

**Esbjörn Hörnberg**  
IOGT International



Candidate for:  
**Chairperson**

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Since the mid-1960s, I have devoted my life to working as a civil society activist on drug-related issues. My mission was and still is being carried out both at the local and national levels in my home country, Sweden, but also all across the globe. From South-East Asia, where I lived and worked with these issues in late 1990-ies, to sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, I have had the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of many dealing with drug-related challenges from the local to the international level.

As a representative of a proactive VNGOC member, IOGT International, I have been elected to the Board of the VNGOC as Treasurer, Vice-Chairperson and Chairperson, duties which I have taken seriously, giving my very best to preserve and to further the standing of the VNGOC vis-à-vis our partners, as well as to ensure that we achieve the objectives we have set in our Strategic Operational Plans.

The beauty of the VNGOC rests in the diversity of the views we hold and the commitment of our member organisations and their representatives to making a positive difference in the lives of those affected by drugs worldwide. As member of the VNGOC Board I have always minded the need to ensure that everyone's voice is heard in the fora where we work and I do believe that significant progress has been achieved in terms of civil society contributions to the international drug policy debate. A case in point is UNGASS 2016. It is my strong belief that this collaborative effort across the board of ideological convictions led to results that no single civil society organisation would have managed to achieve by itself.

This was our collective achievement. And yes, challenges were overcome and more will follow, but our passionate commitment will prevail. The 2019 process will again require a concerted effort on the part of civil society. There are some storm clouds in the horizon.

Only by standing together and being respectful of each other's views, can we achieve the best possible results.

I believe that the years of my experience in Global Advocacy, all my successful efforts of building constructive working relationships with UNODC, the CND Chairs and numbers of governments are a unique feature that will be very useful when we enter the final processes leading to the evaluation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action 2019. As the Chair of VNGOC, I am prepared to make the most of my well-anchored position among number of policy makers combined with my life-long engagement in drug-related issues in order to provide a balanced and comprehensive voice of the Civil Society.