

Elementos para la participación de México en el Evento Paralelo “Civil Society and International Drug Policy in the Context of Agenda 2030”

Friday March 17th, 2017

14:20 - 15:10 hrs.

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Thank you very much for convening this side event on Civil Society Drug Policy and Sustainable Development Agenda.

I start highlighting that the Government of Mexico has favored the inclusion of plural views from civil society in international policies, and such is the case when it comes to the world drug problem, a phenomenon that affects both government and civil society.

This supportive view to civil society participation is a result of an evolution, in this regard, of a day-by-day learning. And I can say that our concrete experience is by all means positive, as we are convinced of the impact of aligning the efforts of drug policy to those efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, we believe that we also have to align those efforts and expenses of Civil Society preparation process.

We recognize the progress made during recent years, in particular because of the UNGASS preparations process, by the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs and the New York NGO Committee on Drugs, as well as by the Civil Society Task Force, as a whole.

We and many other governments are encouraged to maintain and to expand these participations as a good practice, both within the United Nations system and, regional and interregional mechanisms such as CICAD (Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission) and Pompidou Group.

As a proof of our commitment towards the inclusion of civil society in the international drug policy debate, let me share with you, that the Government of Mexico has established a Working Group with civil society organizations, which operates through periodical coordination meetings, which take place at least once every two months. We share documents we receive comment and the result is always strengthening our foreign policy.

Furthermore, Mexico has the practice of incorporating members of civil society in our official delegations, as advisors. Such was the case for the World Drug Problem Debate, for UNGASS 2016 and for the Sustainable Development Agenda Negotiation Process.

Furthermore, the series of national dialogues to better assess and formulate proposals to implement the operational recommendations of UNGASS 2016, which our Government has organized since September 2016, has counted with the participation of representatives of national and international civil society organizations. In our dialogues, civil society and government are sitting at the same table and taking the floor with the same valuable comments.

The solid collaboration that we have established and maintained goes hand to hand with the new multisectoral approach demanded by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, where our Commission of Narcotic Drugs must be inside the same path.

As you might all be aware, one big achievement is the more and more consolidated recognition of the role of civil society in the formulation, implementation, maintaining and evaluation of drug policies, through a transversal approach acknowledged by UNGASS 2016 outcome document. This enables us to continue opening spaces for civil society in all regions and international fora.

A concrete example of the broad debate and learning from the expertise of civil society and scientific community, and at the same time, as a concrete example of aligning drug policy to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, it was our own review of domestic regulations for opioid prescriptions.

In our efforts to prevent diversion, we made it very difficult for health professionals to provide pain relief medication. Administrative modifications, like the development of secure electronic prescriptions have made a huge difference.

Finally, I invite colleagues of other governments to build up on civil society engagement taking into consideration two key concepts to step in forward:

- (1) Plurality: as governments, civil society has not the same views, not the same voice.
- (2) Continuity: as the sustainability agenda demands, having successful policy on civil society participation is based on the possibility of maintaining the efforts as an institutionalized practice.

The result is always a win-win situation for all of us.

Thank you!