



Background

Need to develop a CAP for UNGASS identified by the Sixth Session of the African Union Conference of Ministers in Charge of Drug Control (CAMDC6), Oct 2014.

This was part of Addis Ababa declaration to scale up balanced and integrated responses to drug control in Africa, noting that bad and ineffective policies cause a lot of harm.

CAMDC6 mandated AUC to facilitate consultations and engagements towards a Common Position.

The Process

- First draft March 2015: Sought inputs from African Group in Vienna, UN (UNODC/WHO), MSs focal points, International Organizations and CSOs (IDPC,WACD).
- Draft presented to the First African Union Specialized Technical Committee Meeting on Health, Population and Drug Control (STC-HPDC 1), April 2015.
- Circulated to all MSs for inputs, finalized by AUC and STC Bureau.
- Revised draft circulated to MSs and adopted through silent procedure as per STC decision.
- Finalized version forwarded to African Group in Vienna for onward transmission to UNGASS Secreariat-11 September 2015.

Commitments in the Common African Position (CAP)

It contains the usual Preamble, and in the Operative paragraphs the following Commitments have been agreed to:

1. That in the implementation of the SDGs, FDI and ODA be enhanced to compliment the efforts of African countries in uprooting extreme poverty, unemployment and inequality and to ... improve education, skills and technology transfer.
2. That the main objective of drug policies should be to improve the health, safety, welfare and socio-economic well-being of people and societies by adopting appropriate measures to combat illicit crop cultivation and the illicit production, manufacture, transit, trafficking, distribution and use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as its associated crimes, as outlined in the AU Plan of Action on Drug Control (2013-2017);

Commitments in the Common African Position (CAP)

3. That a balanced approach regarding drug demand and supply reduction be ensured and legislation to be harmonized accordingly – and youth employment to be reflected in national legislation (3 & 4)
4. That the consumption of drugs be considered as a public health problem with socio-economic root causes and consequences, and that drug education and treatment be integrated in broader health programmes as an imperative for all Member States.
5. That the provision of opiates and other essential medicines for palliative care and pain relief be ensured, and that barriers which prevent the import, distribution and use of these medicines, be removed.

Commitments in the Common African Position (CAP)

6. That there is urgent need (for Member States) to respond to the serious challenges posed by the increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime, including trafficking in persons, trafficking in firearms, cybercrime and...money-laundering in connection with the financing of terrorism, and (for Member States to respond to) the significant challenges faced by law enforcement and judicial authorities in responding to the ever-changing means used by transnational criminal organizations to avoid detection and prosecution.
7. That the collaboration of public health and justice authorities be supported in pursuing alternative measures to conviction or punishment for appropriate drug-related offences of a minor non-violent nature, in accordance with the international drug conventions.

Commitments in the Common African Position (CAP)

8. That the Special Session should enhance the capacities of the regional and sub-regional organizations in assisting Member States to fulfill the targets and goals set up in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action to reflect our collective efforts, concerns and goals.

Way Forward and Next Steps

Ongoing work with RECS/MSs to adopt the position during inter-sessional negotiations in Vienna:

- Formally circulated to all MSs and RECS
- Facilitated EAC consultation (EAC/OSEA/GVT/CSOs)
- Nigeria during the second National Symposium on Drugs and Drug Control Policy
- Kenya during 3rd National Conference on Alcohol and Drug Abuse,
- Consultation-Africa Group Chair/UNGASS Chair/STC Bureau-Dec 2015
- MSs consultation- Dec 2015
- Circulated to African Groups in other UN HQs (Geneva and Vienna)
- CAP now uploaded in UNGASS Website
- Negotiations at 59th Session CND March 2016

