

VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON DRUGS (VNGOC)

Strategic Plan 2026 - 2029

ABOUT VNGOC

Established in 1983 as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Austria,¹ the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs (VNGOC) is a coordinating body for civil society groups around the world that are concerned with drug policies. The VNGOC provides a link between NGOs and the Vienna-based agencies involved in setting drug policy: the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The VNGOC's purpose is to:

1. Support the activities of NGOs, and promoting contacts and collaboration with the relevant international agencies, offices and fora.
2. Promote activities that lead to enhanced communication, cooperation and scientific, cultural and social exchanges between NGOs, UN agencies and member states.
3. Promote increased awareness about issues relating to controlled substances through the dissemination of news and information.
4. Facilitate the representation of NGOs reflecting the broadest possible range of perspectives and groups involved, including affected populations.

The VNGOC's work is guided by the VNGOC Statutes and Rules of Procedure,² which were revised and adopted by the membership in 2017. The Committee represents the broadest spectrum of civil society stakeholders in the drug policy debate: members come from all around the world, and are engaged in service delivery, advocacy, research, evaluation and much more – at the international, regional and national levels.³

As of March 2025, the VNGOC represented approximately 450 organizations.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document aims to provide a strategic overview for the work of the VNGOC, as guided by its elected Board and agreed by the membership. The Plan covers a period including the 10th anniversary of UNGASS and the next UN Crime Congress (in 2026), the 45th anniversary of the Committee (in 2028) and the next high-level UN drug policy moment (the review of the 2019 Political Declaration, slated for March 2029).

The Strategic Plan comprises 30 actions organised into four strategic objectives that mirror the successful model of operation developed by the Committee in recent years.

Implementation will be overseen by the Board through annual work plans, with the support of the membership and under the principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence.

¹ The legal registration name is "Wiener Drogen Komitee"

² <https://vngoc.org/about-the-vngoc/statutes-of-the-vngoc/>

³ <https://vngoc.org/about-the-vngoc/membership/>

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Continue to support civil society engagement at meetings of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)

- A. Facilitate NGO participation at meetings of the CND and other relevant UN agencies and entities, including INCB, WHO and the Council of Europe – including facilitating access passes and coordinating an NGO lounge space.
- B. Maintain, disseminate and where possible translate the annual CND Guide for NGOs, depending on resources available
- C. Hold timely briefings to facilitate the engagement of all NGOs, including to share information regarding modalities and processes for participation in Vienna and other relevant high-level meetings.
- D. Host ‘informal dialogues’ with key figures during each main CND session in March: the CND Chair, the INCB President, the UNODC Executive Director, senior WHO officials, and representatives of other relevant UN agencies, such as OHCHR, UNDP, and UNAIDS, among others.
- E. Organise / co-organise at least one formal CND side event per year to showcase the work, resources and key issues of civil society.
- F. Support members towards achieving ECOSOC Consultative Status, including through disseminating the NGO Guide to ECOSOC Consultative Status.
- G. Hold regular meetings with the CND Bureau and/or Secretariat.
- H. Ensure strong civil society participation at the 2029 review required by the 2019 Political Declaration⁴ – building on the mandate of the Civil Society Task Force as included in the modality resolution for the 2019 ministerial meeting.⁵

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Continue to call for full, meaningful civil society participation across all international debates and processes concerning drug policies and related matters.

- A. Make formal written or oral contributions to the CND and other fora on behalf of the Committee members and other NGOs, especially on the issue of civil society engagement.
- B. Work collaboratively with all other relevant NGO Umbrella Organizations incl. inter alia the New York NGO Committee on Drugs, the African Civil Society Platform on Drugs, the European Civil Society Forum on Drugs, the American Coalition on Drug Policies, to ensure and expand civil society participation across different settings.
- C. Hold regular meetings with the UNODC Secretariat – including the Civil Society Unit – to monitor (and renew) the Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations.
- D. Hold regular meetings with the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and the INCB Secretariat.
- E. Work with the INCB to enhance civil society engagement in the Board’s work including, coordinating the identification of NGOs for the INCB to meet during their country missions.
- F. Promote the participation of civil society representatives at other UN expert meetings and fora – including fostering new opportunities.
- G. Produce other materials and guides as required to enable NGOs and other stakeholders to more easily and effectively engage with relevant UN entities.

⁴ https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/2019/Ministerial_Declaration.pdf

⁵ https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/CND_Sessions/CND_61/CND_res2018/CND_Resolution_61_10.pdf

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Continue to encourage a global, balanced and strategic NGO voice in the debates on drug policies and related issues.

- A. Promote membership of the VNGOC to all relevant partners.
- B. Provide on-going support to efforts to expand civil society engagement from currently under-represented regions and groups – including the ad-hoc working groups initiated in 2020.
- C. Seek funding to develop NGO trainings and capacity building opportunities on how to engage the relevant UN bodies on drug policy and related matters, as well as funding for direct support of participation.
- D. Conduct all speaker selections in an open and transparent manner, in line with the established guidelines.⁶
- E. Provide space for constructive, thematic dialogue between various civil society organisations, including ‘Finding Common Ground’ events.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

Effective and efficient management and promotion of the Committee

- A. Enable frequent and meaningful member engagement in the work and direction of the Committee – including physical and online meetings and an annual social gathering during CND, when possible.
- B. Ensure transparent and accountable governance for the Committee, in line with the VNGOC Statutes and Rules of Procedure.
- C. Ensure the effectiveness of the Board elections through regular review of the Terms of Reference of the Nominations Committee, with the engagement of members
- D. Secure sufficient funds to ensure the continued running and sustainability of the Committee, as well as additional resources required for new activities and events.
- E. Maintain, review and develop the VNGOC website, social media platforms and other communications tools.
- F. Work alongside UNODC to promote and further refine the NGO Marketplace for civil society organizations.
- G. Strive for one face-to-face Board meetings per year, in the margins of CND meetings where possible.
- H. Maintain all operational and financial policies and procedures in accordance with relevant Austrian legal regulations and requirements.
- I. Maintain the integrity of the membership database through regular reviews and diligent application processes.
- J. Develop comprehensive Annual Reports that comprise a summary of activities undertaken, a financial summary for the year, the current list of members, and budget for the coming year – for formal adoption at the General Assembly.
- K. Develop a new Strategic Plan for formal adoption by the General Assembly before the 2030 General Meeting.

⁶ <http://vngoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/CSTF-Speaker-Selection-Guidelines-final-formatted.pdf>