

Cross-Committee Collaboration for the 2024 Mid-Term Review of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration: Ensuring Balanced and Meaningful Civil Society Engagement

- Building upon the success of the Civil Society Task Force (CSTF) – jointly formed by the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs (VNGOC) and New York NGO Committee on Drugs (NYNGOC) to facilitate global civil society participation at the 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the World Drug Problem and the 2019 Ministerial Segment – the VNGOC and NYNGOC agreed to again [work together](#) as equal partners in the preparatory process for and during the 2024 mid-term review of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, bearing in mind that the VNGOC, in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) Resolution 66/1 was tasked to nominate civil society speakers for the round tables at the high-level segment to be held during the 67th session of the CND.
- Such cross-committee collaboration is critical to ensure broad and inclusive civil society participation in the mid-term review by leveraging regional and thematic diversity in respective committee memberships.
- While the CSTF was [not disbanded but kept dormant](#) as an option for future high-level meetings on drug policy, the former structure may not be suitable for the upcoming mid-term review given insufficient lead-time to convene and engage dozens of members. Considering the need for a condensed and simplified iteration of the CSTF, the two committees agreed to coordinate all relevant activities between the boards of the two committees.
- As for past high-level meetings, the overarching goal of joint activities is to ensure comprehensive, structured, meaningful, and balanced participation of civil society in preparations for and during the 2024 mid-term review of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration.
- Relevant activities in preparation for and during the 2024 mid-term review, including but not limited to the activities described below, will be organized together across both committees unless otherwise jointly agreed.
- In the short time available, specific activities can include:
 - Conducting a global consultation process with civil society to inform the mid-term review, including a civil society hearing, as well as regional and thematic consultations, held online and/or in-person as appropriate, that leverage existing ad-hoc working groups convened by the VNGOC and NYNGOC,
 - Publishing a report presenting the findings of consultations with civil society to inform the mid-term review, including the concise, action-oriented document to be negotiated by Member States,
 - Supporting dissemination of the report presenting findings of consultations with civil society, such as through side events and a conference room paper,
 - Identifying civil society speakers for preparatory events and at the mid-term review itself in accordance with the [CSTF Guidelines for Selecting Speakers](#), and

- Delivering further activities as determined jointly by the VNGOC and NYNGOC boards and in response to other processes and opportunities that emerge.
- Individual board members are encouraged to volunteer to take lead organizing roles on selected activities to ensure timely and efficient implementation, keeping in mind that key decisions will be jointly agreed with both boards.
- Joint responsibilities can include:
 - Coordinating the global consultation process with civil society, including a civil society hearing, as well as the report presenting consultation findings,
 - Selecting civil society representative speakers for the mid-term review itself, and for any other relevant meetings in connection with the mid-term review,
 - Holding regular calls between the two boards to coordinate and monitor progress on activities,
 - Informing each other in a timely fashion about relevant meetings and communications with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the CND, other UN bodies, Member States, and other relevant stakeholders,
 - Publicly announcing the cross-committee collaboration for the mid-term review, and ensuring appropriate recognition of respective committees in all relevant materials, such as communications, reports, events, and statements,
 - Coordinating fundraising efforts and jointly agreeing how any funds or resources received for this work will be used, and
 - Providing regular reports concerning joint activities to their respective memberships.
- The approach described above maintains past practice and established precedents set by the VNGOC and NYNGOC through the CSTF during the 2016 UNGASS and the 2019 Ministerial Segment to inform and guide our work together, as reflected in the [corresponding Memorandums of Understanding](#) as well as the [CSTF Guidelines for Selecting Speakers](#).

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