

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
29 December 2022

Original: English

Commission on Narcotic Drugs**Sixty-sixth session**

Vienna, 13–17 March 2023

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

**Follow-up to the implementation at the national,
regional and international levels of all
commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial
Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the
world drug problem****Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit
opiates originating in Afghanistan through continuous and
reinforced support to the Paris Pact initiative****Report of the Secretariat***Summary*

In its resolution 56/3, entitled “Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit opiates originating in Afghanistan through continuous and reinforced support to the Paris Pact initiative”, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs welcomed and reiterated its support for the Paris Pact initiative as one of the most important international frameworks and a unique platform for genuine partnership between States, competent international organizations and other relevant stakeholders in the fight against opiates originating in Afghanistan. The Commission continued to call upon Member States, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other entities, to ensure the full implementation of the Vienna Declaration, the outcome document of the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan, held on 16 February 2012. As requested by the Commission, the present report describes the steps taken by UNODC to implement the resolution in 2022.

* E/CN.7/2023/1.



I. Background

1. The Vienna Declaration adopted at the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan, held in February 2012,¹ is a statement of international commitment to act in a balanced and comprehensive manner against the menace of opiates originating in Afghanistan. In the Declaration, participants prioritized the following four main areas, also known as its four pillars, for enhanced cooperation: (a) regional initiatives; (b) financial flows linked to traffic in opiates; (c) preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals; and (d) reducing drug abuse and dependence. In addition, Paris Pact partners reaffirmed their common and shared responsibility towards countering the global threats that opiates pose to peace and stability in different regions of the world.

2. In its resolution 56/3, entitled “Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit opiates originating in Afghanistan through continuous and reinforced support to the Paris Pact initiative”, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs recognized the initiative’s importance as one of the most significant international frameworks and a unique platform for partnership between Member States, competent international organizations and other relevant stakeholders in the fight against opiates originating in Afghanistan.

3. The Vienna Declaration provides a framework for the partnership’s response to the international challenges and the corresponding international commitments outlined in the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”, which are aimed at countering trafficking in narcotic drugs and addressing links with other forms of organized crime.

4. The Paris Pact partnership’s support for the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration contributes towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. Under the Paris Pact global programme, the 81 members of the partnership receive assistance in prioritizing their support in line with Sustainable Development Goals 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) and 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) in particular.

5. The Paris Pact has two dimensions. The first is the partnership itself, currently comprising 58 countries and 23 organizations, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The partnership is responsible for defining priorities and implementing measures in line with the Vienna Declaration, based on the principle of shared responsibility. The expert- and policy-level events organized within the framework of the partnership provide platforms for global dialogue aimed at promoting good practices, adapting responses to evolving threats along the drug trafficking routes originating in Afghanistan, facilitating collaboration and providing stronger evidence for coordinated action. The second dimension is the global Paris Pact programme established by UNODC to facilitate dialogue among the partners and provide coordination support through implementation of the programme’s three core components: the consultative mechanism, the liaison officer network and information management.

6. The Paris Pact is the only global cooperation mechanism dedicated to reducing trafficking in and the production and global consumption of opiates, including the cultivation of opium poppy, in a focused and coordinated manner. The importance of the Paris Pact has been recognized in multiple resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as part of a comprehensive approach to peace, stability and development in Afghanistan, the neighbouring region and beyond.

¹ See [E/CN.7/2012/17](#).

7. The evolving landscape of threats relating to drugs, organized crime and terrorism, in addition to the humanitarian emergency in Afghanistan, have implications not only for the country and its population, but equally for the wider region and the international community. The challenges to security and development call for concerted efforts, political will, cooperation and the support of the international community for mutually reinforcing and effective counter-narcotics measures. In that context, within its mandates, the Paris Pact initiative plays a central role by supporting the international community in strengthening regional and international cooperation, fostering political momentum and informing the development of operational responses to the intersecting challenges.

II. Status of implementation of Commission resolution 56/3

A. Update on the UNODC Paris Pact programme

8. Through its Paris Pact programme, UNODC acts as the coordinator for the Paris Pact partnership and supports the realization of its goals, including by bringing together relevant UNODC operational capacities at the global, regional and country levels.

Consultative mechanism

9. The consultative mechanism of the Paris Pact initiative facilitates regular expert and policy consultations between the 81 Paris Pact partners to identify operational priorities for responses to current and evolving threats, and promotes inter-thematic, regional and interregional coordination along the opiate trafficking routes originating in Afghanistan. At the expert meetings, the Paris Pact partners share their state-of-the-art knowledge and operational best practices to support the development and implementation of enhanced measures in relation to the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration. At the meetings, the recommendations regarding operational priorities are also reviewed and updated, and are subsequently submitted for endorsement at the annual meeting of the decision-making body of the Paris Pact partnership, the Policy Consultative Group.

10. In 2022, despite the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Paris Pact programme was able to successfully organize all five meetings of the consultative mechanism. On the basis of the modalities developed and adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, all the expert and policy meetings continued to be held in a hybrid format allowing both in-person attendance and participation through a virtual platform.

11. The four expert working group meetings organized in 2022 were attended by nearly 450 nominated experts representing 46 geographically widely spread countries and 14 international and regional organizations. The Policy Consultative Group meeting was attended by 135 nominated delegates from 37 countries and 13 organizations.

12. The expert working group on cross-border cooperation, related to the first pillar of the Vienna Declaration, held its meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 5 and 6 October 2022. The meeting was jointly organized with the Central Asia Drug Action Programme of the European Union and the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre. It brought together more than 110 participants from 28 countries and eight international and regional organizations. The participants shared best practices in cross-border cooperation and discussed, inter alia, means of strengthening the role of international and regional law enforcement centres in supporting cooperation to tackle emerging forms of drug-related crime. The meeting resulted in eight priority recommendations for implementation by Paris Pact partners, aimed at strengthening collaborative regional initiatives in cross-border settings.

13. In the context of the second pillar of the Vienna Declaration, the meeting of the expert working group focused on detecting and blocking financial flows linked to

illicit traffic in opiates was held in Vienna on 30 and 31 May 2022. The meeting was hosted by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and was attended by more than 140 nominated participants, including senior level representatives from law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, as well as financial intelligence units, representing 33 countries and 11 international and regional organizations. Participants identified and shared new challenges along the three drug trafficking routes originating in Afghanistan, namely, the northern, Balkan and southern routes, and operational best practices, with a particular focus on the risks posed by the illicit use of virtual assets, and asset recovery. As an outcome of the meeting, the experts agreed on four operational priority recommendations.

14. The meeting of the expert working group on precursors, related to the third pillar of the Vienna Declaration, was organized jointly with the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center and held in Bucharest on 24 and 25 October 2022. At the meeting, attended by 100 participants from 31 countries and six international and regional organizations, the experts shared updates on the latest trends in trafficking in precursor chemicals and provided information about recently identified trafficking routes and techniques. Other main topics discussed included the alignment of legal frameworks for the improved use of special investigative techniques, controlled deliveries, the exchange of intelligence and parallel joint investigations. In addition, participants received updates on backtracking investigations carried out in both source and transit countries for precursors and shared information about new, Internet-based methods to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals. Lastly, the experts agreed on 11 priority recommendations for enhancing actions related to precursors.

15. The meeting of the expert working group in support of a comprehensive approach to drug treatment and care, related to the fourth pillar of the Vienna Declaration, was held in Islamabad on 18 and 19 July 2022. The event was attended by more than 80 participants representing 22 countries and three international and regional organizations. At the meeting, the latest scientific evidence and good practices regarding quality assurance in the treatment and care of people with drug use disorders were presented and discussed. The participants reviewed, *inter alia*, modern approaches to the evaluation of treatment services, and shared experiences in the use of evaluation results. The participants agreed on 10 priority recommendations aimed at improving services for the treatment and care of people with drug use disorders.

16. The sixteenth meeting of the Policy Consultative Group was organized by UNODC and held in Vienna on 5 and 6 December 2022. The event was attended by 135 participants, representing 37 countries and 13 international and regional organizations. The Policy Consultative Group received updates regarding current and emerging drug trafficking patterns and trends, recent operational developments in Afghanistan, and the progress made under the Paris Pact programme and the UNODC Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries. Participants reconfirmed the relevance of the Paris Pact initiative and reiterated the importance of international and regional cooperation in addressing the threat posed by opiates, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility. At the end of the meeting, the operational priority recommendations resulting from the expert meetings held in 2022 in relation to the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration were reviewed and endorsed.

Liaison officer network

17. In 2022, the network of field-based Paris Pact liaison officers located in countries along the main opiate trafficking routes from Afghanistan (i.e. in Iran (Islamic Republic of), North Macedonia, Pakistan, Serbia, Türkiye, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uzbekistan) continued to support the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Paris Pact partnership under the supervision of the Paris Pact Coordination Unit.

18. During the reporting period, the realignment of the liaison officer network was implemented in coordination with key national stakeholders and counterparts. A new national liaison officer position was established in Ankara, reflecting the strategic position of Türkiye on the Balkan route. In response to the growing importance of the southern route and the key role played by the Eastern African countries with regard to counter-narcotics responses, a new national liaison officer position was operationalized in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania. In addition, in collaboration with the UNODC Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, a national liaison officer position was filled and operationalized in Islamabad.

19. The liaison officers continued to facilitate other UNODC programmes in support of the implementation of the Vienna Declaration. For example, the liaison officers improved the availability of data and assisted States in complying with their reporting responsibilities to UNODC with regard to the annual report questionnaire. In addition, the liaison officers collected data for the UNODC individual drug seizure database and the Drugs Monitoring Platform project and supported the dissemination of the *World Drug Report 2022* in the field. The liaison officers also supported several UNODC global and regional programmes, including the Container Control Programme, the Global Maritime Crime Programme, the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, the Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe and the Programme for Central Asia, and facilitated relevant coordination activities and synergies with the Paris Pact initiative at the field level.

20. To further support efforts to improve the availability of data, the liaison officers continued to update the Paris Pact country fact sheets by providing the latest figures on drug and precursor indicators for 21 countries in Central Asia, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and West Asia. The country fact sheets are made available on the Paris Pact web portal (www.paris-pact.net).

21. In addition, the liaison officers maintained and established new collaboration modalities with key national counterparts, developed national expert networks and identified opportunities for strengthening collaboration with UNODC in the areas of technical assistance and capacity-building. The country-level partners expressed their strong support for the Paris Pact and underlined the importance of its liaison officers for facilitating partners' effective engagement in the initiative's activities.

Information management

22. In line with the recommendations of the independent midterm evaluation of the Paris Pact programme and following the decisions taken at the fourteenth meeting of the Policy Consultative Group, the Paris Pact programme continued to provide regularly updated information on the implementation of the activities under the four thematic pillars of the Vienna Declaration through the Paris Pact web portal. The web portal, available in both English and Russian, also allows registered users to find and retrieve specific information and documents in relation to all Paris Pact events, including presentations, and adopted operational priority recommendations related to the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration.

B. Synergies

23. The Paris Pact initiative is a key element of the interregional, interdivisional and inter-thematic approach adopted by UNODC, the technical lead partner organization of the Paris Pact, in order to respond to the threats posed by opiates originating in Afghanistan. The Paris Pact programme continued to ensure the meaningful engagement of relevant UNODC programmes in the Paris Pact consultative mechanism, including through the Regional Section for Europe, West and Central Asia (through the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, the Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe and the Programme for Central Asia), the Border Management Branch (through the Global Maritime Crime

Programme, the Container Control Programme, the Airport Communication Project, the Criminal Network Disruption Programme and the Afghan Opiate Trade Project), the Organized Crime and Illicit Trafficking Branch (through the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism), the Drugs, Laboratory and Scientific Services Branch (through its Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Section), and the Research and Trend Analysis Branch (through its Drug Research Section and Data Development and Dissemination Section).

C. Sustainability of the UNODC Paris Pact programme

24. During the reporting period, the Paris Pact initiative effectively reached most of its partner countries and organizations through the successful holding of the four global expert working group meetings and the Policy Consultative Group meeting. In 2022, the events organized under the initiative's consultative mechanism were attended by nearly 600 nominated participants from 49 countries and 17 regional and international organizations, underlining the demand for the initiative, the importance of its activities and the continued need to strengthen the initiative pursuant to Commission resolution 56/3.

25. The Paris Pact programme actively engaged with the partners in calling for further support to strengthen the initiative. As underlined at the sixteenth meeting of the Policy Consultative Group, the sustainability of the initiative and its activities remains fully subject to the availability of continued donor support. In the future, further leveraging the Paris Pact initiative's consultative mechanism and developing the initiative as a rapidly adaptable vehicle entails broadening the partnership's donor base in the spirit of common and shared responsibility.
