

HEALTH (/THEME/HEALTH)

Contribution to the 41st WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence: IDPC recommendations on cannabis and tramadol

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By International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) (/profile/international-drug-policy-consortium-idpc)

The Expert Committee on Drug Dependence (ECDD) of the World Health Organization (WHO) will hold its 41st Meeting in Geneva on 12th to 16th November 2018. The ECDD is the body constituted by the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the UN Convention on Psychotropic Drugs of 1971 to conduct scientific reviews of substances with a view to understanding their public health risks and therapeutic uses, and to recommend their assignment to the appropriate schedule within the international drug control conventions.

In the context of the proliferation of new psychoactive substances, the principle of scientific review is of special significance. Many governments are presently subject to anxieties that can drive the process of scheduling – not on an evidential basis, but a political and ideological one. This gives an added importance to the Expert Committee, that of ensuring its recommendations are made on the basis of scientific evidence, as per its mandate and despite political pressures.

The significance of this role is underscored by the UNGASS Outcome Document of 2016, which devotes an entire chapter to the issue of access to controlled medicines. Among a broad collection of substances subject to critical review at the 41st ECDD meeting, an especially important medicine is included: tramadol, which is currently not under international control.⁵ Certain countries have called for tramadol to be placed under international control, in particular, Egypt, which submitted a conference room paper on the issue to the 60th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.



In the meantime, discussions around the scheduling of cannabis at national and global levels have accelerated over the past few years, while more and more countries are adopting medicinal cannabis schemes. For the first time in the history of the current international drug control regime, a critical review of cannabis and its derivatives is also planned for the 41st ECDD meeting.

This IDPC advocacy note will provide recommendations on both tramadol and cannabis, with the hope that it will inform the discussions of the Expert Committee for its meeting in November.



(http://files.idpc.net/library/ECDD-advocacy-note_Oct-2018.pdf)

Advocacy note in English (http://files.idpc.net/library/ECDD-advocacy-note_Oct-2018.pdf)

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Marie Nougier is responsible for the communications and publications work stream of IDPC, and also engages in networking, civil society capacity building activities, and policy advocacy engagement.

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IDPC promotes objective and open debate on the effectiveness, direction and content of drug policies at the national and international level, and supports evidence-based policies that are effective at reducing drug-related harm.

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TRANSLATIONS

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SUBJECT

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- 📌 Cannabis (/subject/cannabis)
- 📌 Access to controlled medicines (/subject/access-to-essential-medicines)

REGION

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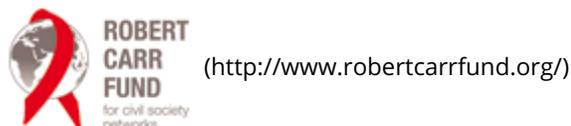
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