

# AFRICA CONFERENCE ON DRUGS AND CRIME

*“Promoting evidence-based interventions on drugs and crime to foster African development”*

## CONCEPT NOTE

21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY 2022

Online

### BACKGROUND

According to the [Outcome Document](#) of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Countering the World Drug Problem held in 2016 (UNGASS 2016), the [Review Mechanism](#) of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the recently launched [Kyoto Declaration](#), it is evidently clear that there is need to promote effective, comprehensive, scientific evidence-based policies to respond to the world drug situation, address transnational organized crime and foster a fair and just criminal justice system.

*The 2016 UNGASS Outcome Document* elaborates on the need to enhance the knowledge of policymakers and the capacity, as appropriate, of relevant national authorities on various aspects of the world drug problem and criminal justice system in order to ensure that national policies remain evidence based. We strongly believe this conference will create that avenue since we will bring civil society organizations together and table our recommendations to state parties, so that gaps can be addressed together.

*The 2019 Ministerial Declaration on strengthening our actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem* makes it clear that there is need to safeguard future generations by ensuring that no one affected by the world drug situation is left behind by bridging the gaps in addressing the persistent and emerging trends and challenges through the implementation of balanced, integrated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary and scientific evidence-based responses, placing the safety, health and well-being of all members of society, in particular our youth and children, at the centre of our efforts.

*Resolution 9/1 of the Conference of the Parties to UNTOC* provides space for civil society, academics and the private sector to participate in the review process through constructive dialogues with governments as well as consultation at the national level.

In the *Kyoto Declaration*, Member States committed to enhance multidisciplinary efforts to prevent and combat crime through cooperation and coordination between law enforcement and other criminal justice institutions, and other governmental sectors, as well as to support their work, by engaging in and fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships with the private sector,

civil society, academia and the scientific community, and with other relevant stakeholders as appropriate.

The conference aims to create avenues for dialogue and action to ensure that no one is left behind and further build on existing documents such as the UNODC Strategic Vision for Africa 2030 and the [African Civil Society Common Position on Drugs](#).

## **Conference Objectives and Topics**

The conference will be a platform for scientists and practitioners, including youth, to present their work, and exchange on how to continue to bridge the “data gap” in Africa, while also promoting interventions following evidenced based international standards.

The aim of the conference is to support the implementation of the recently launched [UNODC Strategic Vision for Africa 2030](#), especially value proposition “*analysis, research, evidence*”.

The conference will aim to achieve the following objectives:

1. Provide a platform for civil society organizations from Africa to engage with each other, form consensus on their actions on matters concerning, drugs and crime and guided by the outlined policy documents and the context of UNODC Strategic Vision for Africa 2030<sup>1</sup>
2. Share experiences on the implementation of the afore mentioned policy documents with the view to addressing challenges affecting the region with regards to Drugs and Crime, in particular on what can be done to promote close working relations between state parties and civil society.
3. Reflect on the various drugs and crime thematic areas –trends, and current issues; how interventions can be improved; existing opportunities to influence policy and practice.
4. Enhance the knowledge of non-governmental stakeholders and their capacity to react appropriately to emerging trends in the field of drugs and crime as part of promoting evidence-based interventions for development.
5. Celebrate the work of CSOs and contribute to the implementation of the UNODC Strategic Vision for Africa and the African Union Agenda 2063.
6. Foster engagement with the UNODC, the African Union and other regional bodies, as well as with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) and the Conference of the Parties to UNTOC (COP UNTOC).
7. Produce a practical, action-oriented and forward-looking outcome document that will be presented to the upcoming sessions of the CND and the CCPCJ the COP UNTOC.

The Conference will focus on the following three cross-cutting topics:

- Crime and drug use prevention among youth

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<sup>1</sup> List relevant policy documents you are referring to here

- Cybercrime: Vulnerabilities and opportunities of digitalization
- Illicit trafficking

### **Conference Methodology**

The conference will be held in a hybrid format, depending on the availability of resources from supports and partners.

The event will take place over the course of three days.

For those interested in participating in the event both physically and virtually, information about registration and venue will be shared. For the side events or breakout sessions, an online platform will be used to enable participation of participants joining virtually, whereas those attending physically will be directed to the appropriate rooms.

### **Way forward**

The outcome of the meeting will be consolidated together into a practical, action-oriented and forward-looking outcome document that will be harmonized into the already existing African Civil Society Common Position on Drugs as part of highlighting the progress made with the document since its launch. The outcome document will be presented to the upcoming 65<sup>th</sup> session of the CND (March 2022), the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the CCPCJ (May 2022) and the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties to UNTOC (October 2022).