



**Preparations for the high-level segment
of the 52nd session of the Commission on
Narcotic Drugs**

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**Open-ended intergovernmental expert
working group on supply reduction**
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Discussion note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

This discussion note was prepared pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 51/4, which decided, inter alia, to establish open-ended, intergovernmental expert working groups to work in a coordinated manner, on the following topics, which correspond to the subjects of the action plans, declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session: (a) Drug demand reduction; (b) Supply reduction (manufacture and trafficking); (c) Countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation; (d) International cooperation on the eradication of illicit drug crops and on alternative development; (e) Control of precursors and of amphetamine-type stimulants.

The open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on supply reduction will discuss results achieved by Member States in achieving the goals and targets set at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, limitations and problems encountered as well as the way forward in the field of supply reduction. The conclusions and recommendations of this working group will be transmitted to the intersessional meetings of the Commission to provide material on which the drafting of the outcome for the high-level segment can be based.

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I. Introduction

1. At the Twentieth Special Session of the General Assembly (UNGASS) on countering the world drug problem, Member States adopted the “Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development” that, with respect to supply reduction, called for:

- The strengthening of capacities of law enforcement and judicial authorities to combat the criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking, and to promote sub-regional, regional and international cooperation mechanisms to facilitate the sharing of information and technical expertise.

II. Significant and measurable results in the field of supply reduction

2. Over the last 10 years, the analysis of the responses to the Biennial Reports Questionnaires (BRQs) showed that Member States had taken many broad and important steps towards implementation of measures to reduce the supply of illicit drugs in all areas monitored under UNGASS. Progress had also been reflected in the reports of Member States participating in the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Subcommission for the Near and Middle East and the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) .

3. The majority of States reported having adopted comprehensive national drug control strategies, together with establishing central coordination bodies to oversee their national responses. Judicial and law enforcement cooperation had advanced and was supported by domestic legal and procedural frameworks. It was now a criminal offence in most States, for example, to launder the proceeds derived from drug trafficking.

4. Considerable progress had also been made in reducing illicit cultivation of coca, whilst the gains in reduced poppy cultivation in South East Asia had been offset by the increases in Afghanistan. The steady increase in national controls exercised over the chemical substances listed in the revised Tables I and II of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988, had restricted their trafficking, and led to major successes in international enforcement cooperation. The specific action plans adopted by Member States to target amphetamine-type stimulants manufacture and trafficking, undertaken in conjunction with their efforts in precursor control, had also successfully acted to restricted illicit supply.

III. Limitations and problems

5. Nevertheless, drug trafficking and the other illegal activities associated with it remained a global threat to the safety, stability and integrity of communities and Member States.

6. Illicit trafficking by sea remains the principle modus operandi, posing a significant threat to border control strategies.

7. The frequency and effectiveness of international controlled deliveries are still hampered by inadequate legislation, expertise, equipment and training. The response of law enforcement authorities is not keeping pace with the advances in technology available to trafficking groups.

8. The links between drug trafficking and arms trafficking have not been thoroughly examined and, despite a continued resolve to increase cooperation to stem illegal arms trafficking and achieve concrete results in this field, little has been done. Drug trafficking investigations continue to be largely carried out in isolation, without linkages made between drugs and arms trafficking.

9. Corruption in many law enforcement agencies has not been effectively tackled, making it difficult to identify reliable partners to carry out joint operations and with which to exchange information.

10. Witness protection programmes in many countries remain either very weak or non-existent, rendering the investigation and prosecution of organized criminal networks engaged in drug trafficking and related organized crime activities extremely difficult.

IV. The way forward

A. Illicit trafficking by sea

11. Further strengthen operational responses and counter measures to maritime trafficking of illicit drugs through the establishment of well resourced coordination mechanisms with agreed-upon procedures at the regional and international level to monitor the movement of vessels and small craft; develop intelligence through the gathering and exchange information; respond in support of operational necessity to identified national and foreign flagged vessels of interest and introduce proactive strategies to improve inter-agency cooperation, both domestically and internationally to bring the collective resources of State authorities together to combat illicit drug trafficking.

12. Ensure commercial port operations are supported by drug law enforcement authorities with adequate resources, equipment, training and legal powers to effectively enable the screening, evaluation and examining of commercial freight and sea-containers.

B. Challenges in cooperation, coordination and operations

13. Implement and strengthen legislation allowing for the application of special investigative techniques and develop the skills of drug law enforcement authorities in the use and application of these measures to identify and dismantle trafficking groups:

- (a) Through the use of controlled delivery operations, supported by well-promulgated details of national agency contact points, clear and streamlined request and clearance procedures, inter-agency agreements and cooperation in standard operating procedures;
- (b) Through the use of court sanctioned evidence gathering techniques, such as electronic surveillance and the structured informant programmes.

14. Ensure that drug law enforcement agencies are able to respond effectively to new and emerging cyber-technologies employed by traffickers through the provision of adequate legislation and training to sustain the investigation and prosecution of offences undertaken utilising cyber-technology, the establishment of national focal points for high-tech crime, the development of capacity and expertise to support forensic investigations and the pursuit of partnerships with private sector communication providers.

C. Maintaining integrity for effective drug law enforcement

15. Examine the contributory causes of corruption within their law enforcement agencies and take steps to make them stronger and more resistant to such malfeasance. Conditions such as low salaries, inadequate training, lack of equipment, weak legislation, poorly supervised operating procedures should be addressed, together with the adoption of measures that build public confidence in law enforcement authorities.

16. Introduce proactive strategies within law enforcement agencies, such as anti-corruption action plans, integrity programmes, drug testing and security vetting of staff and recruits, to reduce the opportunity for corrupt practices.

D. Reducing the violence

17. To reduce the violence stemming from the relationship between illicit drug and arms trafficking: strengthen mechanisms to combat arms trafficking, including: strengthening law enforcement capacities; strengthening internal control mechanisms on the licit trade of arms to prevent arms from being diverted; and establishing multi-agency task forces to ensure a comprehensive approach to combating the organized crime networks engaged in illicit arms and drug trafficking.

18. Strengthen the judicial process through the establishment of witness protection programmes to encourage the witnesses and victims of organized trafficking networks to safely and securely provide evidence against them.