

Annual General Assembly of the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs

Due to COVID-19 the VNGOC Board decided to hold all meetings during the 64th CND online, including the Annual General Assembly. The VNGOC Board and the Nominations Committee further decided to deliver the General Assembly in two parts:

1. Part 1 of the AGM was held on Thursday 8th April 2021 (15:00 – 17:00 Vienna time) using Zoom
2. Part 2 of the AGM was held on Thursday 15th April 2021 (16:30-17:30 Vienna time) using Zoom

The recordings of the meetings as well as the full presentations are available at <http://vngoc.org/about-the-vngoc/vngoc-meetings/>.

DRAFT MINUTES

AGM PART 1

1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda

The Committee **adopted** the draft agenda.

2. Attendance and apologies for absence

113 people attended Part 1 of the AGM and 70 people attended Part 2 of the AGM. 150 member organisations in good standing registered to vote in the VNGOC elections. (see Annex 1)

No apologies were received by the Secretary prior to the meeting.

3. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting

The [draft minutes](#) of the meeting held on 04 March 2020 have been circulated. The Committee **approved** the draft as a correct record of the meeting.

4. Membership

The Committee was informed about the latest applications for membership and the new members were officially introduced.

64 new organisations from 39 different countries were admitted since March 2020, bringing the total membership to 318 organisations. The list of new member organisations can be found [here](#).

Several members raised concerns regarding the large number of new organisations with a similar name. The Board reiterated that only independent organisations can join the VNGOC and that the new members fulfill this and all other membership

criteria as far as they could ascertain. As much of the process is based on good faith, the membership was encouraged to look at the list of VNGOC members and give feedback to the Board if they have specific concerns regarding the eligibility of an organisation.

5. Annual Report

The Board presented the VNGOC [annual report](#) and reflected on activities for 2020. In particular, the Board presented civil society speaking opportunities in 2020 and the range of speakers selected by the VNGOC. The annual report was **approved**.

6. Financial Report 2020 and Budget 2021

The Board informed the Committee about the annual accounts for 2020 and the latest financial status – contained within the annual report. The Auditors, Mousa Daoud (Jordan Green Crescent) and John Redman (CADFY), confirmed their **approval** of the financial documentation.

The Board presented the budget for 2021, and the Committee **approved**.

7. Proposal from the VNGOC membership to change the election procedure

Stig Erik Sørheim, representing EURAD, presented a [proposal](#) regarding new procedures for VNGOC Board elections which had been submitted on behalf of several member organisations. The proposal was put forward by EURAD, IDPC, Movendi International, MUCD, Dianova, Forut and TB/HIV Care Association in accordance with the VNGOC statutes.

After a discussion among the members present (see below), the proposal – to form a working group and further explore possible changes to the election process, and also to delay the formation of the 2022 nominations committee until October 2021 – was **approved** by the Committee by acclamation, with no formally registered objections and one formally registered abstention.

The following ideas and suggestions were brought up by members of the Committee during the discussion:

Mousa Daud (TJADS) and Memory Usaman (Rwanda Youth Impact) proposed to delay the discussion and the formation of a working group until next year as they felt that more time was needed to explore and discuss the proposal.

Tajudeen Abiola (Green Crescent Health Development Initiative Nigeria) raised the issue of gender balance mentioned in the proposal and asked whether it is truly relevant for the issue as organisations and not individuals are represented in the VNGOC. He also pointed out that “geographical representation” and “balanced

representation” are vague terms and need to be more clearly defined and put in a context. In addition, he voiced concern that the proposed time period might be too short to come up with a good proposal.

John Redman (CADFY) also agreed regarding the timing of the proposal, especially considering the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on in person meetings that might make robust debate more difficult.

Through comments in the chat, several members pointed out the importance of gender balance in all aspects of our work. It was also noted that the proposal was simply to begin a discussion via a working group, and not to make any binding decisions at this time.

Stig Erik Sørheim (EURAD) then addressed the issues raised, saying that especially regarding gender balance and other terms mentioned the proposal had been kept deliberately vague as further exploration and discussion should be done by the working group. While we have had gender balance on the Board so far, it is important to make sure that the membership does not select an all-male or all-female Board in the future.

Amy Ronshausen (Drug Free America Foundation) suggested a series of online discussions in the coming months to allow as many members as possible to discuss this idea and to give their input.

Beyza Kartal (Verein Neubeginn) pointed out that gender balance and regional representation are important aspects to always keep in mind, but cautioned that “balanced representation” was a very vague term and that in-depth discussions would be needed with plenty of time to explore.

Shane Varcoe (Dalgarno Institute) drew attention to the composition of the working group and asked how that would be formed.

Stig Erik Sørheim (EURAD) responded that the working group would be formed by volunteers from the VNGOC membership and re-emphasized that the proposal is only to have a conversation at this time, and changes would only be proposed after in-depth discussion both in the working group and among the broader membership.

Shane Varcoe (Dalgarno Institute) proposed a rolling consultation in different regions and a recruitment mechanism for the working group to ensure gender and regional balance already in the working group itself.

David Borden (DRCnet) pointed out that online discussions had the potential to increase participation and suggested to support members without stable internet access.

Nazlee Maghsoudi (CDPCE) drew parallels to other work of the VNGOC and the Civil Society Task Force (CSTF), where balancing different aspects of drug policy, and ensuring gender balance and geographical diversity are always central. Beginning a conversation on how to better incorporate these variables in the Board seems to align very well with our working principles. Any proposals by the working group can then be discussed and voted on at the proposed Extraordinary General Assembly later in 2021, and even if a future proposal would be approved by the membership there wouldn't be any actual change in the voting process.

Jamie Bridge (VNGOC Chair) then attempted to summarize the suggestions put forward by the members, especially that:

- an open call would be issued by the Board for working group participants
- a series of meetings geared toward different time zones to facilitate discussions and enable broad engagement
- provide internet access to people if they are unable to join because of challenges with the infrastructure

During the meeting itself, the following volunteers for the working group were noted:

- Arumugam Sankar
- Ganna Dovbakh
- Hellen Lunkuse Waiswa Tanyniga
- Jamie Bridge
- Marie Nougier
- Milutin Milošević
- Monica Barzanti
- Regina Mattson
- Stig Erik Sørheim

8. UNODC update

The Committee received an update on developments within UNODC from the Civil Society Unit. The Civil Society Unit especially highlighted the successful webinars conducted together with the VNGOC, and also drew attention to Crime Congress that took place in March 2021 (the first virtual meeting to take place outside of a UN Headquarter). Lessons learned from this important event also impact the CND,

and include a greater number of online slots for NGOs at the 64th CND. 20% of all available slots are dedicated to civil society organisations.

9. VNGOC Board elections

The nominations committee (Orsi Feher, Rogers Kasirye, Clement Bofa-Oppong, Ezze Eluchie) presented the procedures for the online Board elections, which were also circulated before the meeting, and each candidate had the opportunity to briefly address the membership. The elections were held online via electionrunner.com in the following order (all times CET):

- a) Chairperson: Monday, 12th April 11am to Tuesday, 13th April 10am
- b) Deputy Treasurer: Tuesday, 13th April 11am to Wednesday, 14th April 10am
- c) Deputy Secretary: Wednesday, 14th April 11am to Thursday 15th April 10am

The meeting was then firmly paused by Matej Kosir (VNGOC Deputy Chair) for the duration of the elections, to be resumed on Thursday 15th April, 4.30 pm CEST.

AGM PART 2

10. VNGOC Board elections (continuation of item 9)

Out of 174 members in good standing, 150 registered to vote in the Board elections. The final results were confirmed by the nominations committee as follows:

Chairperson:

Nominee	Organisation	Votes Received
Jamie Bridge	IDPC	88
John Redman	CADFY	59

Deputy Treasurer:

Nominee	Organisation	Votes Received
Heloísa Broggiato Matter	IAHPC	59
Alexandre Kieslich da Silva	CADFY	49
George Ochieng Odalo	Slum Child Foundation	22
Augusto Paulo Valente Nogueira	IFNGO	13
Arumugam Sankar	Empower	4
Beatrix Vas	Students for Sensible Drug Policy	candidacy withdrawn

Deputy Secretary:

Nominee	Organisation	Votes Received
Penny Hill	Harm Reduction Australia	73
Asia Ashraf	WOCAD	70
Dr Kawal deep Kour	SA-DARC	2

On behalf of the VNGOC Board, Jamie Bridge (Chair) thanked the nominations committee and all the membership for their cooperation and understanding during the unprecedented online elections this year. Jamie also formally registered thanks to Sarah Pirker, VNGOC Project Officer, for overseeing the whole process, and especially thanked Zoran Jelic (Stijena Resoc), who served as a Deputy Treasurer from 2018 to 2021, for his outstanding work as a Board member.

11. Appointment of an auditor

The membership was asked to nominate and confirm an auditor. Beatrix Vas (Students for Sensible Drug Policy) volunteered and was **appointed for two years**, replacing Mousa Daoud (Jordan Green Crescent).

12. Any other business

Michael Kraevitz (Veterans for Safe Access) raised the issue of speaker selection and asked the Board to re-examine the selection process as he felt that especially when it came to the CND discussions on cannabis, his stakeholder group had been underrepresented. The Board invited all members to review the existing selection criteria and process ([available here](#)) and make any formal suggestions for changes that could be made.

Kenzi Riboulet (FAAAT) asked the Board to explore the possibility to formalize the informal dialogues with the CND, UNODC, INCB, and WHO. The Board agreed to discuss this further.



ANNEX 1 – registered voters

Organisation

Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation (CDPE)

Frontline AIDS

World Federation Against Drugs (WFAD)

Drug Reform Coordination Network (DRCnet)

Institute for Research and Development (UTRIP)

International Network of People who Use Drugs (INPUD)

Dianova International

Fondazione San Patrignano

Women and harm reduction international network (WHRIN)

Youth Organisations for Drug Action (YODA)

International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC)

FORUT

STAND

Empower India

Dianova Portugal

Alcohol and Drug Foundation

Foreningen Tryggere Ruspolitikk (Norway)

ANORW Police and Emergency Services of the Ottawa Watershed

Youth RISE

Mainline Foundation

Drug Policy Australia Limited

Penal Reform International

Correlation Network

Andrey Rylkov Foundation for Health and Social Justice (ARF)

Instituto RIA

HIV Legal Network (formerly Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network)

Harm Reduction Australia

International Council of Women

Middle East and North Africa Harm Reduction Association

Asociacion Proyecto Hombre

Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP)

Karim Khan Afridi Welfare Foundation

Rights Reporter Foundation

Hepatitis Australia

Latinoamerica Reforma Foundation

Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM)

Verein Neubeginn

Latin American Network of People Who Use Drugs (LANPUD)

Asociación Costarricense para el Estudio e Intervención en Drogas (ACEID)

FEDITO BXL asbl - Drugs & Addictions Brussels

CADCA

Centro de Convivência É de Lei

Health Poverty Action

Knowmad Institute

Dejusticia

International Doctors for Healthier Drug Policies (IDHP)

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)

International Center for Ethnobotanical Education, Research and Service (ICEERS)
Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network
Global Initiative on Substance Abuse (GISA)
Drug Free America Foundation, Inc.
International Police Organisation (IPO)
Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy (CSSDP)
Organização das Famílias da Ásia e do Pacífico (Organization of the Families of Asia and Pacific)
Harm Reduction International
Elternkreis Wien
ARTM
Movendi
National Needle Exchange Forum
Conectados Pela Vida
CADFY
APDES
Stardom Association
Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)
EURAD
Green Moon
Udruzenje gradjana Zeleni polumjesec u Bosni i Hercegovini
Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA)
FONDACIONI YESILAY (Green Crescent Albania Foundation)
Turkish Green Crescent
Afghanistan Green Crescent Organization (AGCO)
Rwanda Youth Impact
Green Crescent South Africa
IG SEMATIK
Green Crescent Ghana
The Green Crescent Health Development Initiative (GHI) Nigeria
Federation Addiction
International Inner Wheel
Transform Drug Policy
MUCD
WOCAD
Dalgarno
Finnish Association for Humane Drug Policy
The Jordan Anti Drugs Society
Transnational Institute (TNI)
Pertubuhan Bulan Sabit Hijau Malaysia (Green Crescent)
Green Crescent Society Palestine
Shola Mese Foundation
Scottish Drugs Forum
GREA - Groupement Romand d'Etudes des Addictions (proxy given to IDPC)
Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign (Ireland)
Release (Proxy given to IDPC)
Pengasih Malaysia
Moroccan Green Crescent
Actis

TB/HIV Care (proxy given to IDPC)

Zambia Green Crescen

Green Crescent Syria

Kosova Yeşilay Cemiyeti/ Shoqëria Hana e Gjelbërt e Kosovës

Zelenyy Pivmisyats Ukrayiny ZPU Ukraine

Croissant Vert Senegal

SDRUZHENIE YESHILAY - BALGARIA (Yeshilay Bulgaria - YSLBG)

Mali Green Crescent CVM Mali

Public Association "Zhasylai"

Against bad habits public union

Yayasan Green Crescent Indonesia

CROISSANT VERT NIGERIEN (CVN)

Green Crescent Foundation (Maldives)

Sudanese Green Crescent Society (SGCS)

Somali Green Crescent Society (SGCS)

tunisian green crescent

Uganda Green Crescent

Gambia Green Crescent

Zdruzenie Jesilaj Na Rsm (Macedonia)

GREEN CRESCENT ZIMBABWE

Help Not Handcuffs, Inc.

TANZANIA GREEN CRESCENT COMMUNITY

Thai Green Crescent

Open Society Institue

Kıbrıs Türk Yeşilay Derneği

Green Cresent Foundation Sri Lanka

Green Crescent Kyrgyzstan (Public Association)

Dagıstan Yesilay

AFEW (proxy given to CDPE)

Zeleni krst - Zeleni polumjesec

Al Hidn

Centro de Integracion Juvenil AC

Help Not Handcuffs, Inc.

Pakistan Youth Organization (PYO)

Law Enforcement Action Partnership UK?Europe

Eurasian Harm Reduction Association

Ana Liffey Drug Project (proxy given to CDPE)

Green Crescent Australia

FAAAT

SPYM

CELS

Canadian Drug Policy Coalition

Drug Free Europe Foundation

IFNGO

New Zealand Drug Foundation

African Action on Aids (AAA)

Association For Safer Drug Policies Sweden

Intercambios

International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care (IAHPC)

Japan Advocacy Network for Drug Policy

Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL)

Virginians Against Drug Violence

CROISSANT VERT DE LA REPUBLIQUE DÉMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO

Slum Child Foundation

Child Space Organization



ANNEX 2- budget

VNGOC

ACCOUNTS

2020



Description	2020 Budget (EUR)	EUR Actual Expenditure	USD Actual Expenditure
Opening Balance, 1 Jan 2020		€ 26.317,05	\$ 14.750,55
INCOME			
Membership Fees	€ 12.000,00	€ 8.878,04	\$ 1.805,92
Travel Grans (from reserve)	€ 4.000,00		
TOTAL INCOME	€ 16.000,00	€ 8.878,04	\$ 1.805,92
EXPENDITURE			
Salary costs	€ 3.000,00	€ -	\$ -
Travel Grans for Members	€ 4.000,00	€ -	\$ -
Board Meetings	€ 3.500,00	€ -	\$ -
Working Groups	€ 2.000,00	€ -	\$ -
Bank Fees and Charges	€ 1.500,00	€ 559,71	\$ 522,30
Office Expenditures / Website	€ 2.000,00	€ 1.483,86	\$ 583,02
Webinars		€ 300,00	\$ 300,00
Other		€ 759,37 *	\$ -
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	€ 16.000,00	\$ 3.102,94	\$ 1.405,32
Surplus / (Deficit)		\$ 5.775,10	\$ 451,82
BALANCE, 31 January 2021		\$ 32.092,15	\$ 15.151,15

*Membership fee payment received in error and refunded

BUDGET 2021



Income		Expenditure	
Membership Fees	€ 10,000	Salary Costs	€ 8,000
Travel Grants (from reserves)	€ 4,000	Travel Grants for NGO Speakers	€ 4,000
UNODC Grant (for salary costs)	€ 8,000	Regional Working Groups	€ 2,000
		Events/ Webinars	€ 1,000
		Board Meeting	€ 3,500
		Bank Fees	€ 1,500
		Office Expenditure/ Website	€ 2,000
Total	€ 22,000	Total	€ 22,000

WORKPLAN

- Provide resources and support to **develop NGO capacity to engage the relevant UN bodies** on drug policy and related matters.
- Foster new, and utilise existing, **opportunities for NGO engagement** with relevant UN bodies on drug policy and related matters.
- **Advocate for NGO inclusion in international debates** concerning the implementation, impact and development of drug policies.
- **Present a global, balanced NGO voice** and/or position on drug policy at strategic national, regional and international events.
- **Effective and efficient management** and promotion of the Committee