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# The world drug problem: Taking stock and strengthening the global response



Annual Parliamentary Hearing  
United Nations Headquarters  
Trusteeship Council Chamber, Secretariat Building  
8-9 February 2016

## Programme

Session I	Feb 8	9.30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
<b>Official opening</b>		9.30 a.m. – 10 a.m.
<i>Welcome remarks from the leadership: UN and IPU</i>	H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the General Assembly	
	Hon. Saber Chowdhury, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union	
	H.E. Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	
<b>The world drug problem in perspective: The evolution of drugs control</b>		10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p><i>Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem (United Nations General Assembly, 2009)</i></p> <p><i>International Cooperation against the world drug problem (Resolution 69/201 of the General Assembly adopted on 18 December 2014)</i></p>	<p>While drugs and drug addiction go back centuries, if not millennia, it is only in the last 50 years or so that the international community has developed a concerted approach to tackle the health, social, and economic costs of drug production, transaction and consumption.</p> <p>Three United Nations Conventions on drugs have been adopted that place under international control narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The primary goal of the international drug control system is “the protection of the health and welfare of humankind.”</p> <p>In international agreements such as the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem (2009), Member States have further elaborated this international drug control system and recognized that the world drug problem remains a common and shared responsibility that requires effective and increased international cooperation and a balanced approach to supply and demand reduction strategies.</p> <p>This session will review the world drug problem from its origins to today, as well as the rationale and scope of the international legal framework set up to counter this problem.</p>	
	<p><b>Keynote: Purpose of the UNGASS 2016 and update on preparations</b> Ambassador Khaled Shamaa, Chair UNGASS Board, UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs</p>	
	<p><i>Leading questions</i></p>	
	<p>What is the rationale behind the approach of the three drug conventions? How did governments treat drugs before the current international system?</p>	
	<p>How can the prime concern of the international drug control conventions, the health and welfare of humankind, best be addressed?</p>	
	<p>What obligations do the conventions and other international instruments place on states and what flexibilities do States have in implementing them?</p>	
	<p>How do the conventions distinguish between production, trafficking and use?</p>	

	<i>Interviewees</i>	
	Ms. Margarita Stolbizer, MP, Chamber of Deputies of Argentina	
	H.E. Ambassador Mahmoud Saikal, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations	
	Mr. Bernard Leroy, <i>Rapporteur</i> , International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)	
	Dr. Vanda Felbab-Brown, Senior Fellow, Center for 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Security and Intelligence, Brookings Institute	
	<i>Moderator(all sessions)</i>	
	Ms. Julia Taylor Kennedy <sup>i</sup>	
<b>Lunch break</b>		1 p.m. to 2.45 p.m.

<b>Session II</b>	<b>Feb 8</b>	<b>3 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.</b>
<b>The global response to drugs: Can it work more effectively?</b>		
<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p><i>World Drug Report 2015</i> (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Vienna)</p>	<p>The world drug problem undermines sustainable development, political stability and democratic institutions. Notwithstanding the ever-increasing efforts and progress made by States, relevant international organizations and civil society, the drug problem continues to pose a serious threat to the health, safety and well-being of all humanity.</p> <p>In some instances, the drug problem has had a number of consequences, including the creation of black markets, a reorientation of investments away from public health and toward law enforcement, displacement of drug production and trade to other countries, and marginalization of drug users.</p> <p>The United Nations Conventions on drugs, corruption and transnational organized crime provide the tools to combat drug trafficking and money laundering, while promoting international cooperation in criminal matters. Efforts are being made at the international, regional and national level to prevent drug-related crime, drug-related violence, and manufacture, supply and trafficking of drugs, consistent with international human rights norms, and also to integrate measures with law enforcement efforts. Alternatives to criminal sanctions for possession of illicit drugs for personal consumption are being discussed.</p> <p>This session will discuss the various responses to the world drug problem and evaluate what has worked and what has not.</p>	
	<i>Leading questions</i>	
	How can efforts be strengthened to prevent drug-related crime and violence?	
	What are the elements of a balanced approach to drugs control and how can this balance be reached?	
	What approaches to demand and supply reduction have been tried and to what effect? Are there best practices?	
	What can be done to increase efforts on treatment for drug addiction?	
	How are drug trafficking, corruption and organized crime connected and how can those networks be disrupted?	
	How can countries cooperate to address this problem more effectively?	

<i>Interviewees</i>	
Ms. Reem Abu Dalbouth, MP, House of Representatives of Jordan	
Mr. Raymond Pryce, MP, House of Representatives of Jamaica	
H.E. Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Permanent Representative of Khazakhstan to the United Nations	
Mr. Alberto Otarola, Executive President of the National Commission for Development and Life without Drugs (DEVIDA), Peru	
Ms. Andrea Huber, Policy Director, Penal Reform International	
<b>Reception for MPs and Ambassadors</b> <b>IPU Office, Uganda House, 336 East 45<sup>th</sup> Street (10<sup>th</sup> floor)</b>	<b>5.45 p.m. – 7.30 p.m.</b>

<b>Session III</b>	<b>Feb 9</b>	<b>10 a.m. – 1 p.m.</b>
<b><i>Drug prevention and treatment from the standpoint of sustainable development and human rights: What is required?</i></b>		
<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p><i>Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development</i> (UN Summit Declaration, September 2015)</p> <p><i>Study on the impact of the world drug problem on the enjoyment of human rights</i> (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, September 2015)</p> <p><i>Addressing the development dimension of drug policy</i> (UNDP, 2015)</p>	<p>In adopting new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a people-centred agenda for sustainable development in September 2015, governments reaffirmed their commitments to “a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination.” While several SDGs are important to this debate, a specific target under Goal 3 on health and well-being commits governments “to strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.”</p> <p>A recent report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights argues for the rights of drug users to treatment and non-discrimination. According to this report, the criminalization of drugs keeps users away from the health care system and makes them prone to discrimination and stigmatization. Indigenous peoples who consume drugs as part of their traditional lifestyle are particularly vulnerable. The imposition of the death penalty for drug-related offences is contrary to the international human rights framework.</p> <p>The international community has recognized the need to reduce the vulnerability of local communities to the illicit drugs economy by promoting alternative livelihoods. Particular attention should be paid to agricultural communities and the special vulnerabilities of women, youth and indigenous peoples.</p> <p>This session will look at the way in which human rights and development considerations may inform the response to the world drugs problem in countries around the world.</p>	
	<i>Leading questions</i>	
	The Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a new people-centered framework for development predicated on the affirmation of fundamental human rights. What are the links between drug policy and the Goals?	
	How can the rule of law, justice and the promotion and protection of all human rights, and public health best be addressed in the implementation of drug policies?	
What does a “human rights approach to the drug problem” require?		

<i>Interviewees</i>
Ms. Aasiya Nasir, MP, National Assembly of Pakistan
Ms. Jutta Urpilainen, MP, Member of Parliament, Finland - <i>invited</i>
H.E. Ambassador Fodé Seck, Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations - <i>invited</i>
Mr. Javier Sagredo, Advisor, Democratic Governance and Citizen Security, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP
Mr. Pedro Jose Arenas Garcia, Observatory Colombian Coca Growers, former Member of Congress of Colombia

<b>Session IV</b>	<b>Feb 9</b>	<b>2.45 p.m. – 5.45 p.m.</b>
<i>Parliamentary motions</i>		2.45 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.
<p>This wrap-up segment will be in the format of the Doha Debates popularized by the BBC.</p> <p>Assisted by a moderator, two debaters will argue for a “motion” and two debaters will argue against it. Each debater will have up to three minutes to present his/her argument. This will be followed by direct questions from participants until closing arguments (90 seconds) and a final Yes or No vote on the motion by a simple show of hands.</p> <p>Two motions will be considered for about 70 minutes each. Given the informal nature of the hearing, the motions will not be binding. Their main purpose is to help flesh out the various aspects of the matter with the contribution of as many participants as possible.</p> <p>The discussion around these motions and the outcome of the votes will provide a sense of the politics of the drug issue within the world’s parliamentary community.</p> <p><b>First motion:</b> <i>Implementing the international legal framework will address the world drug problem.</i></p>		
<i>Discussants</i>		
	<b>In favor</b>	<b>Not in favor</b>
	Mr. Anti Avsan, MP, Parliament of Sweden	H.E. Ambassador Luis Alfonso De Alba, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the International Organizations in Vienna
	tbc	Dr. Kasia Malinowska, Director, Global Drug Policy Programme, Open Society Foundation
<p><b>Second motion:</b> <i>States should seek alternatives to incarceration when addressing possession of drugs for personal use.</i></p>		

<i>Discussants</i>	
In Favor	Not in Favor
Ms. Laura Rojas, Senator, Senate of Mexico	Mr. Herman Herry Adranacus, MP, House of Representatives of Indonesia - <i>invited</i>
Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith, MP, House of Commons of Canada	Mr. Ibrahim Ahmed Omer, Speaker of the National Assembly of Sudan
<b>Closing session: the way forward</b>	
	5.30 p.m. – 5.45 p.m.
An <b>evaluation form</b> will be distributed during this session. Participants will be invited to fill out the form and leave it on their desk for IPU staff to collect.	This session will present some of the preliminary conclusions of the meeting which will be further elaborated in its final report.
	<i>Speakers</i>
	Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General, Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the General Assembly (or other UN representative)

<sup>i</sup> A seasoned producer and interviewer, Julia Taylor Kennedy hosts a Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs podcast called *Impact: Where Business and Ethics Meet*. She is also senior vice president and senior fellow at the Center for Talent Innovation, where she drives qualitative research and writes reports on gender and diversity in the workplace. Her most recent publication was a book entitled *Mission Critical: Unlocking the Value of Veterans in the Workplace*.

Ms. Taylor Kennedy has facilitated sessions and advised speakers for major platforms like The Conference Board, the World Economic Forum and the United Nations, and collaborated on articles published in Forbes, Time, and academic journals. Taylor Kennedy also hosted and produced *51%*, a public radio show on gender issues, and reported for National Public Radio. She earned a Master of International Relations from Yale University and a journalism degree from Northwestern University.