



High Level Segment Roundtable A: Demand Reduction

Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs: Joint Statement

Thursday 13th March 2014, 10.30am.

I am speaking today for members of the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs. Together we have a huge resource working to prevent illicit and harmful drug use and **we come here today to speak with a collective voice in the area of drug demand reduction and related services.**

Responding to Resolution 56/12, the VNGOC surveyed its members. It found that examples of progress in the area of drug demand reduction were not being systematically implemented in each Member State. In spite of the repeated resolutions adopted by the CND, which often say the right things, there is often no real action behind them. Even where there is evidence of some demand reduction activities, very rarely do these represent the entire continuum– from universal pathways which target the whole population, to selective pathways which target groups of the population and to indicated pathways which target those individuals who are most at risk. **We need a more systematic review and follow-up on the resolutions which are being adopted here – especially in the domain of Drug Demand Reduction and related services.**

We welcome the Contribution of the Executive Director of the UNODC to the High Level Review and fully support his proposals for a way forward as they relate to drug demand reduction and related services.

We need Member States to prioritise the funding and application of evidence-based tools, policies and structures in support of the Drug Demand Objectives. This includes applying the international prevention standards adopted by CND in all jurisdictions, applying evidence based programmes and structures supported by the UNODC project on Drug Treatment, Dependence and Care and implementing the recommendations from the UNODC project on HIV-AIDS and injecting drug use.

NGO's, who contribute greatly to drug demand reduction, can play a role in tackling some of these issues but to do this effectively, we need to work with Member States to implement evidence-based and sustainable interventions which prevent drug use and assist those with drug problems. We need to work together to ensure that prioritisation is given to evidence-based programmes and that the strategies and policies which we agree upon, are delivered to the highest quality possible. Finally, we must ensure that there is more systematic process of review and follow-up on the commitments that both governments and civil society make.

So, let's initiate dialogue to identify good practice, gaps to be addressed and initiate action plans with measurable outcomes to correct these shortcomings. Perhaps we can then see real progress in our shared desire "to protect the health and welfare of mankind".