every 26th June, the United Nations held a special event on UN International Day against Drug Abuse and illicit Trafficking. UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov called for comprehensive efforts, founded on human rights and dignity, to overcome drug traffickers and the appalling impact of drug abuse on individuals and communities.

He said that we continued to lose 600 people everyday because of drug overdoses and other drug conditions. These deaths are unacceptable and have terrible consequences for families and communities around the world.

The event was attended by Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol, the Minister of Justice for Colombia, Yesid Reyes, the new Afghan Counter-narcotics Minister, Salamat Azimi, as well as heads of missions.

The World Drug Report 2015 was also launched on the same day. Mr. Fedotov finished his speech with a call to recognize that people were at the centre of all efforts against illicit drugs.

During the special session, Mr. Esbjorn Hornberg, Chair of VNGOC and Vice President of OFAP, also made a statement in capacity as Chair of the Civil Society Task Force on Drugs. He emphasized that the CSTF is not looking to come to consensus on all issues, but rather to provide a platform where all voices are heard, then we work toward identifying and prioritize the main issues with one voice.

Below are the concerns that were concluded:

- Abolition of the Death Penalty and support for the principle of proportionality for drug related offences;
- The adoption of a public health approach to the world drug problem based on the WHO definition, “Public Health refers to all organized measures (whether public or private) to prevent disease, promote health, and prolong life among the population as a whole”;
- Development of prevention strategies, in particular those that protect the rights of children;
- A renewed commitment to the availability and financial sustainability of equally important and mutually reinforcing evidence--based harm reduction, voluntary drug treatment, recovery, and rehabilitation measures, which are under threat in many parts of the world due to economic constraints;
- Urgent, focused action led by WHO to address the global problem of lack of access to essential controlled medicines for pain relief, palliative care, and opioid dependence treatment; and
- Sustainable development opportunities for those currently involved in the cultivation of crops used to produce illicit drugs, and putting an end to conditioning their inclusion in alternative development projects on prior eradication of these crops.
- Engagement of all of civil society, including people who use drugs, people in recovery, families and communities, will provide an added value to the UNGASS.

Mr. Hornberg is asking Member States to support one-day interactive civil society hearing to be held in New York at least three months prior to the UNGASS.

At the same time, the VNGOC meeting was held, it was supposed to be the Election day, but members are concern with new membership submission and would like to review the current membership, the election is postponed to September. A group of members are set up as membership reviewing team, and electronic voting are also approved.