

**Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 62<sup>nd</sup> session**  
**Intersessional Meeting**  
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Intervention

**Thematic Debate 1. both the range of drugs and drugs markets are expanding and diversifying;**

Given that this is my first time taking the floor in these new series of thematic debates, I would start with your permission, Mr President, stating on general terms on how we are planning to address and to engage in all of these debates.

You are fully aware, Mr President, that my delegation has been very vocal about the need and urgency for this Commission and for UNODC to start from day one, that is TODAY, to focus on the level of implementation of each and every one of the hundreds of political commitments that we, the international community, assumed in 2009, 2014 and 2016.

As expressed, many times beforehand, we consider that because of their nature and/or clear timeframe attached to them, we can distinguish two types of political commitments: on one hand, those who should had to be fully undertaken by 2019, and on the other, those which are ongoing efforts and require a constant engagement from States.

Notwithstanding that the vast majority of the commitments are of an ongoing nature, we deem imperative to look on the effect that they have had in our collective efforts to address and counter the world drug problem. By the mid-term review in 2024 we need to have started identifying which commitments are working well, as well as those who need to be revisited. Another automatic roll-over of commitments in 2029 is simply out of question.

Now, Mr President, I will proceed with our comments regarding the commitments closer to the subject of this particular debate:

The first thing to note is that in all the commitments contained in the political documents of 2009, 2014 and 2016, we couldn't find any reference to "range of drugs".

The closest reference to "range of drugs" appears in the subpara (b) of Action 32 of the Plan of Action of 2009, which reads: "*Emphasize the critical importance of forensic and scientific laboratory and treatment centre data and qualitative information in*

*understanding the problem of illicit synthetic drugs and the **range of products available on the illicit market** and systematically integrate such data and information into their monitoring and investigation activities".*

This, Mr President, evidently is an ongoing effort that has to be continuously undertaken by States and the international community and particularly by UNODC, WHO and the INCB. In this regard, the questions for the panelists and other delegations are:

- 1) *How do you systematically integrate forensic and scientific laboratory and treatment centre data and qualitative information into the monitoring and investigation activities for better understanding the problem of illicit synthetic drugs and the range of products available on the illicit market? And,*
- 2) *Given that the range of synthetic drugs is infinite, and that new and easily available technologies and knowledge are facilitating the designing and manufacturing of homemade illicit drugs: would you consider that the current model of scheduling substances is sustainable in the mid and long-term? And if not, how would you suggest to handle the continuous emergence of new synthetic drugs in the market?*

On the issue of "drug markets", Mr. President, we identified only a couple of commitments, namely those contained in:

- **Subpara (i) of Action 4 of the Plan of Action**, which requires States to: "*Strengthen their efforts aimed at reducing the adverse consequences of drug abuse for individuals and society as a whole, taking into consideration not only the prevention of related infectious diseases, such as HIV, hepatitis B and C and tuberculosis, but also all other health consequences, such as overdose, workplace and traffic accidents and somatic and psychiatric disorders, and social consequences, such as family problems, the effects of drug markets in communities and crime*", and
- **Subpara (g) of Action 41 of that Plan**, which call for States to: "(g) Cope with the multiple challenges faced by the drug control agencies of developing countries, especially in view of the emergence of new synthetic drugs and amphetamine-type stimulants in those markets, through capacity-building and technical assistance involving, *inter alia*, the provision of advanced detection equipment, scanners, testing kits, forensic laboratories and training;".

If we broaden or loosen our understanding of the term "range of drugs and drug markets" to also include those commitments addressing patterns, trends and challenges, then we could identify a number of additional commitments. In general terms, those commitments related to substances, routes or means for trafficking, refer mainly to: a) their evolving nature and the need to be vigilant and, b) the need to develop better data gathering collection mechanisms and information analysis systems, for improving our capacities to respond.

I will not cite each and every one, as there are tens of commitments addressing the evolving patterns, trends and challenges. I will just highlight some examples from each document:

**Subpara a) of Action 24 of the Plan of Action of 2009**, requires States to “*(a) Ensure that law enforcement agencies are able to adapt in order to adequately address the changing nature of the drug trafficking problem, particularly with regard to new technologies, routes and methods used by traffickers, thereby reducing the illicit supply of drugs;*”

**Paragraph 24 of the Joint Ministerial of 2014** underscores for States “*the need to respond to shifting trafficking routes and new drug trafficking trends, including Internet-based e-commerce and mail-order services*”.

**Supara e) of Operational Recommendation 3 of UNGASS 2016** calls on States and the international community to “*(e) Monitor current trends and drug trafficking routes and share experiences, best practices and lessons learned, in order to prevent and counter the misuse of international trade for illicit drug-related activities, and note the success achieved through United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime operational initiatives, including initiatives aimed at countering the exploitation of freight containers for drug trafficking and at preventing and countering the diversion of precursors for illicit use and illicit financial flows stemming from drug trafficking and related crimes, as well as other technical assistance activities*”.

We can all agree that the commitments just mentioned are on-going by nature. We could ask ourselves, though, if the commitment contained in para 24 of the Joint Ministerial Declaration of 2014 has already been fulfilled, at least partially, with the meeting organized just a couple of weeks ago by INCB, precisely on the use of mail carriers and, therefore, if we should start to develop concrete measures for addressing this ever-increasing challenge, based on the recommendations that that meeting of experts produced. A mid-term review in 2024 could head into that direction.

There are other commitments, Mr President, which notwithstanding the efforts and progress made, have clearly not been fulfilled within an appropriate timeframe, such as:

**Subparas g) and h) of Action 18 of the Plan of Action** which urges States, respectively, to: “*(g) Seek agreement on a set of relevant indicators covering key issues to allow for the comparable assessment of the effectiveness of demand reduction measures with a view to developing, adapting and validating simple, standardized United Nations data-collection and evaluation methods, concepts and tools*” and, to “*(h) Develop, in cooperation with the international community and in the light of lessons learned in the analysis of replies to the annual reports questionnaire and the biennial reports questionnaire, enhanced data-collection instruments to be considered and adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, allowing streamlined measurement of the quality,*

extent and coverage of drug demand reduction measures, ensuring that the tools used are appropriate for the different needs and reporting capacities of countries and are scientifically sound, making full use of existing information resources and, benefiting from, if appropriate, the experience of the existing regional monitoring systems, while minimizing the reporting burden”.

Or the one contained in **subpara m) of Action 22 of the Plan of Action** which mandates to “(m) Establish, through the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and in coordination with the Statistical Commission of the Economic and Social Council, clear and measurable indicators in the area of supply reduction in order to accurately assess the achievement of any goals and targets that might be set by the international community beyond 2009”. Acknowledging that from 2009 to 2019, that ECOSOC didn’t establish clear and measurable indicators to accurately assess the achievement of goals and targets set by the international community beyond 2009, during the negotiation process of the Ministerial Declaration, the priority of my delegation was to address this pending, urgent and priority task. I am happy to report to you, Mr President, that Mexican experts participated in the most recent ARQ meeting and they are actively engaged in the piloting of the new ARQ.

In this regard, and as the Ministerial Declaration of 2019 mandates, Mr President, it is imperative for the CND and UNODC to have soon a mechanism in place, for the systematic follow-up and assessment of the implementation of all the political commitments made in 2009, 2014 and 2016, to be able to appropriately prepared for a substantive and productive Mid-term review in 2024.

Thank you, Mr President, and my apologies for making such a long intervention.