

Statement

On Resolution E/CN.7/2013/L.4/Rev.1 of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs 56th Session passed on March 14, 2013: Intensifying the efforts to achieve the targets of the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS among people who use drugs, in particular the target to reduce HIV transmission among people who inject drugs by 50 per cent by 2015

On Thursday, March 14, 2013, the 56th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs passed a very important resolution on HIV and injecting Drug use. The aim of the resolution is to intensify efforts to reduce HIV transmission among people who inject drugs by 50 per cent by 2015.

We welcome this new resolution, in which for the first time, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs has made the clear connection between HIV, Viral Hepatitis and drug use. Furthermore the resolution specifically encourages UNODC and member states to implement the WHO and UNAIDS technical guidelines and targets.

A notable feature of the current resolution is the recognition given to the specific needs and circumstances of women who use drugs, in particular women who inject drugs, who are even less likely to access HIV services than their male counterparts.

The resolution urges the UNODC, member states, affected populations, civil society groups, UNAIDS and WHO to work in partnership to ensure adequate access for people who use drugs, in particular people who inject drugs, without stigma and discrimination while ensuring gender equality.

While major steps have been taken, a great deal remains to be done. It is critical that the resolution be supported and passed through the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (ECOSOC) and the UN General Assembly, and that it be funded and implemented, while fully protecting the human rights of people who inject drugs. While we are encouraged by the change in the tone of the UNODC language it must be acknowledged that there still remains much need for improvement in the International Narcotics Control Board's attention to the human rights of all those affected by substance use.

Chris Beyrer and Michel Kazatchkine,
Co-Chairs, International AIDS Society (IAS) Advisory Group on Key Affected Populations

About the IAS

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with over 16,000 members from more than 196 countries working at all levels of the global response to AIDS. The IAS members include researchers from all disciplines, clinicians, public health and community practitioners on the frontlines of the epidemic, as well as policy and programme planners.

The IAS is lead organizer of the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, which will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 30 June – 3 July 2013 and custodian of the biennial International AIDS Conference, which will be held in Melbourne, Australia, 20-25 July 2014.

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