

6 September 2022

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**Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic
and Related Matters in the Near and
Middle East****Fifty-fifth session**

Ashgabat, 22–25 November 2022

Annotated provisional agenda**Provisional agenda**

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation.
4. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its fifty-fourth session.
5. Consideration of topics by working groups:
 - (a) Trends in drug trafficking and concealment methods, and in intelligence-led international cooperation;
 - (b) Synthetic drug production and trafficking, including the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs and their precursors;
 - (c) Alternatives to conviction and punishment for drug-related offences;
 - (d) Exchange of actionable intelligence and the role of regional cooperation platforms in facilitating such exchange.
6. Follow-up on 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, and preparations for the midterm review in 2024.
7. Organization of the fifty-sixth session of the Subcommission.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the report of the Subcommission on its fifty-fifth session.

* Available only in Arabic, English and Russian, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.



Annotations

1. Election of officers

Elections are held in accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. Past practice has been for the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East to elect a Chair, two Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The provisional agenda for the fifty-fifth session was approved by the Subcommission at its fifty-fourth session, held in Tashkent from 23 to 27 September 2019.

Following the adoption of the agenda, the Subcommission may wish to establish a programme of work. A proposed programme of work is contained in the annex to the present document for the consideration of the Subcommission.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda ([UNODC/SUBCOM/55/1](#))

3. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation

Participants are invited to inform the Subcommission about the efforts of their Governments to strengthen regional and subregional cooperation in areas such as joint investigations, law enforcement training and the sharing of information and experiences relating to measures taken to counter drug trafficking.

Participants were requested to submit to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), by 9 September 2022, a three-page country report on trends in drug trafficking during the past year. Under agenda item 3, participants are invited to inform the Subcommission about the main observations made in their reports, orally or in the format of a presentation.

Participants are also invited to inform the Subcommission of any practical challenges impeding subregional cooperation and of measures taken to overcome them.

The discussions under the item will provide an opportunity to examine current trends and the *modi operandi* used in drug trafficking, operational successes in efforts to counter trafficking in cannabis, cocaine and heroin, and other issues of relevance.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat transmitting the report of the Secretariat on the world situation with regard to drug trafficking ([UNODC/SUBCOM/55/2](#))

Report of the Secretariat on the current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation ([UNODC/SUBCOM/55/3/Add.1](#))

4. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its fifty-fourth session

Participants are invited to inform the Subcommission of action taken by their Governments to implement the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its fifty-fourth session, held in Tashkent from 23 to 27 September 2019. The Subcommission will have before it a note by the Secretariat based on replies received to a questionnaire concerning action taken by Governments to implement those recommendations ([UNODC/SUBCOM/55/4/Add.1](#)). Questionnaires are made available to participants on a secure dedicated website.

To enable the Secretariat to prepare its note on the status of implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its fifty-fourth session, a note verbale was transmitted to the Governments of the States members of

the Subcommittee with the request to return the completed questionnaires by 9 September 2022.

Under agenda item 4, participants are invited to inform the Subcommittee about the main elements of their responses to the questionnaire and to highlight areas of particular interest, orally or in the format of a presentation.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommittee at its fifty-fourth session ([UNODC/SUBCOM/55/4/Add.1](#))

5. Consideration of topics by working groups

Working groups will be established to review issues of regional importance and to facilitate informal discussions and an open exchange of views on such matters.

Representatives of UNODC with relevant specialized knowledge will be invited to make introductory presentations to inform the working groups and facilitate discussions. Participants are invited to bring presentations on the topics of the working groups, to enter into an interactive debate with others and to formulate their observations and recommendations to the plenary for endorsement and inclusion in the report on the session.

The working groups will be invited to consider the issues set out below.

(a) Trends in drug trafficking and concealment methods, and in intelligence-led international cooperation

The working group will discuss trends that national drug law enforcement agencies have observed in concealment methods and the transportation of drugs at the national, regional and interregional levels. Participants will be invited to share information on practices for investigating complex drug trafficking cases and the use of effective investigative techniques, including controlled deliveries. They will also be invited to share their experiences and challenges faced in conducting such operations and investigating such cases, as well as to share their views on how those challenges and problems are currently being or could be addressed. Participants are encouraged to highlight in particular actions and strategies that have proved to be effective and areas in which greater efforts should be made.

In addition, participants will discuss the effectiveness of existing regional and international law enforcement cooperation mechanisms, including with regard to intelligence-led international cooperation. In particular, they are encouraged to discuss difficulties in collecting, collating, analysing and sharing criminal intelligence at the national, regional and international levels. Issues related to building trust to ensure regular and effective exchange of criminal intelligence will also be addressed.

Participants are invited to make presentations on specific cases.

(b) Synthetic drug production and trafficking, including the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs and their precursors

The working group will consider current trends in the production of and trafficking in synthetic drugs and will discuss trafficking routes and the exchange of information on potential countries of source, transit and destination. Participants will share information on legal, technical and other challenges encountered in addressing the production of and trafficking in synthetic drugs and will consider the problems and challenges faced by law enforcement agencies in identifying and countering such production and trafficking.

Participants will also consider ways to better inform and facilitate counter-narcotic operations and interdiction decisions, including with regard to drug identification and the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs and their precursors. The working group will further consider ways in which to counter illicit trafficking in synthetic

drugs while ensuring access to and the availability of those substances for legitimate medical and scientific purposes, and will identify good practices in that field.

(c) Alternatives to conviction and punishment for drug-related offences

The working group will examine alternatives to conviction or punishment that are available, in line with the international drug control conventions and relevant international standards and norms, for drug-related offences. Participants will be encouraged to share national experiences and challenges related to the use of such alternatives at the pretrial, trial and post-trial stages, providing examples of available options and relevant criteria. Participants will be invited to reflect on the impact of establishing alternatives to imprisonment on public health and security. The workshop will also be focused on the interface between the criminal justice system and essential health care and social services, and good practices in coordination and cooperation between those sectors will be highlighted. In addition, the working group will consider successful strategies used in the region to address overcrowding in prisons, improve the efficiency of the criminal justice system, strengthen access to legal aid, reduce reoffending through the social reintegration of prisoners and manage prison capacity through efficient prison management.

(d) Exchange of actionable intelligence and the role of regional cooperation platforms in facilitating such exchange

The working group will discuss the importance of exchanging actionable intelligence in a timely manner, the problems faced in that regard and ways in which such an exchange could be facilitated at various levels. The roles and responsibilities of various law enforcement agencies will be considered by the working group, including those of the police, customs authorities, border protection agencies and other specialized agencies involved in the exchange of intelligence at the national and regional levels. The working group will also consider ways in which to improve the use of regional cooperation platforms in the exchange of intelligence, such as the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) Information System. Participants will discuss ways of facilitating the use by Member States of such platforms and how their services can be optimized to ensure the timely exchange of actionable intelligence.

6. Follow-up on 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, and preparations for the midterm review in 2024

At its sixty-second session, held in 2019, the Commission adopted by consensus the Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem. In the Ministerial Declaration, Member States, while acknowledging that tangible progress had been achieved over the past decade, noted with concern the persistent and emerging challenges posed by the world drug problem and committed to accelerating, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility, the full implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission and the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016, aimed at achieving all commitments, operational recommendations and aspirational goals set out therein.

Member States committed to supporting the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in continuing transparent and inclusive discussions involving all relevant stakeholders on effective strategies to address and counter the world drug problem, including through the sharing of information, best practices and lessons learned. To this end, thematic discussions are held every autumn to address the challenges identified in the “stocktaking” part of the Declaration, in line with the workplan for the period 2019–2023.

Thematic discussions to be held in Vienna in September 2022 will focus on the challenge “Responses not in conformity with the three international drug control conventions and not in conformity with applicable international human rights obligations pose a challenge to the implementation of joint commitments based on the principle of common and shared responsibility”.

Under agenda item 6, participants will be invited to consider the challenges posed to the States of the region with regard 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. Participants will also be invited to discuss how they could best contribute through the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to accelerating the implementation of all commitments made in the past decade, drawing on their technical expertise and regional experience.

Documentation

Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of Our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem (see [E/2019/28](#), chap. I, sect. B)

Conference room paper containing the Chair’s summary on the thematic discussions on the implementation of all international drug policy commitments, following up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration (19–21 October 2020) (E/CN.7/2021/CRP.1)

Conference room paper containing the Chair’s summary on the thematic discussions on the implementation of all international drug policy commitments, following up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration (19–21 October 2021) (E/CN.7/2022/CRP.1)

Conference room paper containing a note by the Secretariat on the implementation of all international drug policy commitments, following up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration (E/CN.7/2022/CRP.2)

7. Organization of the fifty-sixth session of the Subcommission

The Subcommission will be invited to review a draft provisional agenda for its fifty-sixth session, including the topics for discussion in working groups and possible venues for future sessions. A decision taken by the Subcommission at its fifty-fifth session on the venue for its fifty-sixth session and the topics for the working groups would greatly facilitate the preparation and organization of the fifty-sixth session. Participants are requested to be prepared to propose and discuss topics for the working groups of the fifty-sixth session of the Subcommission. The Secretariat will provide, upon request, a copy of the standard letter of agreement setting out the contributions of the United Nations and the host Government.

Participants will also be invited to discuss any other matters related to the organization of the deliberations, with a view to improving their substantive content and follow-up.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the organization of the fifty-sixth session of the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East ([UNODC/SUBCOM/55/5](#))

8. Other business

Under agenda item 8, the Subcommission may wish to address any other important issues, such as urgent matters arising from the country reports.

9. Adoption of the report of the Subcommission on its fifty-fifth session

The Subcommission is expected to adopt the report on its fifty-fifth session, including the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the working groups, on the last day of the session.

Annex

Proposed programme of work

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Title or description</i>
Tuesday, 22 November 2022	9 a.m.		Registration
	10 a.m.		Opening of the fifty-fifth session
		1	Election of officers
		2	Adoption of the agenda
		6	Follow-up on 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, and preparations for the midterm review in 2024
		4	Implementation of the recommendations adopted at the fifty-fourth session
Wednesday, 23 November 2022	3 p.m.	3	Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation
	10 a.m.	5	Consideration of topics by working groups
	3 p.m.	5	Consideration of topics by working groups (<i>continued</i>)
Thursday, 24 November 2022	10 a.m.	5	Consideration of topics by working groups (<i>continued</i>)
	3 p.m.	5	Consideration of topics by working groups (<i>continued</i>)
Friday, 25 November 2022	10 a.m.	7	Organization of the fifty-sixth session
		8	Other business
	3 p.m.	9	Adoption of the report of the Subcommission on its fifty-fifth session