

February 26, 2020

Draft Resolution L4. Commission on Narcotic Drugs, IAHPC Recommendations and Sample Letter to Vienna Missions from National Palliative Care Associations. A directory of all national missions with the name of the Chief of Mission and email addresses can be found [here](#).

[Promoting awareness-raising, education and training as part of a comprehensive approach to ensuring access to and the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes and improving their rational use](#)

The [63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs](#) (CND) will take place in Vienna from March 2-6. CND member states will discuss and approve a number of [draft resolutions](#), including one proposed by Belgium, Australia and the European Union regarding the urgent need to improve global access to internationally controlled essential medicines such as those used for palliative care, the treatment of severe pain, substance use disorder, and other conditions. The resolution is focused on education and health system strengthening, including training and upskilling of personnel who oversee the procurement, distribution, and prescription of opioids.

All UN resolutions begin with preambular paragraphs that sum up the situation addressed by the resolution and that lay out the normative framework in which it has been developed. These preambular paragraphs are followed by operational paragraphs that include recommendations to member states about how they should proceed to remedy the situation addressed in the preambular paragraphs. Both the preambular and operational paragraphs of this resolution are excellent.

We are requesting that all our members and partners support this resolution by asking your national palliative care association to send a letter by electronic mail to your [ambassador or head of mission in Vienna](#). This letter should be sent on letterhead and signed by a senior executive of the organization. The letter need not be long, but should include the following:

1. An introduction and brief presentation of the Association, its mission, and the country you work in, describing some of the challenges your members face in accessing controlled medicines for patients.
2. Reference the CND63 meeting to take place in Vienna and Draft Resolution, L4.
3. Emphasise your organization's support for Draft Resolution L4.
4. Emphasise the work your Association is doing to comply with the recommendations of Chapter 2 of the UNGASS Outcome Document and the UN Conventions.
5. Respectfully request your Vienna mission to support the Draft Resolution and co-sponsor it with Australia, Belgium and the EU.
6. Offer any other support or information that might be required.

Please contact me, Katherine Pettus kpettus@iahpc.com if you have any questions at all regarding this.

The following text can serve as a guide for this request on letterhead. Please adapt as you see fit.

Your Excellency (protocol for addressing Ambassadors)

My name is XXX, and I am XXX (officer) of XXX Palliative Care Association, whose mission is the promotion and development of palliative care in XXX (country). We are an association of palliative care professionals who work with patients and families facing severe health related suffering. One of the pillars that we

work on as a civil society organization is the availability of and access to internationally controlled essential palliative care medicines, in particular opioids for the control of severe pain and breathlessness.

The 63rd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs will consider Draft Resolution L4, sponsored by Australia, Belgium and the European Union. This resolution is entitled

[Promoting awareness-raising, education and training as part of a comprehensive approach to ensuring access to and the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes and improving their rational use](#)

We have analyzed the document and consider that it is excellent. It emphasises the most important issues that affect access for rational medical use and outlines the necessary steps and solutions member states can adopt to overcome existing barriers.

We are writing this letter to request that your mission support this resolution and add our country as a co-sponsor. Our palliative care patients need to be able to access opioid medicines to relieve severe pain; scarcity, stockouts, high prices, and unduly restrictive regulations cause great suffering and have created a global public health crisis.

Please confirm receipt of this letter and feel free to contact us for any further information regarding our work.

Respectfully, etc.

XXXX
