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## Commission on Narcotic Drugs

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Item 5 (e) of the provisional agenda\*

**Implementation of the international drug control treaties: other matters arising from the international drug control treaties**

### United States of America: draft resolution

#### **Preventing and responding to drug overdose through scientific evidence-based prevention, treatment, harm reduction and recovery support services in accordance with domestic law and circumstances**

*The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,*

*Recognizing* that the abiding concern of the three international drug control conventions is the health and welfare of humankind,

*Reaffirming* its principal role as the policymaking body of the United Nations system with prime responsibility for drug control and other drug-related matters, and of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as the leading entity in the United Nations system for addressing and countering the world drug problem, as well as the treaty-mandated roles of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board and the World Health Organization, and recognizing the contributions of other relevant United Nations entities and regional and international organizations, within their respective mandates,

*Recalling* its resolution 62/4 of 22 March 2019, in which it encouraged Member States, in accordance with national legislation and in the context of comprehensive and balanced drug demand reduction efforts, to implement, in accordance with the international drug control conventions, effective measures and initiatives aimed at minimizing the adverse public health and social consequences of the non-medical use of synthetic drugs, particularly synthetic opioids, by raising awareness and promoting increased access to and availability of evidence-based prevention, treatment and recovery services, including access to naloxone, used for the reversal of opioid overdose, and other opioid-blocking medicines and evidence-based measures,

*Recalling also* its resolution 55/7 of 16 March 2012, in which it encouraged all Member States to include effective elements for the prevention and treatment of drug overdose, in particular opioid overdose, in national drug policies, where appropriate,

\* E/CN.7/2024/1.



and to share best practices and information on the prevention and treatment of drug overdose, including the use of opioid receptor antagonists such as naloxone,

*Welcoming* the publication of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime *World Drug Report 2023*,<sup>1</sup> in particular its chapter entitled “The synthetic drug phenomenon”, while noting with concern its findings that consumers of synthetic drugs face growing challenges related to the unknown pharmacology and harms of such drugs, the lack of available treatments, therapies or antagonists for some new drugs, inadequate access to scientific evidence-based treatments, and increasingly dangerous mixtures of harmful substances in the drug supply,

*Stressing with grave concern* the increase in the number of overdose deaths associated with the use of synthetic drugs, and the urgent need to raise awareness of and improve access to the prevention and treatment of drug overdose,

*Recognizing* that a range of factors, including social and economic determinants of health, polydrug use, gender, age, comorbidities, pregnancy and maternity status, tolerance to drugs, route of administration and recent release from incarceration, can affect overdose vulnerability,

*Stressing* the need for a broad range of support measures and services that serve the specific needs of vulnerable groups and are differentiated on the basis of scientific evidence so that they respond best to the needs of those groups, taking into account gender considerations and cultural backgrounds,

*Recognizing*, in the context of comprehensive and balanced drug demand reduction efforts and in accordance with domestic legislation and applicable provisions of the three international drug control conventions, the importance of effective initiatives, strategies and practices aimed at minimizing the adverse health and social consequences of drug use, including harm reduction measures, in preventing and responding to overdose and related health challenges,

*Highlighting* its intersessional thematic discussions held in 2023, in which representatives of many Member States, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization, relevant United Nations entities and civil society cited harm reduction measures implemented in accordance with domestic law and the three international drug control conventions, including needle and syringe programmes and the distribution of opioid antagonists such as naloxone, as effective measures to safeguard public health and address the harms of drug use,

*Recognizing* advances in the area of overdose prevention and response, such as the improved collection, analysis and sharing of quality and comparable data on drug use and non-fatal and fatal overdoses, the identification of best practices and lessons learned and the expansion of scientific evidence-based prevention, treatment, harm reduction and recovery support,

*Noting with appreciation* key initiatives developed to prevent and respond to overdose and to prevent the use of drugs and other psychoactive substances, including the United Nations Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime early warning advisory on new psychoactive substances, the Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care and the Stop Overdose Safely initiative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Health Organization, and the Children Amplified Prevention Services initiative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,

1. *Calls upon* Member States to develop and implement, in accordance with domestic law and the international drug control conventions, and taking into consideration relevant circumstances, scientific evidence-based prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery support measures, as well as initiatives and measures aimed at minimizing the adverse public health and social consequences of the non-medical use of synthetic drugs, including needle and syringe programmes,

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations publication, 2023.

the distribution of opioid antagonists such as naloxone, the provision of medications for opioid use disorders and drug-checking equipment and services, wound care, sexually transmitted infection testing and other scientific evidence-based measures;

2. *Also calls upon* Member States to promote and strengthen, as appropriate and in accordance with domestic legislation, regional and international cooperation in developing and implementing treatment-related initiatives, to enhance technical assistance and capacity-building, to ensure non-discriminatory access to a broad range of interventions, including psychosocial, behavioural and medication treatment, including opioid agonist treatment and treatment for pregnant and post-partum people, and to promote the inclusion of drug overdose prevention and treatment in national drug policies;

3. *Further calls upon* Member States to explore, as appropriate, innovative approaches to more effectively address any threat posed by the non-medical and non-scientific use of synthetic drugs, including overdose, by involving all relevant sectors, supporting research, data collection, the analysis of evidence and the sharing of information, reinforcing health-care systems and harm reduction services and building the capacity of law enforcement and health-care professionals to respond to this challenge;

4. *Calls upon* Member States, as appropriate and in accordance with national legislation, to promote and strengthen scientific evidence-based early prevention, encompassing prenatal care, infancy and early and middle childhood, including through a cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach, as appropriate, and taking into account gender- and age-specific needs as well as the impacts of individual and environmental factors, including social, risk and protective factors, on health, using the International Standards on Drug Use Prevention to formulate effective early prevention programmes and strategies aimed at children by identifying and reducing risk factors and enhancing protective factors as part of a comprehensive strategy for overdose prevention;

5. *Urges* Member States, as well as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization and other relevant United Nations entities and regional and international organizations within their respective mandates, to develop or strengthen systems, including early warning networks, for the collection, analysis and sharing of information relating to overdose deaths and non-fatal overdoses, including through enhanced cooperation with civil society, the scientific and public health communities, toxicology and forensic analysis laboratory networks, health professionals and academia, with a view to identifying trends, emerging threats and informing public health responses, including targeting resources to support overdose prevention and response efforts;

6. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and other relevant United Nations entities and regional and international organizations, to expand existing efforts related to overdose prevention and response, such as the Stop Overdose Safely initiative, including by collecting and facilitating the exchange of best practices relating to overdose prevention and response, including harm reduction measures such as the use and availability of opioid receptor antagonists such as naloxone, legislative approaches and public outreach initiatives that encourage overdose victims and witnesses to contact emergency medical services by granting a certain degree of immunity from criminal liability and immunity from civil liability for the administration of opioid receptor antagonists, providing appropriate training and civil and criminal immunity for first responders and other relevant personnel and implementing other measures based on scientific evidence;

7. *Encourages* Member States to support the efforts, within their respective mandates, of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization, other relevant United Nations entities and regional and international organizations, and civil society to expand efforts to prevent the initiation of non-medical use of drugs and other psychoactive substances, and to raise awareness

of and provide education on practices aimed at minimizing the associated health risks and social consequences, in particular regarding overdose prevention, and prevention, treatment, harm reduction and recovery support services, including through, but not limited to, the Stop Overdose Safely initiative and the Children Amplified Prevention Services initiative;

8. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in coordination with the World Health Organization, the International Narcotics Control Board, other relevant United Nations entities and regional and international organizations, civil society and other non-governmental entities, to convene an intergovernmental meeting, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources and in collaboration with Member States, on synthetic drug threats, including overdose prevention and response;

9. *Invites* Member States and other donors to provide extrabudgetary resources for the purposes described above, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations.

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