

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: Limited
16 March 2023

Original: English

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

Vienna, 13–17 March 2023

Agenda item 5 (e)

**Implementation of the international drug control
treaties: other matters arising from the
international drug control treaties****Australia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Honduras: revised draft
resolution****Safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and
other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs***The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,*

Recognizing that the world drug problem continues to constitute a serious threat to public health and safety and to the well-being of humanity, and in particular the significant dangers posed by the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in synthetic drugs,

Recalling article 14, paragraph 5, of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988,¹ in which it is provided that the parties to the Convention may also take necessary measures for early destruction or lawful disposal of the narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and substances in Table I and Table II which have been seized or confiscated and for the admissibility as evidence of duly certified necessary quantities of such substances,

Recalling also the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem² of 2009, in which Member States recognized that scientific and forensic support in the identification and safe disposal of precursors was still inadequate in many countries, and in which it is stated that Member States should develop practical procedures for the safe handling and disposal of seized precursors in cooperation with competent international and regional bodies and share experiences in that area, as well as training and related activities,

Reaffirming its resolution 62/2 of 22 March 2019, in which it encouraged Member States, within their national contexts, to, inter alia, develop frameworks to ensure that persons on the front line of drug control efforts were adequately trained and equipped to safely handle synthetic drugs, including measures for the disposal of those drugs as described in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime *Guidelines*

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1582, No. 27627.

² See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 8 (E/2009/28)*, chap. I, sect. C.



*for the Safe Handling and Disposal of Chemicals Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Drugs,*³

Recalling its resolution 58/9 of 17 March 2015 on promoting the role of drug analysis laboratories worldwide and reaffirming the importance of the quality of the analysis and results of such laboratories, and noting that the accurate identification of substances contributes to their safe handling and the selection of appropriate disposal methods,

Reiterating that efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing, and more specifically that efforts to enhance capacity to safely handle and dispose of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, including those that have been seized or confiscated, among others, contribute to the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and to significantly reducing their release into air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment,

Bearing in mind that the improper disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, including those encountered in drug control efforts, in particular through waste management and wastewater systems, may have detrimental and long-lasting effects on the environment,

Noting with concern the risk of exposure of persons working on the front line of drug control, which may include, among others, police and other law enforcement personnel, customs and border control officers, counter-narcotics officers and other relevant personnel, who may come into contact with synthetic drugs, precursors and other chemicals used in their illicit manufacture, especially during and after seizure or confiscation,

Noting with concern also the risk of exposure of relevant personnel providing related public services, including health service providers and emergency response personnel, as well as other relevant personnel, who may come into contact with synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in their illicit manufacture,

Noting the importance of having appropriate and adequate scientific evidence-based practical procedures that support good health and safety practices among persons handling and disposing of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in their illicit manufacture in their work,

Emphasizing the need to encourage the sharing of best practices and information on the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs among Member States, including in cases of seizure or confiscation, as well as with industry and the private sector, on a voluntary basis,

Recalling the commitments contained in the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem,⁴ in which Governments are encouraged to work more closely with the International Narcotics Control Board and industry,

Emphasizing the need to promote the provision of technical assistance to States, upon request, including, where necessary, the provision of appropriate and adequate equipment and technology, according to their needs and priorities, along with the necessary training and maintenance support to assist with the safe handling and

³ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.11.XI.14.

⁴ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2014, Supplement No. 8 (E/2014/28)*, chap. I, sect. C.

disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs,

Recognizing the need to ensure that technical guidance and other resources on the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs are developed, implemented and updated regularly and are responsive to new and emerging trends related to such drugs, including changes in the methods used in their illicit manufacture and trafficking,

Taking note with appreciation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Synthetic Drug Strategy 2021–2025,

Recognizing that the safe handling and disposal of plant-based drugs and chemicals used in the illicit production and manufacture of such drugs, including during and after seizure or confiscation, pose significant risks and challenges, and thus also require the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building to requesting Member States and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned in this regard,

Mindful, for the purposes of the present resolution, of the relevant experience and practices of United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in waste management in relation to chemicals,

1. *Encourages* Member States to establish and implement, in accordance with their domestic law, adequate practical procedures for the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, including those encountered in drug control efforts, that are informed and guided by scientific evidence, are environmentally responsible and ensure the health and safety of persons, especially those on the front line of drug control and response, as well as other relevant personnel, bearing in mind the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Synthetic Drug Strategy 2021–2025;

2. *Recommends* that Member States consider, where relevant, including in such practical procedures for the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, measures for monitoring and the safe storage of such material pending its disposal;

3. *Encourages* Member States, where appropriate and in accordance with domestic law, to ensure sufficient capacity of persons on the front line of drug control, including law enforcement, customs and border control officers and other relevant personnel, to safely handle and dispose of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in their illicit manufacture, especially during and after seizure or confiscation, in a manner consistent with their respective national practical procedures, including by providing the necessary technical support and making use of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime scientific and technical assistance, expertise and training programmes;

4. *Also encourages* Member States, where appropriate and in accordance with domestic law, to ensure sufficient capacity of relevant personnel providing related public services, including health service providers and emergency response personnel, as well as other relevant personnel, who may come into contact with synthetic drugs, precursors and other chemicals used in their illicit manufacture to safely handle and dispose of these substances, including by providing the necessary technical support and making use of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime scientific and technical assistance, expertise and training programmes;

5. *Further encourages* Member States, where appropriate and in accordance with domestic law, to ensure sufficient capacity of relevant national agencies, including laboratories, to identify and characterize substances in order to support the appropriate selection of disposal methods and personal protective equipment and the assessment, elimination or mitigation of risks in handling, storage, transportation and disposal, with the support of relevant national agencies responsible for synthetic drugs

and their precursors, and requests the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Laboratory and Scientific Services to continue to provide support in this regard;

6. *Recommends* that Member States make use of available training tools on the safe handling and disposal of drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, in particular the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime e-learning modules available in the United Nations Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board E-learning Individual Training Environment modules;

7. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue to assist Member States in enhancing capacity for the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, including during and after seizure or confiscation;

8. *Encourages* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue to provide, upon request, scientific and technical assistance and expertise, training programmes and capacity-building related to the safe handling and disposal of plant-based drugs and chemicals used in their illicit production and manufacture, including during and after seizure or confiscation;

9. *Invites* the International Narcotics Control Board, within its treaty-based mandate, to continue to provide guidance to Member States, including, as appropriate, on enhancing their capacity for the safe handling of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, in particular those which have been seized or confiscated;

10. *Invites* Member States to continue to make use of training, guidance and expertise from the International Criminal Police Organization to enhance their capacity for the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs;

11. *Invites* Member States, as appropriate, and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, to share, on a voluntary basis, according to their domestic legislation, including through the Commission, their best practices, challenges, lessons learned and relevant scientific advances on the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, and requests the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to support efforts of Member States in this regard;

12. *Encourages* Member States, industry, academia and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, to continue their research and development to improve the methods available for the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs;

13. *Encourages* Member States to consider voluntarily establishing and strengthening partnerships or cooperation with private sector entities, where relevant and in accordance with domestic law, in support of the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, in particular those which have been seized or confiscated, including in situations where relevant private sector entities are engaged to undertake disposal operations, or where disposal involves repurposing and reuse by legitimate industries;

14. *Encourages* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in close cooperation with Member States and in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, to regularly review and, as appropriate, update its *Guidelines for the Safe Handling and Disposal of Chemicals Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Drugs* and to make that publication and other relevant tools available, including through the United Nations Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs;

15. *Also encourages* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue to engage with relevant entities, including those intergovernmental organizations that participate in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, for the purposes of inter-agency cooperation and

coordination, information-sharing and obtaining feedback on new and ongoing activities, to ensure that the work of the Office on the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs, their precursors and other chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, in particular those which have been seized or confiscated, is well informed and to keep Member States informed about those activities;

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