



Trinidad and Tobago's Comments
Working Group on the Implementation of the Operational Recommendations of
UNGASS 2016
First Meeting
Tuesday, April 24, 2018.

Background:

The National Drug Policy of Trinidad and Tobago 2014 and Operational Plan for Drug Control 2014-2018, adopted by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) in July 2014, seek to address the complex issue of drug control through a balanced and multi-pronged approach. The Policy utilises legislative frameworks and systems and is in alignment with local, regional and international standards that are relevant to the national context. It includes the thematic areas of: Institutional Strengthening and International Cooperation, Research, Supply Reduction, demand reduction, control measures, monitoring and evaluation, as well as acknowledges the Government's position that all drug control efforts must complement each other.

Given that the drug problem is transnational in nature, scope and impact, and the peculiar challenges it poses to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean and in other parts of the globe, Trinidad and Tobago drafted a position paper to ventilate the issues relating to the world drug problem, and guide its contributions at the UNGASS discussions with a view to developing more robust policies and programmes.

These issues were:

- Human Rights;
- Decriminalization / Legalization of Marijuana;
- Controlled Drugs and Medicine;
- Public Health Approach to Drug Control;
- Review of Measurement Indicators;
- Proportionality of Sentencing and Alternatives to Incarceration;
- Death Penalty for Drug-Related Offences;
- Alternative Development: Preventive and Sustainable Development;
- Sustainable Development Goals as they relate to Drug Control

Participation in the UNGASS negotiations:

The Trinidad and Tobago Mission in Geneva in consultation with agencies in the Capital participated in the negotiations on the UNGASS. At the CND meetings in 2015 and 2016, representation from Capital was present to participate in the negotiations and informals.

Acceptance of the recommendations and Action Taken:

Trinidad and Tobago accepted the recommendations agreed to by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at the UNGASS session convened in New York in April 2016. The Final Outcome Document was circulated to all drug Control agencies in July 2016 and In December 2016, during an annual review of the Operational Plan, the NDC in collaboration with the stakeholders in the drug control sector reviewed the recommendations for inclusion in the work plans of the various areas of the National Operational Plan for Drug Control for the period 2016-2017.

UNODC Workshop October 2017:

The UNODC Secretariat in Vienna, approached the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs to offer the convening of a workshop in Trinidad and Tobago to discuss the recommendations, and highlight the need for additional attention to be focused on their implementation.

The National Drug Council sought and received approval to facilitate a 2 day workshop hosted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with fifty eight (58) representatives from approximately twenty three (23) agencies. This workshop allowed participating agencies:

- To increase the awareness of the UNGASS recommendation and the follow-up process,
- To support the implementation of the UNGASS outcome document,
- To analyze the recommendations regarding their specific relevance to the region and translate them into concrete activities.
- To highlight the content of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its alignment with the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
- To assess the actions taken by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to date, and
- To develop a roadmap for further implementation of the recommendations of the UNGASS outcome document.

The UNGASS Outcome Document was also reviewed at an annual meeting of stakeholders in drug control in November 2017, when priority actions were identified for implementation over the last year of the Plan. The NDC intends to continue working with stakeholder agencies to incorporate some of the recommendations that align naturally to the priority activities they have identified for implementation.

Trinidad and Tobago's position on the UNGASS 2018 and beyond:

Trinidad and Tobago was pleased to have the support of the UNODC and CICAD to participate in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March 2018. Discussions were held

with a few delegations on the way forward as member states approach the High Level meeting (Ministerial level meeting) in 2019.

To date Trinidad and Tobago has not submitted a status of implementation report to UNODC but this will be rectified by June 2018.

Recommendations 2018;

The National Drug Council Trinidad and Tobago welcomes the task undertaken by this Working Group and provides the following recommendations for consideration.

- It has been noted that many Caribbean Member States are not familiar with the UNGASS Outcome document and has not made it an integral part of their drug control planning. Therefore the following actions are suggested:
 - A Caribbean regional workshop be convened to highlight the importance of the UNGASS recommendations
 - CICAD and UNODC collaborate to have sub regional training on specifics related to the UNGASS recommendations

- The NDC has recommended the following for T&T going forward:
 - That a position is articulated by Trinidad and Tobago's representatives to United Nations when the issue arises that reflects the following:
 - That the time-frame for action on the recommendations be extended to 2029 at the 2019 High Level meeting. This allows adequate time to facilitate more meaningful implementation of the activities, and will allow for closer alignment and reporting with the 2030 SDG's;
 - That the UNODC Secretariat be mandated to engage in capacity building initiatives that will assist Member States to implement the recommendations.
 - That the UNODC Secretariat undertake resource mobilization to host sub-regional meetings that allow Member States to discuss and share best practices in the implementation of the recommendations
 - That the UNODC Secretariat maintain active follow up with Member States to track the status of implementation of the recommendations and report back to the intercessional meetings of the CND
 - That the Minister of National Security attend the 2019 High Level meeting in Vienna to articulate Trinidad and Tobago's position on the implementation of the recommendations.

- The Hemisphere speak with one voice on the future handling of the UNGASS recommendations.

NDC April 2018