

56th session of the Human Rights Council

Interactive Dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

Statement delivered by the International Drug Policy Consortium

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On behalf of IDPC, alongside various other organisations, we congratulate the UN Special Rapporteur on the publication of her new report on 'Drug use, harm reduction and the right to health'. The evidence presented in this report is clear: Stigma, discrimination, criminalisation and racism have had devastating impacts on the right to health of people who use drugs, in particular on people facing multiple and intersecting layers of vulnerability.

We welcome the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur to move away from criminal law and move towards an anti-colonial, human rights-based, harm reduction approach to drug use. In particular, and echoing the report's recommendations, we urge member states to:

1. Ensure access to harm reduction for all, as well as ensure sustainable funding for these critical interventions.
2. Remove criminal sanctions and other forms of punishment for drug use, possession, purchase and cultivation of drugs for personal use as a matter of priority. People who use drugs should be given support, not punishment.
3. Move towards alternative regulatory approaches that put people's health and rights front and centre, as has also been recommended by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in its 2023 report.
4. We call on Member States to meaningfully involve civil society and communities in all aspects of drug policy and harm reduction.
5. Finally, we encourage the Special Rapporteur to continue her critical work in promoting human rights-centred drug policies, and look forward to her next report on harm reduction.

Thank you very much.

Co-signatories:

- Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS), Argentina
- Harm Reduction International
- Amnesty International