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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: EU Statement on the occasion of the 4th Intersessional meeting of the 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Vienna 24 June 2019  
- Follow-up to the 62nd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, including the Ministerial Declaration on "Strengthening our actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem"

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Delegations will find in annex the final version of the European Union Statement on the *Follow-up to the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, including the Ministerial Declaration on "Strengthening our actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem"* which was expressed, on behalf of the EU, at the 4th Intersessional meeting of the 62nd Session of the CND in Vienna.



**European Union Statement**

**on the occasion of the**

**4th Intersessional Meeting of the 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

**Vienna, 24 June 2019**

*Follow-up to the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, including the Ministerial Declaration on "Strengthening our actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem"*

Distinguished Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey<sup>§</sup>, The Republic of North Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Iceland<sup>+</sup>, Serbia\*, Albania\*, Bosnia and Herzegovina\*, Norway<sup>+</sup>, Ukraine, The Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Georgia and San Marino.

1. The European Union and its Member States would like to thank you for organizing this intersessional meeting in which we can prepare the follow-up to the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the CND, including on the Ministerial Declaration. We welcome the March Ministerial Segment, where we unanimously reaffirmed our political will to *strengthen our actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem.*

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<sup>§</sup> Candidate Country

\* Candidate Countries: The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

<sup>+</sup> Iceland and Norway are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

2. Accelerating the implementation of our joint commitments is precisely what we should now focus on, in order to have effective results by 2030. Building on experience, the European Union and its Member States emphasise that drug policies based upon an integrated, balanced and evidence- based approach prove to be the most effective for addressing the world drug situation. This approach underpins our EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020 and its accompanying Actions Plans.
3. It is therefore essential to accelerate the implementation of the UNGASS Outcome Document "Our joint commitment to effectively addressing the world drug problem". With its seven chapters, UNGASS puts a focus on inter alia drug supply reduction, new challenges and threats – and, at the same time, on prevention, public health related measures, development aspects and the human rights dimension of the world drug situation. It is the most comprehensive international drug policy document - a milestone - and a progressive step towards the improvement of the current situation on international drug policy.

Distinguished Chair,

4. For the EU and its Member States, it is clear that the way forward to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments requires the following next steps:

Firstly, we support the multiyear workplan proposed by you, Mr. Chair, and we thank Ambassador Okeke for her commitment in facilitating its adoption. The workplan provides a pragmatic basis for discussions among experts and practitioners on international drug policy with a view to effectively address and counter the world drug problem.

Secondly, if we are to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments, it is key to further enhance cooperation between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other relevant UN entities and regional and international organisations. In this regard, the EU and its Member States take note of the work done by the UN system coordination Task Team on the Implementation of the UN System Common Position on drug-related matters.

Thirdly, a solid evidence base on all aspects of the drug problem is needed notably to inform policy actions and be able to measure results. We have all made considerable efforts to meet that objective. For instance, the European Drug Report 2019 recently published by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, is based on sound and reliable data, which examines relevant aspects related to drug supply, drug use prevalence and trends, drug-related harms, and therefore provides a comprehensive analysis of patterns emerging across the EU. Nonetheless, implementing our joint commitments requires the strengthening of the data collection system at international level. We welcome the organization of the expert consultation meeting in this area in the months to come.

To ensure the success of this process, it is important to focus our efforts on three main areas, in particular:

- the Annual Report Questionnaire should be updated, strengthened and streamlined to enable reporting on the new aspects of the drug policy introduced by the UNGASS Outcome Document;
- the cooperation between UNODC and other UN entities as well as other relevant stakeholders should be strengthened in order to create streamlined, coherent, relevant mechanisms; and
- a targeted capacity building programme should be developed, helping low return rate countries and regions to improve and increase data collection, analysis and dissemination.

Distinguished Chair,

5. Allow me to recall that 2030 is also the year by which we have committed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. As we know, these efforts and our work on drug policies are complementary and mutually reinforcing. In line with SDG 3, the implementation of UNGASS would of course strengthen the prevention and treatment of drug abuse. But it would also enable to contribute to ending epidemics such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, to combat diseases such as hepatitis and water-borne diseases, to reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases, and provide access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines. In line with SDG 16, the implementation of UNGASS would contribute to significantly reducing violence and related death rates, and to combatting organised crime. It is therefore key for us to keep the achievement of the relevant SDGs as an overarching consideration when advancing our work on drug policy.
  
6. To conclude, the international community needs to step up its responses to cope with the challenges at stake. And we want to assure you that the EU and its Member States will continue working relentlessly at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address the world drug situation, thus stepping up the implementation of the operational recommendations of the UNGASS Outcome Document, to achieve substantial results by 2030.

Thank you, Mr. Chair!

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