

**Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 62<sup>nd</sup> session**  
**Intersessional Meeting**  
**16-18 October 2019**

Intervention

**Thematic Debate 3. that synthetic opioids and the non-medical use of prescription drugs pose increasing risks to public health and safety, as well as scientific, legal and regulatory challenges, including with regard to the scheduling of substances;**

For addressing the increasing public health and safety risks posed by synthetic opioids and the non – medical use of prescription drugs, as well all know Mr President, there is myriad of specific recommendations throughout the three political documents, some of which I have already mentioned yesterday and the day before, such as the commitment contained in paragraph **29 of the Political Declaration of 2009**.

I could also refer to specific commitments such as those envisaged in **Action 32 of the Plan of Action**, which in its **subparas (a), (b) and (c)** foresee actions like taking measures to advance the monitoring of illicit synthetic drugs, linking existing activities related to amphetamine-type stimulants around the world and developing of monitoring capacities, including for the early identification of emerging trends and to generate prevalence data on amphetamine-type stimulants; to systematically integrate forensic and scientific laboratory and treatment centre data and qualitative information into monitoring and investigation activities and, promoting consultative mechanisms between INCB; UNODC and other relevant international and regional bodies in order to enhance the quality and consistency of reported data on amphetamine-type stimulants and other synthetic drugs and their precursors.

Clearly, for the past 10 years a number of efforts on these fields have been undertaken by States, UNODC, WHO, INCB and other international and regional organizations, as well as other actors. But we should question ourselves if some of these commitments could or should already have been implemented in full before 2019, such as the abovementioned subpara c of Action 32.

When analyzing the political commitments more directly linked to the issues under review, what stroke us our attention more was that many of them could considered to be fully implemented, such as the commitment to share information with WHO, UNODC, INCB

and other relevant international and regional organizations for the review of new psychoactive substances and to facilitate informed scheduling decisions by CND, as mandated by **Operational Recommendation 5 (f) of UNGASS 2016**. That of course, without losing sight that because of its nature, those are on-going efforts which will continue to be made.

The same can be said about the commitment contained of **paragraph 14 of the Joint Ministerial of 2014**, which calls for continued cooperation between Member States, INCB and WHO to provide recommendations on the scheduling of substances. Or the commitment of **subpara (g) of the Operational Recommendation 2 of UNGASS 2016** for continuing to regularly update the Model Lists of Essential Medicines of the WHO, leading to informed and coordinated scheduling decisions by CND, and to review national lists of controlled substances and national lists of essential medicines, as appropriate.

As well as the second part of the **Operational Recommendation 5 of UNGASS 2016** about the need for strong national and international actions to address the emerging challenge of new psychoactive substances and the evolving threat of amphetamine-type stimulants and for enhancing information-sharing and early warning networks, developing appropriate national legislative, prevention and treatment models and supporting scientific evidence-based review and scheduling of the most prevalent, persistent and harmful substances.

It comes as no surprise, that from the three political documents UNGASS 2016 is the one that elaborates further on synthetic opioids. It is simply a reflection of times. Hence, the question that we should be putting to ourselves are, not if we are doing enough, which as the tragic reality remind us often, we are clearly not, but if we are having the right approach to the problem.

UNODC, INCB, WHO and many others are constantly alerting the CND about the ever changing scenario in relation to synthetic drugs, including the alarming fact that because of the ever increasing availability of means and knowledge, the manufacture and trafficking on synthetics is becoming everyday a more homegrown operation and its increasing the risks for users and the mortality of them, and even of health workers and officers who assist them. And the same entities and experts are raising the voice about the limitations that the current scheduling system has for trying to incorporate every single new substance appearing by the hour in the markets. What, Mr President, are we going to do about it, for better the response of the international community to this, which in our view, is one of the biggest challenges that we are facing to efficiently address and counter the world drug problem.

Thank you, Mr. President.