



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 15 April 2024
(OR. en)

8066/24

CORDROGUE 45
SAN 187
RELEX 382
UD 74

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	WK 1557/2024, ST 6231/24
Subject:	EU Statement at the regular segment of the 67th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (Vienna, 18-22 March 2024) - Agenda item 5(c): International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)

Delegations will find in the Annex the above-mentioned statement as expressed on behalf of the EU and its Member States at the regular segment of the 67th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) (Vienna, 18-22 March 2024).



European Union

Statement on

Agenda item 5(c): International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)

Regular segment of the 67th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Vienna, 18-22 March 2024

Distinguished Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina¹ and Georgia, the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia, Andorra and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

The EU would like to express its support to the INCB and to emphasise its important role in supporting Governments in relation to the three international drug control conventions. We value the work of the INCB and welcome its annual report 2023.

INCB's focus on human rights is particularly welcome and is in line with the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2025 and our human rights-based approach in drug policies². As stated by the INCB, the fundamental goal of the international drug control conventions to safeguard the health and welfare of humanity requires fully respecting and protecting human rights³.

¹ North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

² Title of Council conclusions 2022 (ST 15818/33)

³ INCB annual report 2022, para 944.

We also appreciate INCB's increased focus on health, including mental health. This corresponds to the latest actions undertaken by the EU, such as the recent Council conclusions on people having drug use disorders that occur together with other mental health disorders. The conclusions focus, among others, on the need for a multidisciplinary approach, on developing responses to the needs of people with drug use disorders and other mental health disorders, and on minimising stigma and discrimination associated with both mental health and drug use, including a gender sensitive perspective.

We also welcome and strongly support INCB's opposition to the death penalty for drug-related offences, as the EU and its Member States are also unequivocally opposed to the use of the death penalty at all times and under all circumstances, including for drug-related offences. Moreover, we agree that any extrajudicial action purportedly taken in pursuit of drug control objectives is fundamentally contrary to the provisions and objectives of the three international drug control conventions, as well as to human rights norms to which all countries are bound⁴.

Like the INCB, the EU and its Member States recognise the importance of collecting comprehensive and timely quality data for the reliable analysis of trends. Therefore, improving collection of data and information exchange within and among Member States and our Agencies, such as Europol and the EU Drugs Agency, remains an important priority. In the short- and medium-term the EU and its Member States will also be looking into the structured information exchange to support the fight against drugs and precursor trafficking.

As the EU is tabling a resolution on access to and availability of controlled medicines during this CND session, we would like to express appreciation for the e-modules developed by INCB learning, which focus on building capacity and raising awareness about adequate access to controlled substances.

With regard to drug precursors the European Union would like to thank the Board for all the activities and initiatives it has undertaken in recent years for furthering international cooperation. The EU would nevertheless like to highlight the actions to tackle the diversion of non-scheduled substances and proliferation and trafficking of designer precursors such as the recent scheduling proposal of 16 designer precursors for amphetamine type stimulants and the INCB conference room paper on Options to address the proliferation of non-scheduled chemicals which the EU believes deserves further attention from the international community.

⁴ INCB annual report 2022, para 944

In light of these new practices responding to rapid developments on drug market, we wonder whether INCB could assess the effectiveness and feasibility of generic approaches to scheduling new psychoactive substances (NPS) under the UN conventions. We could also further reflect on the possibility of mandating INCB to expand the GRIDS/IONICS platforms, which track shipments, to include scheduled substances and not only NPS. We should continue to exchange on any other measures that would facilitate rapid scheduling at international, regional and national level.

Mr Chair,

To conclude, we would like to assure the INCB of the continued support of the EU and its Member States and of our commitment to further fruitful and effective cooperation.

Thank you very much.
