



International Drug Policy Consortium
A global network promoting objective and open debate on drug policy

The AU Common African Position and the Africa Group's Submitted Position

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Who we are...



- A global network of 140+ NGOs
- Promoting drug policy debates and NGO participation
- Promoting drug policies based on evidence, health, human rights and development

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www.idpc.net

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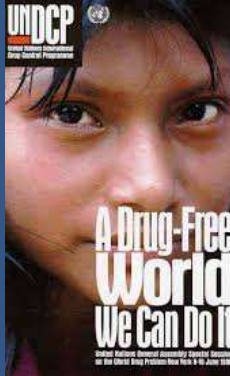

What is an UNGASS?

General Assembly

- Highest policy-making and representative organ of the UN

Special Sessions

- Can be called by a majority of Member States or the Security Council





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The 2016 UNGASS

- Urgent debate requested by the Presidents of Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia
- Supported by 95 UN member states
- In the context of increasing calls for drug policy reform and debate



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An opportunity....



“I urge Member States to use these opportunities to conduct a wide-ranging and open debate that considers all options.”

UN Secretary General
Ban Ki-Moon
26th June 2013


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Africa's Misrepresented

- Many African countries have no staff in Vienna
- Low engagement allows a few countries to dominate
- AU developed 'Common African Position'
- But South Africa instead submitted something drafted by Egypt






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Overview of CAP's Development

October 2014: 6th AU Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Drug Control (CAMDC6)

March 2015: Discussions with member states, UN partners, CSOs at CND

April 2015: 1st meeting of the AU Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Health, Population and Drug Control




April – August 2015: Inputs from member states received by AU Commission

September 2015: Final version sent to South Africa to submit, as Chair of the Africa Group in Vienna

October 2015: We discover that South Africa actually submitted something very different instead – apparently drafted by Egypt


January 2016: AU CAP is finally released online, and submitted on UNGASS website



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AU Common Position

- Objective of drug policy is to improve health and well-being
- Balanced between supply, demand and harm reduction
- Ensure the provision of essential medicines
- Drug use must be considered as a public health problem: pursue alternatives to punishment for minor offences
- Reallocate resources to treatment
- That the debate should be open and inclusive
- The CAP calls for one common African voice



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Africa Group Submitted Position

- Reaffirms target to eliminate drugs by 2019
- Balance between supply and demand reduction (no harm reduction)
- Ensure adequate availability of essential medicines – but stricter controls on ketamine and tramadol
- Misguided policies such as legalization and decriminalization... will hinder ongoing efforts...”
- Calling for the scheduling of Ketamine.
- That the debates should be restricted “within the framework of the three international drug control conventions.



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What is the way forward?

1. AU position has now formally been submitted into the UNGASS preparations.
2. To move forward, the CAP should be promoted at national levels.
3. CSOs must encourage their Gov'ts to promote the CAP in Vienna and New York
4. CSOs must ensure their governments are engaging in the debates in Vienna and New York and hold the Africa Group accountable to avoid future occurrence of CAP saga



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How to engage...

- Follow the debate: www.idpc.net / www.cndblog.org
- Join the VNGOC / NYNGOC
- Raise awareness, build alliances at national/regional level
- Find out who attends the debates from your country
- Speak to your governments / local UN officials
- Define your 'asks' and your targets
- Make submissions to www.ungass2016.org



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THANK YOU

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS?

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www.idpc.net

www.cndblog.org

www.stoptheharm.org

www.supportdontpunish.org