

Jamie Bridge

International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC)

Supported by:

International Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse (IFNGO)

Candidate for:

Chairperson

Dear members,

I have been on the VNGOC Board since March 2017, and the Chair since March 2018. During this time, it has been a huge honour to represent this growing global network. I have cherished the opportunity to contribute to the essential work of the Board - including updating the Statutes and Rules of Procedure, the civil society coordination around the 2019 High-Level Ministerial Segment, and more recently steering through the challenges and barriers created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

If I am re-elected, this would be my last permitted term as VNGOC Chair. My motivation to continue comes from seeing first-hand the impact and benefits that strong, coordinated, professional civil society engagement has at the CND and beyond. Even when our participation is forced online - like at the 64th CND - we continue to prove our value and to protect the spaces that we have earned. In recent years, the VNGOC has expanded its work in terms of online events, speaking opportunities for members, the civil society hearings with INCB, the "finding common ground" meetings, and the regional working groups. It is an exciting period for the Committee - especially as our attention will soon also turn to the next high-level moment in 2024 (the mid-term review of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration).

I started my career working in further education and drugs services in the UK, having graduated in psychology in 2002. I went on to gain a Masters in drug policy, and have also worked with Harm Reduction International (HRI) and the Global Fund in Geneva, before returning to the UK to join the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC). In addition to my roles at VNGOC, I have previously served on the Boards of Harm Reduction International and the UK National Needle Exchange Forum (NNEF). Throughout my career, I have gained invaluable experience at the UN level as well as in networking and diplomacy.

Despite the breadth of views that are represented within the VNGOC membership, we have worked hard to emphasise our commonalities and work together. The Board has demonstrated its commitment to balance and transparency, and I would like to thank all VNGOC members for their support and engagement over the past few years. I hope that I can continue to deliver all of these things as your Chair for the next two years as well.

Yours faithfully,
Jamie Bridge
jbridge@vngoc.org.