



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE
Advancing Hospice & Palliative Care Worldwide

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Twenty-first century medicine has the tools to relieve the severe pain and suffering caused by the modern diseases that now plague all our countries. This wonderful achievement includes the use of medicines scheduled under the conventions. Yet the World Drug Report tells us that those same medicines remain unavailable, inaccessible, and unaffordable to patients in more than 75% of the world. The framers of the conventions, who were concerned with the health and welfare of mankind, would have been deeply dismayed by this state of affairs.

Since the framers couldn't foresee the development of palliative and addiction medicine in the 21st century, the documents member states ratified do not provide the necessary mechanisms to ensure adequate access for patients requiring those medicines and services. That is why we are here today. The Commission and INCB *have* caught up with these developments, which are expressed in programmatic resolutions and reports, but now It's time for *member states* to catch up with them by implementing the recommendations of the Ministerial Declaration and UNGASS Outcome Document.

The IAHPC is aware that many member states are afraid of an epidemic of non-medical opioid use such as that affecting certain countries where the private sector successfully captured national regulatory agencies to the detriment of those populations. Yet other member states are showing this is *not* an inevitable outcome and that changing traditional supply and demand control policies to meet the needs of patients does not have to result in that sort of epidemic.

The key lies in balanced policies, robust professional training, partnerships with academia and civil society, public procurement of generics, and meticulous oversight of supply chains. Governments can take advantage of the fact that oral morphine, the gold standard of pain control, is unattractive both to industry and traffickers seeking new markets.

Ensuring that drug policies and budgets are patient-, family-, and community- centered, rather than profit oriented, is a strategy that can immunize member states against opioid diversion and misuse, while ensuring that pain and health related suffering, including substance use disorder, are relieved.

I thank you.