



## Mutually Reinforcing: A Detailed Comparison of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, and the 2016 UNGASS Outcome Document

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, member states of the United Nations have agreed on three high-level policy documents on drugs: the *Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem*,<sup>1</sup> adopted at the high-level segment in 2009; the *Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review* of the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action;<sup>2</sup> and the 2016 Outcome Document of the 30th special session of the General Assembly, entitled *Our Joint Commitment to Effectively Addressing and Countering the World Drug Problem*.<sup>3</sup> Member states have agreed that these three documents “are complementary and mutually reinforcing”.<sup>4</sup> For example, in the UNGASS Outcome Document, member states “reaffirm our commitment to implementing effectively the provisions set out in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, mindful of the targets and goals set therein”.

In March 2019, the CND will hold a high-level ministerial segment in Vienna to lay the foundations for the coming years. However, as the CND prepares for the approaching 2019 target date that was set by the 2009 Political Declaration (Article 36) – a tension has persisted in relation to these documents, and the role they each play in the coming decade of international drug control. To support these debates and reconcile tensions, this paper provides a detailed analysis and comparison of the 2009 and 2016 documents.

The primary aim of this analysis is to explore to what extent the content and commitments of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action are

reflected in the 2016 UNGASS Outcome Document, and vice versa.

### STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY

The 2009 and 2016 documents vary in their structure – not least because the Political Declaration is built around three pillars (demand reduction, supply reduction, and money laundering and international cooperation), whereas the UNGASS Outcome Document is built around seven pillars (demand reduction, access to medicines, supply reduction, cross-cutting issues, evolving reality, international cooperation, and alternative development).

For this analysis, the researchers considered every operational paragraph of the 2009 document and identified the corresponding paragraph from the 2016 document. To triangulate the findings, the researchers then considered every operational paragraph of the 2016 document and identified the corresponding paragraph from the 2009 document as well.

For each UNGASS Outcome Document chapter, simple Venn diagrams are used to illustrate the convergence between the two documents. Venn diagrams are visual tools which show the logical relation between different sets, and can help to intuitively illustrate simple set relationships. For the Venn diagrams in this document, a variety of symbols are used to represent key issues and elements of the policy documents. In some cases, these symbols have been placed on the borders between the two sets (2009 and 2016), indicating that these issues are notably expanded or elaborated in one document compared to the other.

For each chapter, a narrative analysis is provided to compliment and describe what is captured in the Venn diagram, and to draw attention to any deviations that were found.

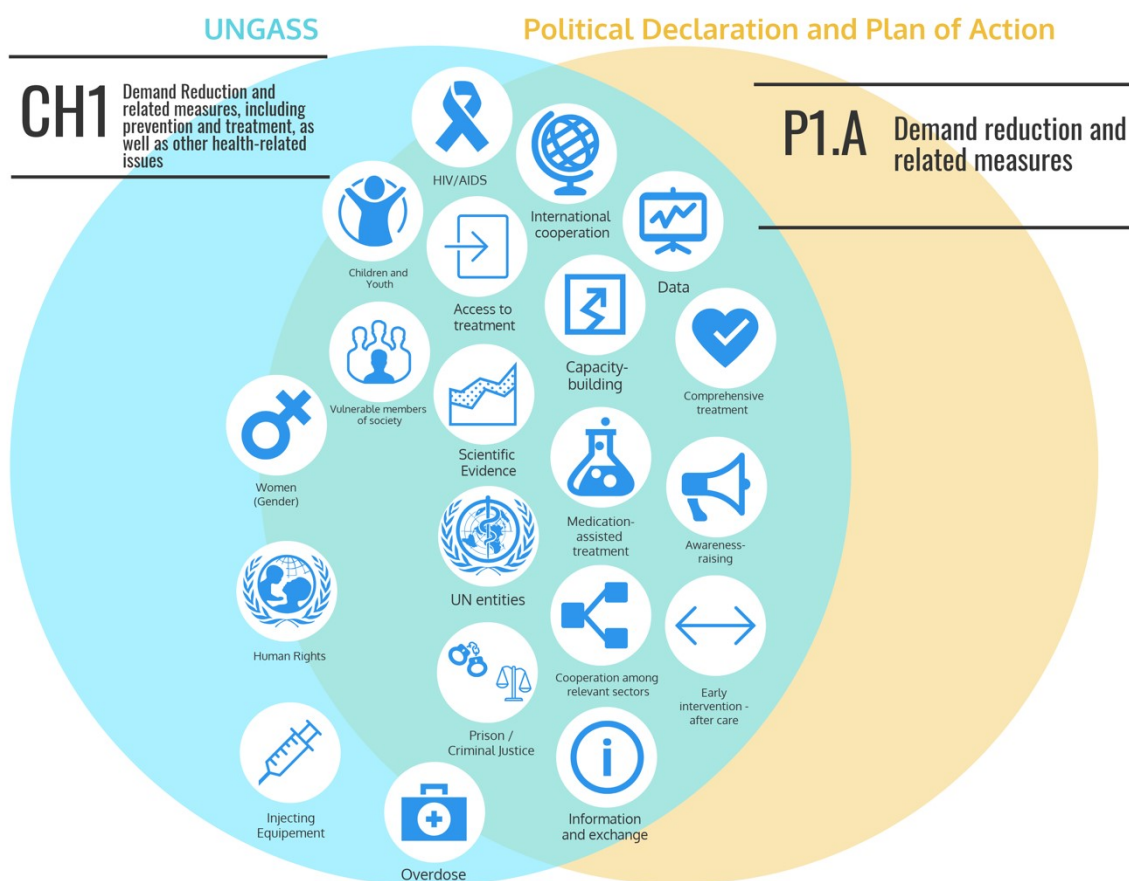
This analysis does not directly consider the 2014 Joint Ministerial Statement, as this represented a mid-term implementation review of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, and therefore corresponds closely to the 2009 document.

To further support the analysis, detailed annexes also lists every paragraph from the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action and identifies the corresponding paragraph from the 2016 Outcome Document, and vice versa. The annexes are available on the website of the Norwegian Mission to the United Nations in Vienna (<https://www.norway.no/de/austria/>).

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## CHAPTER 1:

*“Operational recommendations on demand reduction and related measures, including prevention and treatment, as well as other health-related issues”*



Both the 2009 and 2016 documents opened with sections dedicated to demand reduction – comprising drug use prevention, drug treatment, harm reduction interventions (although never explicitly referred to as harm reduction), and other related measures. In terms of the quantity of operative paragraphs on demand reduction, the Political Declaration and Plan of Action is much longer (50 paragraphs) than Chapter 1 of the

UNGASS Outcome Document (18 paragraphs). Nevertheless, the UNGASS Outcome Document integrates all the themes covered in the 2009 document. Chapter 1 from the UNGASS Outcome Document is divided into two sections – prevention of drug abuse, and treatment of drug use disorders, rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration. It also recalls agreed language from 2009, while updating or nuancing several aspects.

This chapter also integrates the target 36b set out in the Political Declaration, “the illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; and drug-related health and social risks”. Crucially and with regards to the target 36b the UNGASS Outcome Document expands further in some key areas, elaborated below.

### **1.1 Prevention, treatment and care of HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis and other blood-borne infectious diseases:**

The Political Declaration and Plan of Action recognizes the pressing issue of prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS (Paragraph 20), as well as “hepatitis B and C and tuberculosis, but also all other health consequences, such as overdose...” (Action 4i). However, the UNGASS Outcome Document is considerably more detailed on this matter, including the first specific reference to “injecting equipment programmes” in a consensus-based political document from Vienna (Paragraph 1o). Both documents also cite the *WHO, UNODC, UNAIDS Technical Guide for Countries to Set Targets for Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment and Care for Injecting Drug Users*.<sup>5</sup>

### **1.2 Treatment of drug use disorders, rehabilitation, recovery and social reintegration:**

The Political Declaration and Plan of Action calls for “developing a comprehensive treatment system offering a wide range of integrated pharmacological (...) and psychosocial (...) interventions based on scientific evidence” (Action 4h), whereas the UNGASS Outcome Document is also able to cite the more recent UNODC and WHO standards on the treatment of drug use disorders. Significantly, the 2016 document also specifically mentions the use of naloxone – an opioid receptor antagonist essential medicine to prevent fatal overdoses.

### **1.3 The specific needs of children, youth, women and vulnerable members of society:**

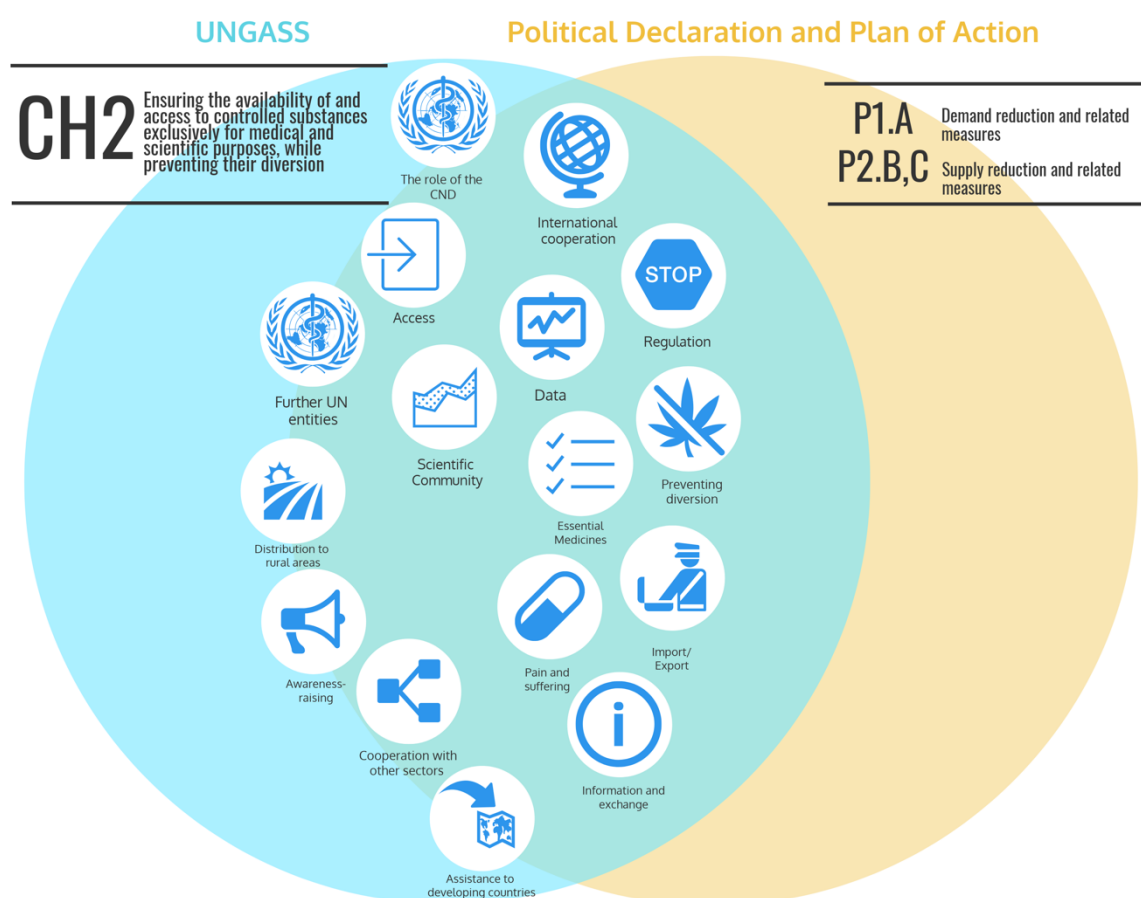
The 2016 document significantly expands existing language on the specific needs of children, youth, women and vulnerable members of society. While the Political Declaration and Plan of Action does raise the connection to human rights (Paragraph 1,2,24, Action 2.f, Action 3) and provides language on youth (PD, Paragraph 13, 20, 23,) with regards to their vulnerability in relation to drugs and other vulnerable members of society, the UNGASS Outcome Document expands on these issues with significant emphasis on gender, age and ensuring access to, and availability of, tailored treatment and other health services. This is further demonstrated in Chapter 4 (see below). The Political Declaration and Plan of Action recognizes the need for appropriate measures in relation to the vulnerabilities of young people. One noticeable difference is the fact that the UNGASS Outcome Document adds the need to reach youth in school, “as well as out of school”.

### **1.4 Treatment in custodial settings:**

Both the 2009 and 2016 documents provide language on custodial settings, but using different angles. The UNGASS Outcome Document focuses on a human rights perspective and on access to treatment and other health services in prison, whereas the 2009 Plan of Action articulates concerns on the challenges of “measures to address corruption, reduce overcrowding and prevent access to and use of illicit drugs within detention facilities” (Action 16b). The UNGASS Outcome Document does also address corruption, but with regards to drug-related crime in Chapter 3 on supply reduction and related measures. Both documents also address the need for “comprehensive treatment programmes in detention facilities” (Action 16c), although the UNGASS Outcome Document does so in Chapter 4 on cross-cutting issues and human rights.

## CHAPTER 2:

*“Operational recommendations on ensuring the availability of and access to controlled substances exclusively for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion”*



A dedicated chapter on the availability and accessibility of controlled substances was a new development for the UNGASS Outcome Document. This issue, which is a core obligation within the international drug control conventions themselves, was addressed to a much lesser extent in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, across several interspersed paragraphs in the chapters on demand and supply reduction.

### 2.1 Availability and access:

The UNGASS Outcome Document represents a strong commitment to ensuring the availability of, and access to, controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes. In comparison, the 2009 document addresses just a few of the key issues within this theme (such as the role of the INCB and the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines). The UNGASS Outcome Document reflects all of these

elements, but expands on them to provide a more detailed roadmap for governments to remove the legislative, political, structural and technical barriers hampering access. The 2016 document cites the pivotal normative guidance from WHO in 2000: *Ensuring Balance in National Policies on Controlled Substances: Guidance for Availability and Accessibility of Controlled Medicines*.<sup>6</sup> It also urges “the provision of technical and financial assistance, upon request, to developing countries” (Paragraph 2b), references the INCB’s *International Import and Export Authorization System*<sup>7</sup> (Paragraph 2c), and provides language on distribution to rural areas (Paragraph 2d), among numerous other issues such as licenses and taxation with regards to national regulations and the training of professionals.

## 2.2 Supply management systems, national authorities and professionals:

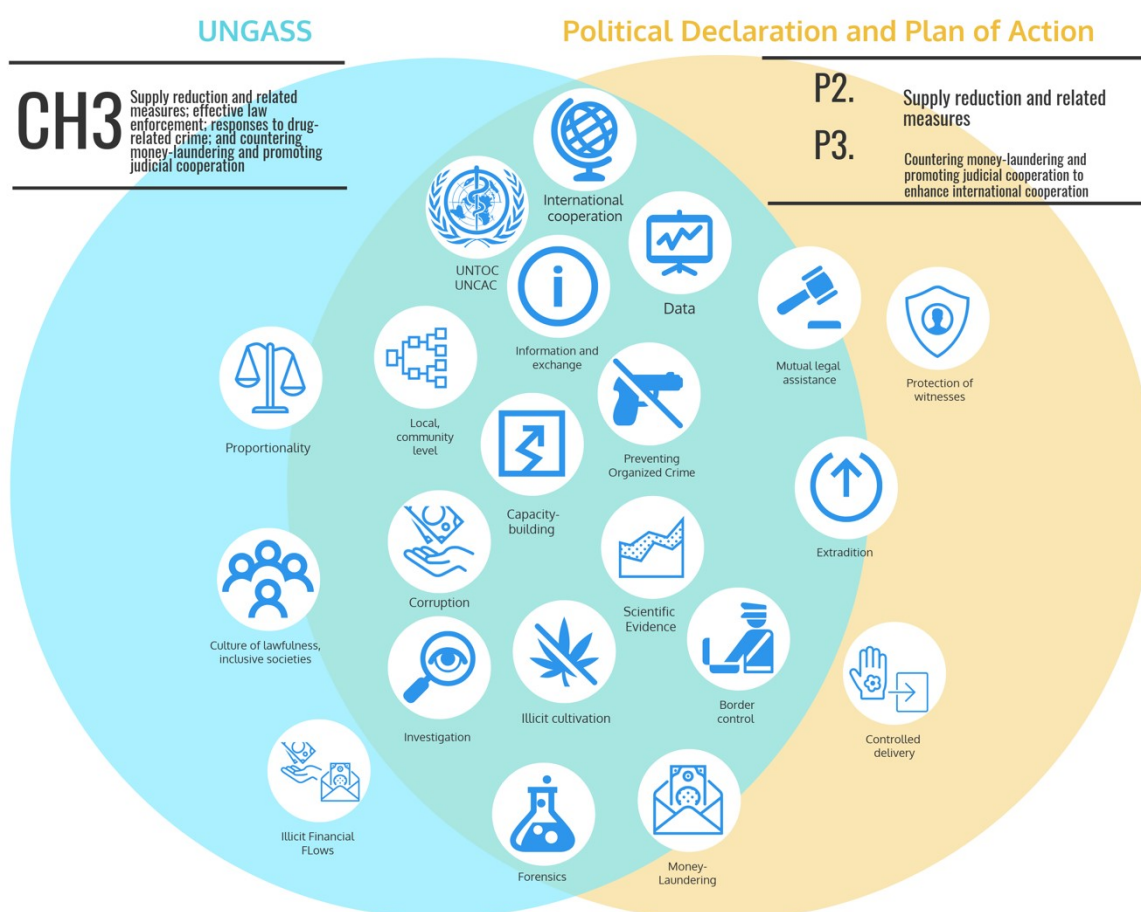
The role of the competent national authorities and health-care professionals, and the inclusion of the role of the pharmacist, are further recognized in the UNGASS Outcome Document – nuances that were not included in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action. Moreover, the UNGASS Outcome Document suggests providing capacity-building and training for these roles, with support from relevant UN entities such as WHO and UNODC. The UNGASS Outcome Document also

suggests the development of national supply management systems for controlled substances, emphasizing the need to pay attention to essential medicines and cites the 2012 *Guide on Estimating Requirements for Substance under International Control* produced by INCB and WHO.<sup>8</sup> While the Plan of Action suggests bearing in mind the Model Lists of Essential Medicines of the WHO in relation to submission to the INCB of estimates of their requirements, the UNGASS Outcome Document further articulates this would benefit “informed and coordinated scheduling decisions” by CND.

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## CHAPTER 3:

*“Operational recommendations on supply reduction and related measures; effective law enforcement; responses to drug-related crime; and countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation”*



Both the 2009 and 2016 documents included a dedicated chapter to supply reduction and related measures. While the Political Declaration and Plan of Action dedicated more paragraphs to this topic, the vast majority of issues were also reflected in

the UNGASS Outcome Document – in which Chapter 3 also emphasizes the importance of matters related to law enforcement and criminal justice.

### 3.1 Reducing illicit drug cultivation:

Whereas the preambular of the UNGASS Outcome Document reconfirms commitment to the targets set out in the 2009 Political Declaration, paragraph 3d suggests increasing cooperation at “all levels and enhance measures to prevent and significantly and measurably reduce or eliminate the illicit cultivation of opium poppy, coca bush and cannabis plant” – directly referencing the targets set in paragraph 36 of the 2009 document.

### 3.2 Reducing money-laundering:

One noticeable difference between the two documents is the way in which money laundering is addressed. The Political Declaration and Plan of Action focused on this issue in a separate chapter – perhaps reflecting the prominence of this phenomenon in international debates at the time. It included very detailed language on legislative frameworks and the need to ensure mutual legal assistance in cases related to money laundering. It furthermore includes paragraphs addressing measures to ensure that banks and non-financial institutions are adhering to existing financial and regulatory regimes. By contrast, the UNGASS Outcome Document includes a number of paragraphs that cover much of the same territory, but in less detail. The UNGASS Outcome Document furthermore introduces illicit financial flows as a new element, which is broader than that of money-laundering.

### 3.3 Prevention of drug-related crime and trafficking in drugs:

Central aspects covered by both documents on these elements include the need for international cooperation, as well as the sharing and exchange of information, data and scientific evidence. Along with this, both documents maintain a strong emphasis on preventing organized crime related to the supply of illicit drugs, preventing and combating illicit cultivation, capacity-building and training of law enforcement and practitioners, along with the strengthening of investigation efforts.

The UNGASS Outcome Document (paragraphs 3e, f, g and q) also addresses the trafficking of precursors in relation to border management

strategies, monitoring of current trends and drug trafficking routes, sharing of drug-related intelligence, and mechanisms for domestic coordination. These paragraphs correspond with actions 32, 36 and 41 of the 2009 Plan of Action – while chapter 5 of the UNGASS Outcome Document also introduces ‘pre-precursors’ as a new element.

Both documents highlight linkages with the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The UNGASS Outcome Document extends the list to other UN agreements including the *Doha Declaration on Integrating Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice into the Wider United Nations Agenda to Address Social and Economic Challenges and to Promote the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels, and Public Participation*.<sup>9</sup> Recognizing the need to prevent drug-related crime, the UNGASS Outcome Document draws upon the Doha Declaration to promote strengthened multidisciplinary measures at all levels to prevent drug-related crime and provides language on violence, victimization and the need to improve social development and inclusiveness so as to promote a culture of lawfulness.

However, whereas the UNGASS Outcome Document considers the broader challenges and consequences of drug-related crime and supply reduction measures, the Plan of Action includes much more detail on extradition, mutual legal assistance, and transfers of proceedings. These elements are included in the UNGASS Outcome Document – but in paragraphs addressing overarching matters, rather than the detailed recommendations and measures as in 2009.

### 3.4 Protection of witnesses and controlled delivery:

Across this whole analysis, the only issues in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action not to be explicitly incorporated into the UNGASS Outcome Document are the protection of witnesses and controlled delivery (a law enforcement tool whereby a consignment of illicit drugs is detected and allowed to go forward under surveillance in order to secure further evidence). In its Plan of Action for judicial cooperation, the 2009 document calls on member states to “take



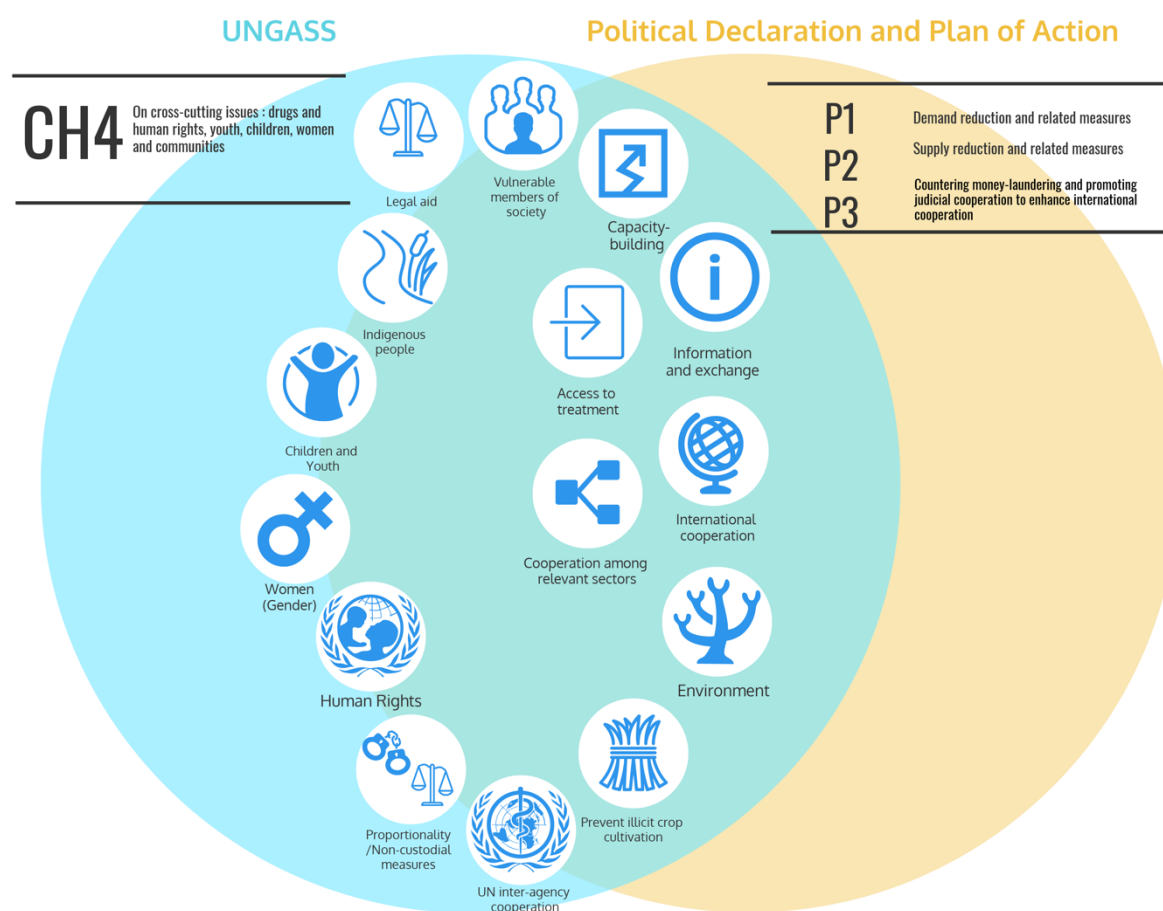
appropriate measures, within their means, including adopting, where they have not yet done so, legislation, rules and practical measures that provide for the protection of witnesses before, during and after trial...” (Action 62). The 2009 document also refers to this issue when discussing the implementation of the Organized Crime

Convention. By contrast, the UNGASS Outcome Document only mentions the need to ratify the Convention and its Protocols (Paragraph 3n). Arguably, as the 2016 document promotes effective measures to address the obstruction of justice, these would indirectly include the protection of witnesses.

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## CHAPTER 4:

### *“Operational recommendations on cross-cutting issues: drugs and human rights, youth, children, women and communities”*



The UNGASS Outcome Document dedicates an entire new chapter to the issues of human rights, youth, children, women and communities – as such, many of the thematic areas included in this chapter were not, or only partially, featured in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action across its three pillared approach. This shift followed extensive advocacy from a number of member states, UN agencies and civil society organizations,<sup>10</sup> reflective of the commitment of all three international drug control conventions to “the health and welfare of mankind”.

## 4.1 Human rights:

The language in the UNGASS Outcome Document centrally emphasises a range of human rights, UN conventions and member state obligations – clearly reflecting, and presenting new perspectives on, language and commitments from the Political Declaration and Plan of Action. The 2016 document therefore places significant emphasis on, inter alia, effective human-rights based treatment, other human rights obligations,

children and youth, women, indigenous people, proportionality, legal aid and the right to fair trial within the criminal justice system, and UN inter-agency cooperation.

Action 22e of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action sought to “Promote supply reduction measures that take due account of traditional licit uses, where there is historical evidence of such use”. The UNGASS Outcome Document adds emphasis to this by urging member states to “take into account... the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” (Paragraph 4i), albeit in the context of “measures to prevent the illicit cultivation of and to eradicate plants containing narcotic and psychotropic substances” in line with the three international drug control conventions.

#### 4.2 Children and youth:

Both documents state the need for implementing age-appropriate measures: Action 14b calls on member states to “Ensure that prevention programmes target and involve youth and children with a view to increasing their reach and effectiveness”, while the UNGASS Outcome Document additionally cites obligations from the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (Paragraph 4f). In this context, the UNGASS Outcome Document addresses the various ways in which youth and children are involved in, or exploited by, drug-related crime – building on the 2009 document to addresses the various settings in which member states should seek to ensure their safety from.

#### 4.3 Women:

The Political Declaration and Plan of Action acknowledges “the important contribution made by women in curbing the world drug problem” (Paragraph 9), but only contains two actions focused on women: 14c to “Provide specialized training for those who work with vulnerable groups, such as patients with psychiatric co-morbidities, minors and women, including pregnant women”, and 49f to “promote gender equality in alternative development interventions”. By contrast, the UNGASS Outcome Document goes much further towards

mainstreaming a gender perspective – for example, building on the issues around treatment to also highlight the specific needs of female prisoners. The 2016 document also seeks to address protective and risk factors that make women and girls specifically vulnerable victims of drug trafficking and organized crime, both as victims of drug-related crime and as low-level participation in drug trafficking as couriers. Furthermore, the UNGASS Outcome Document incorporates language on implementing the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as citing the *United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders* (The Bangkok Rules)<sup>11</sup> which were adopted after the 2009 Political Declaration was agreed.

#### 4.4 Proportionate and effective policies and responses:

Despite being agreed in 1990, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Noncustodial Measures (The Tokyo Rules)<sup>12</sup> were not cited in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action – something that was addressed in the 2016 document, alongside reference to the revised UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (The Nelson Mandela Rules) that were adopted the year prior to the UNGASS.<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, the UNGASS Outcome Document provides significant and expanded language on proportionality and effective criminal justice responses. Whereas the 2009 document includes reference “providing treatment as an alternative to incarceration” (Action 16a), the UNGASS Outcome Document encourages: “the development, adoption and implementation (...) of alternative or additional measures with regard to conviction or punishment in cases of an appropriate nature to share” (Paragraph 4j) – more closely reflecting the language from the 1988 Convention itself).

The UNGASS Outcome Document also builds significantly on the concept of proportionality – calling for the sharing of “information, lessons learned, experiences and best practices” with regards to proportional sentencing (Paragraph 4k), and for “proportionate national sentencing



policies, practices and guidelines for drug-related offences whereby the severity of penalties is proportionate to the gravity of offences and whereby both mitigating and aggravating factors are taken into account” (Paragraph 4l). Similarly, Paragraph 3j of the UNGASS Outcome Document also calls for proportionality in the criminal justice response (“appropriate focus (...) on those responsible for illicit activities of a larger scale or more serious nature”). By contrast, the only reference to proportionality in the 2009 document was in the context of a “balanced and mutually reinforcing approach to supply and

demand reduction... [and] proportionality of effort, resources and international cooperation” (Action 2a).

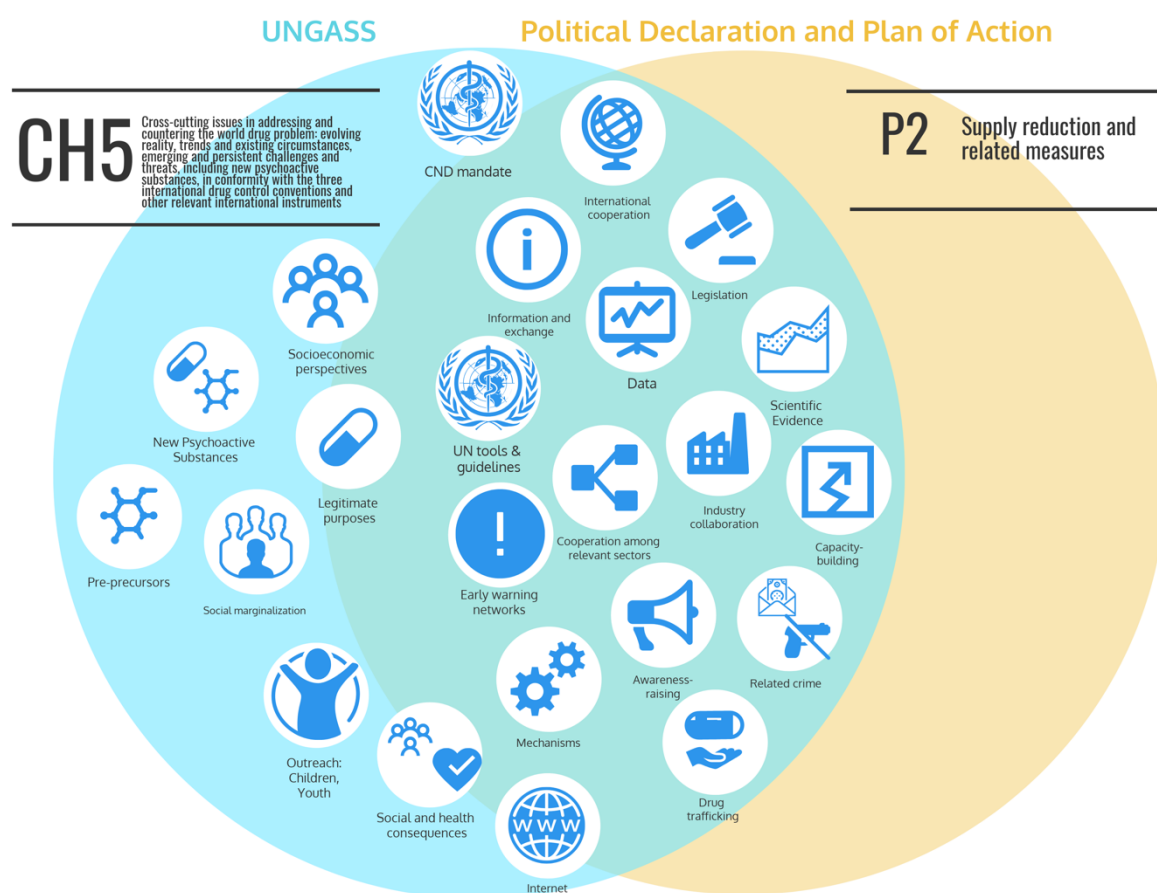
#### 4.5 Legal aid and the right to fair trial:

In the final paragraph of Chapter 4 (Paragraph 4o), the 2016 document also introduces important new language on ensuring legal aid and the right to a fair trial, as well as “the prohibition of arbitrary arrest and detention and of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and to eliminate impunity”.

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#### CHAPTER 5:

*“Operational recommendations on cross-cutting issues in addressing and countering the world drug problem: evolving reality, trends and existing circumstances, emerging and persistent challenges and threats, including new psychoactive substances, in conformity with the three international drug control conventions and other relevant international instruments”*



Chapter 5 is the largest chapter of the UNGASS Outcome Document, containing many operative

paragraphs and reflecting the breadth of the chapter theme. By definition, the Chapter

concentrates on “challenges and threats” that have emerged since 2009, such as the proliferation of new psychoactive substances. But the chapter also incorporates language from 2009 and integrates various issues from the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, as the diagram above demonstrates.

### **5.1 New psychoactive substances:**

With regards to new psychoactive substance, the comprehensive language in the 2016 document – covering the trends, risks and challenges in the composition, production, prevalence and distribution of these drugs – is understandably not mirrored by the Political Declaration, as the issue was first acknowledged in a CND resolution in 2012. Yet the 2009 document did include content on synthetic drugs and amphetamine-type stimulants. The UNGASS Outcome Document also includes the need to review the potential uses of these substances in connection to medical and scientific purposes, and the need for “interim steps while substances are under review, such as provisional measures of control, or making public health announcements” (Paragraph 5e). The UNGASS Outcome Document also cites UNODC’s Global Synthetics Monitoring: Analyses, Reporting and Trends (SMART) Programme – which was launched in 2008.

### **5.2 Pre-precursors:**

As mentioned under chapter 3, the UNGASS Outcome Document also addresses precursors and introduces ‘pre-precursors’ in its fifth chapter. With regards to precursors, this chapter once again adds the emphasis on ensuring their availability for legitimate purposes while preventing and combating the misuse and diversion.

### **5.3 UN tools and guidelines:**

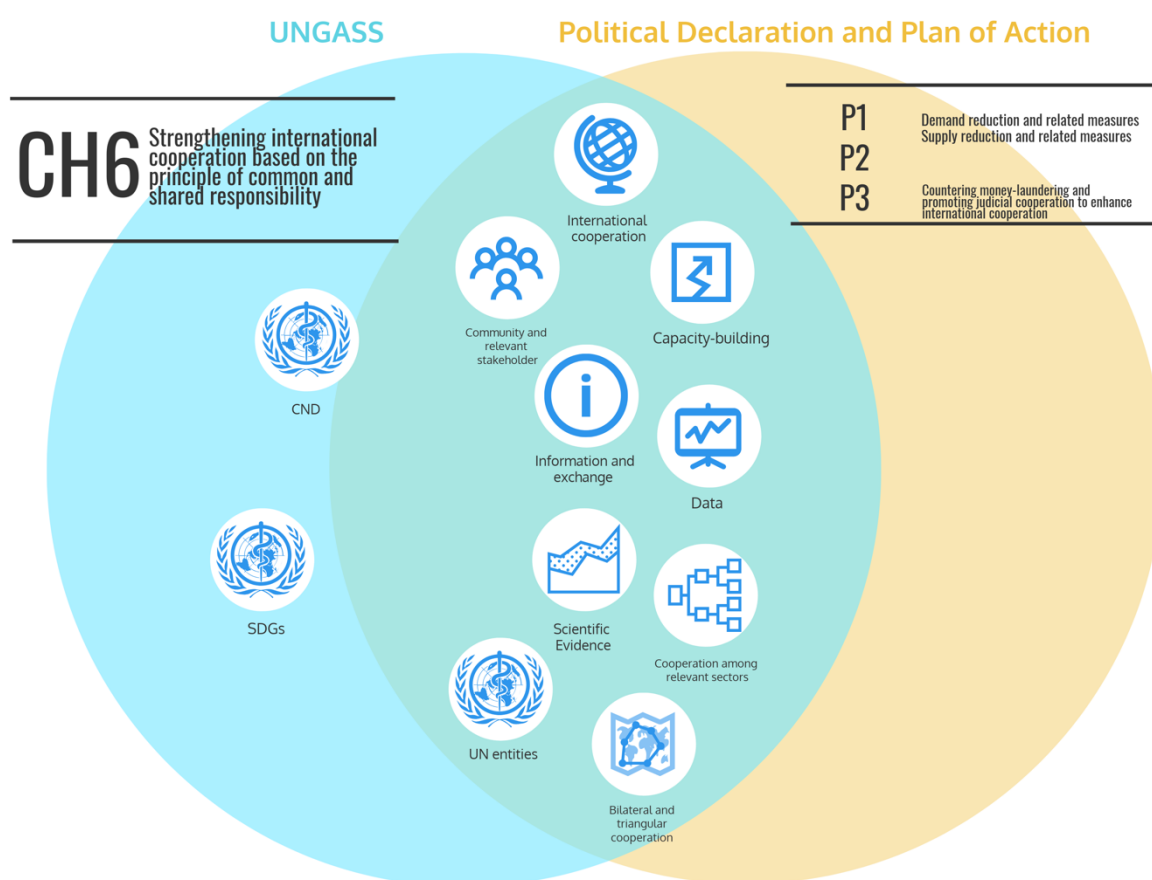
Both the 2009 and 2016 documents make reference to the UN tools and guidelines related to precursor monitoring and control – such as Project Prism, the Precursors Incident Communication System, and the Pre-Export Notification (PEN) Online system – that were available at the time. However, the UNGASS Outcome Document is also able to mention initiatives such as INCB’s Project ION (International Operations on NPS) – which was launched after 2009 (and the need for which was alluded to in the 2009 document itself). The 2016 document is also able to cite the INCB’s *Guidelines for a Voluntary Code of Practice for the Chemical Industry*.<sup>14</sup>

### **5.4 Use of internet:**

Action 36 from the 2009 Plan of Action for supply reduction called for “concerted action” regarding “the illegal sale of preparations containing amphetamine-type stimulants via the Internet and the misuse of postal and courier services for smuggling such preparations”. This particular “emerging threat” received heightened attention in the UNGASS Outcome Document – with a whole sub-section dedicated to “use of the Internet in relation to drug-related activities”. This section covers language on research, technical assistance, law enforcement and electronic evidence gathering and, significantly, “the use of the Internet for prevention purposes, including appropriate counselling and information provision” (Paragraph 5f). Language on the use of the Internet for the purposes of harnessing and sharing information and data can be found in both documents. In this regard, paragraph 5r recalls also target 36e by preserving and analysing electronic evidence related to money-laundering.

## CHAPTER 6:

### *“Operational recommendations on strengthening international cooperation based on the principle of common and shared responsibility”*



This chapter of the UNGASS Outcome Document reflects the long-standing principles of common and shared responsibility in the international response to drugs, and therefore correlates very closely to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action.

One significant difference is in how the 2016 document more strongly links the work of CND and UNODC to the broader UN-wide sustainable development agenda. The Political Declaration and Plan of Action makes three references to the Millennium Development Goals (which were active at the time) – including Action 47a to “Tackle alternative development in a larger development context through a holistic and integrated approach, taking into account the Millennium Development Goals, with the priority of eradicating poverty”.

However, in the UNGASS Outcome Document, the work of CND is much more strongly connected to

the Sustainable Development Goals that came into force in 2015 – including a preambular paragraph in which member states “welcome the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and (...) note that efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing”.

#### 6.1 The Commission on Narcotic Drugs:

The mandate of the CND in regards to enhancing international cooperation and collaboration is reinforced in both the 2009 and 2016 documents. The UNGASS Outcome Document promotes the need to strengthen the regular exchange of information, good practices and lessons learned be done through the Commission, in order also to “further facilitate meaningful discussions among those practitioners” (Paragraph 6c). A significant new perspective added by the UNGASS Outcome Document comes through encouraging the CND

to “contribute to the global follow-up and support the thematic review of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, within its mandate” (Paragraph 6d).

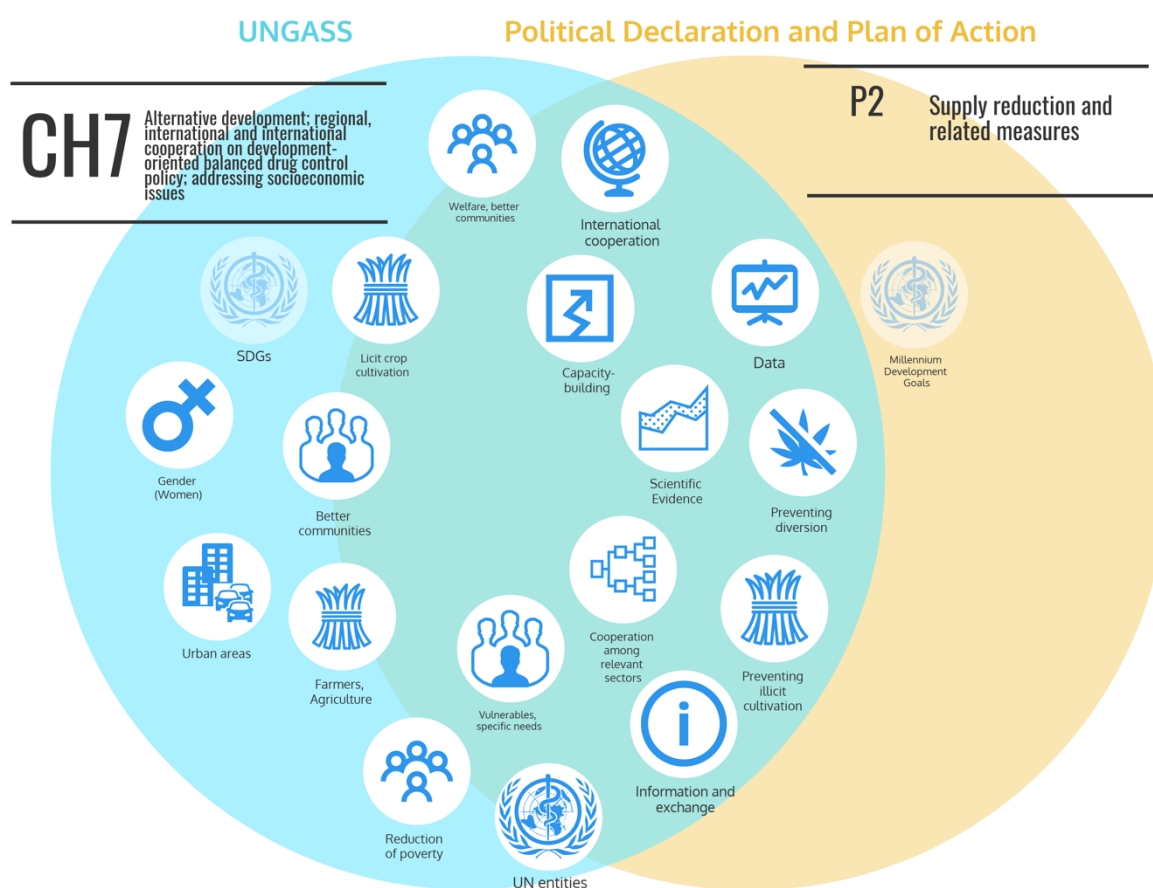
## 6.2 Cross-border cooperation:

The need for cross-border cooperation is addressed in the 2009 document, while the UNGASS Outcome Document goes a step further by detailing the importance of North-North and South-South cooperation, as well as triangular cooperation.

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## CHAPTER 7:

*“Operational recommendations on alternative development; regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented balanced drug control policy; addressing socioeconomic issues”*



The final chapter of the UNGASS Outcome Document addresses issues of a socio-economic nature and alternative development, technical and financial cooperation for comprehensive and balanced development-oriented drug policies, and viable economic alternatives. Similar issues can be found in several operative paragraphs of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action. The

main difference in the UNGASS Outcome Document can be found in how it tackles the socio-economic dimensions in this context – including language on women, the reduction of poverty, farmers and agriculture, the need to consider urban as well as rural areas, as well as articulating the need for building better communities and the specific needs of the

vulnerabilities. Crucially, the concept of alternative development is no longer conditioned upon illicit crop cultivation or ending all consumption.

### 7.1 United Nations Development Goals:

While the Political Declaration and Plan of Action refers to the Millennium Development Goals, and the UNGASS Outcome Document refers to the Sustainable Development Goals – as discussed in the section above – the latter draws attention to relevant human development indicators for the first time (Paragraph 7g), again demonstrating a commitment to embed drug policies into broader UN frameworks and priorities to protect health, human rights and development.

### 7.2 Alternative development and reduction of poverty:

In addition to the central and pressing challenges mentioned in the 2009 document, the notions of alleviating poverty and enhancing the welfare of affected and vulnerable populations through licit alternatives are additional issues raised by the UNGASS Outcome Document.

For example, Paragraph 7b of the UNGASS Outcome Document includes “poverty eradication and the sustainability of social and economic development, (...) rural development, improving infrastructure and social inclusion and protection”. The Plan of Action, however, includes in action 47c, that in addition to poverty reduction, “development assistance provided to communities in areas affected by illicit cultivation” should take into account “the overall aims of human rights protection”. Whereas the UNGASS Outcome Document comprehensively draws upon human rights obligations, in this specific regard there is no corresponding language.

The UNGASS Outcome Document further addresses positive outcomes of alternative development programmes in a matter which is very broad and considers not just rural areas, but furthermore urban areas and provides comprehensive language calling for ensuring empowerment, ownership and responsibility of affected local communities, including farmers and their cooperatives. It also includes the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Development Programme,<sup>a</sup> along with the UN Guiding Principles on Alternative Development.

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## CONCLUSION

In March 2017, member states adopted CND resolution 60/1 on *Preparations for the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 2019* – which reaffirmed the 2009, 2014 and 2016 documents as “the commitments made by the international community over the preceding decade”, and “recognizes that those documents are complementary and mutually reinforcing”.<sup>15</sup> This position was then reaffirmed “in its entirety” in March 2018, in CND resolution 61/10.<sup>16</sup>

This analysis, and especially the Venn diagrams presented above, demonstrate that the issues,

actions and targets of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action are to a high extent reflected in the 2016 UNGASS Outcome Document – “the most recent consensus”. Not only does the 2016 document explicitly “reaffirm our commitment to implementing effectively the provisions set out in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, mindful of the targets and goals set therein”, but this complementarity has also been demonstrated through a detailed, paragraph-by-paragraph analysis of the two documents side-by-side.

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<sup>a</sup> The United Nations Development Programme is also referenced in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, but not in relation to supply reduction.

Our analysis also shows that the UNGASS Outcome Document logically provides new or updated elements, language and measures for many issues. Crucially, the 2016 document incorporates broader health, social and human rights perspectives, drawing upon a range of UN conventions, guidelines, rules and declarations (not least the system-wide Sustainable Development Goals). This is perhaps the most significant difference between the two documents. However, as “the most recent consensus”, this should not represent a barrier to the establishment of a ‘one-track approach’ for 2019 and beyond.

Based on the comparison presented above, the “mutually reinforcing” nature of the two documents (as well as the 2014 Joint Ministerial Statement) can be efficiently consolidated into a ‘one-track approach’ to take the international community beyond 2019. Moreover, such an approach – and the parallel process to update the indicators used in the Annual Reports Questionnaire (ARQ) – should reflect the comprehensive structure and tone of the UNGASS Outcome Document, cognizant that the issues contained in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action will continue to be sufficiently addressed.

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- <sup>7</sup> <https://i2es.incb.org/>
- <sup>8</sup> [https://www.incb.org/documents/Narcotic-Drugs/Guidelines/estimating\\_requirements/NAR\\_Guide\\_on\\_Estimating\\_EN\\_Ebook.pdf](https://www.incb.org/documents/Narcotic-Drugs/Guidelines/estimating_requirements/NAR_Guide_on_Estimating_EN_Ebook.pdf)
- <sup>9</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/congress/Declaration/V1504151\\_English.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/congress/Declaration/V1504151_English.pdf)
- <sup>10</sup> See, for example, several of the “contributions” to the UNGASS:  
<http://www.unodc.org/ungass2016/en/contributions.html>
- <sup>11</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Bangkok\\_Rules\\_ENG\\_22032015.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Bangkok_Rules_ENG_22032015.pdf)
- <sup>12</sup> [www.un.org/documents/ga/res/45/a45r110.htm](http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/45/a45r110.htm)
- <sup>13</sup> [www.un.org/en/events/mandeladay/mandela\\_rules.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/events/mandeladay/mandela_rules.shtml)
- <sup>14</sup> <https://www.incb.org/incb/en/publications/guidelines-for-use-by-competent-national-authorities.html>
- <sup>15</sup> [CND Resolution 60/1](http://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/Resolutions/V1603301-E.pdf)
- <sup>16</sup> [CND Resolution 61/10](http://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/Resolutions/V1603301-E.pdf)