

Agenda Item 15.3 Public health dimension of the world drug problem (link to Report)

Thank chair, distinguished delegates. The International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care and the Worldwide Hospices Palliative Care Alliance congratulate Colombia and the member states who prepared the Draft Decision on the Public Health Dimension of the World Drug Problem, which we fully support.

Our organisations applaud the emphasis of the 2016 UNGASS Outcome Document on person-centered, public health oriented drug policies, including the Chapter Two recommendations on improving access to controlled essential medicines for palliative care and other medical needs. We thank outgoing Director General Chan for her active engagement with the UNODC in Vienna. We now look forward to collaborating closely with DG elect Dr. Tedros.

In my capacity as Vice-Chair of the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs, I can testify to the fact that we enjoy good working relations with your counterparts in Vienna as well as with colleagues at UNODC and the International Narcotics Control Board. At the recent 60th Session of CND, Australia, Belgium, Italy, and Norway co-sponsored a high level side event on improving access to controlled medicines with participation of the WHO Medicines Division, as well as with civil society and academic colleagues from Kenya, Germany and the US.

We are working hard with our partners on the ground to assist member states in implementing the excellent recommendations of the Outcome Document of the 2016 UNGASS, which for the first time has a dedicated chapter focused on improving access to controlled medicines. We look forward to deepening collaborations with UN Geneva, including the Human Rights Council, in these crucial efforts to "promote the health and welfare of mankind," to quote the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. I thank you.