



Harm reduction from UNGASS to 2019

Global coverage of harm reduction interventions is critically low, with only 1% of people who inject drugs living in countries with high coverage. Harm Reduction International urges governments to scale up harm reduction in accordance with their UNGASS commitments.

In 2016, UN member states committed to “*minimising the adverse public health and social consequences of drug abuse*”. Paragraphs 1 (m) and (o) of the UNGASS outcome document urge States to consider medication assisted therapy, injecting equipment programmes, antiretroviral therapy and Naloxone for the treatment of overdose, including in prisons.

This is the strongest ever international endorsement of harm reduction in a drug policy document, but the challenge lies in implementation. Around the world harm reduction funding is at crisis levels, while governments spend an estimated \$100 billion each year pursuing ineffective and often abusive drug control strategies. **Countries urgently need to rebalance their spending in order to fund and implement paragraph 1.**

The 2019 process is a key opportunity to move international drug policy, and funding, away from punitive drug control. Harm Reduction International is urging countries to call for the prioritisation of a health and human rights-based response to drugs at the High Level Segment.

HRI events at the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) 12-16 March 2018:

- > **Collaboration between governments and civil society for new drug policies that prioritise health and communities**
Mon 12 March, 2.20pm – Conference Room MOE100
- > **Harm Reduction Champions Network breakfast meeting**
Tue 13 March, 8.30am (*invitation only*)
- > **The urgent need for harm reduction funding: scaling up evidence based interventions for people who use drugs** (*HRI speaker*)
Wed 14 March, 1.10pm – Conference Room M7
- > **Site visit for CND delegates to Vienna-based harm reduction provider Suchthilfe**
Thur 15 March, 9.30am.
Please email olga.szubert@hri.global to register.
- > **The death penalty for drug offences from UNGASS to 2019**
Thur 15 March, 2.20pm – Conference Room M6

The Death Penalty for Drug Offences from UNGASS to 2019

Between January 2015 and December 2017 at least 1,320 people are known to have been executed for drug-related offences. **Harm Reduction International urges all States to establish a moratorium on executions for drug offences, with a view to abolishing the death penalty.**

Harm Reduction International's *Death Penalty for Drug Offences: Global Overview 2017* reports that:

- > At global level, political support for the abolition of the death penalty for drug offences is gathering momentum, with 73 countries expressing strong opposition to the death penalty for drug offences at the 2016 UNGASS on Drugs.
- > The number of executions has been steadily declining, from 718 in 2015 to 325 in 2016 and 280 in 2017.
- > Significant legal and policy developments relating to the death penalty for drug offences took place last year in Iran, Thailand and Malaysia.
- > Between June 2016 and January 2018, over 12,000 people were extrajudicially executed for drugs in the Philippines.

Key Recommendations

- > All states applying the death penalty should immediately halt executions, commute death sentences, and abolish the death penalty for drug-related offences as a first step towards full abolition.
- > The Commission on Narcotic Drugs should request the Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime to report at its 62nd session on the implementation of the 2012 human rights guidance document, in particular the development of the proposed human rights planning tool, and to report annually on its implementation across programmes thereafter.
- > UNODC should operationalise and monitor the implementation of its 2012 human rights guidance document, particularly in the implementation of UNODC drug control programmes in retentionist States.
- > The Government of the Philippines must immediately stop extrajudicial executions for drug-related offences. Summary, extrajudicial and arbitrary executions are prohibited under international human rights law.

International mobilisation around the 2019 High Level Ministerial Segment

The UNGASS outcome document failed to condemn the death penalty, but Paragraph 4(o) called on States to ensure legal guarantees and due process safeguards, including the prohibition of arbitrary detention and torture and other degrading treatment, when responding to drug-related crimes.

Ahead of 2019, Harm Reduction International is urging more countries to support abolition of the death penalty for drug offences, and calls on abolitionist States to work with civil society to secure an unequivocal condemnation of the death penalty for drug offences at the High Level Segment.

> The death penalty for drug offences from UNGASS to 2019

Thur 15 March, 2.20pm – Conference Room M6

Harm Reduction International

Unit 2C09, South Bank Technopark,
90 London Road, London SE1 6LN, UK
+44 (0)207 717 1592 • office@hri.global
www.hri.global



This publication has been produced with the financial support of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Harm Reduction International and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.