

**IOGT International Official Statement
World Health Assembly 2018
Item 20.3 D. Public Health Dimension
of the world drug problem (decision WHA70(18) (2017)**

25.05.2018

We commend the MoU between WHO and UNODC and welcome the commitment to a comprehensive and integrated approach to the world drug problem. Addressing all aspects of the world drug problem should be a priority. In light of the UNGASS outcome document and target 3.5 under the Sustainable Development Goals, allow me to highlight three key actions, that IOGT International urges governments to take:

1) Make use of the full potential of the conventions

The current international drug control treaties establish an international framework to tackle drug-related harm by reducing both supply and demand. The approach adopted by the Conventions is health-centered. The Conventions repeatedly call for social cohesion and the reintegration of drug users, and do not treat drug users and people with drug use disorders as criminals to be marginalized. One of the primary aims of the Conventions is to guarantee the availability of essential drugs for medical interventions, as “indispensable” tools for the treatment of a variety of medical conditions, while preventing use that is not for medical or scientific purposes.

2) Implement public health oriented, population level measures

Drug use is not only a health issue that affects the individual user; it is a public health issue. This means tackling structural causes of drug use within a society and helping to determine interventions that can prevent and reduce drug-related harm at population as well as individual level.

3) In the era of SDGs, pivot to prevention and health promotion

A pivot to evidence-based prevention and health promotion benefits governments with regard to cost-effectiveness as well as sustainability of interventions and

1

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Agenda item 20.3 D

outcomes. It also helps to empower people and communities and promotes Human Rights, contributing significantly to positive engagement of children, youth and adults with their families, schools, workplaces and communities.

Thank you for your attention

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