

Oral Statement

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Joint statement by Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS) Asociación Civil, Conectas Direitos Humanos, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), and International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)

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Mr. President. We would like to welcome the report of the Office of the High Commissioner on the *Implementation of the joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem with regard to human rights* and to celebrate the contribution of this Council to the UNGASS implementation process. This is a positive step to strengthen cooperation between UN entities and to achieve better system coherence in the response to drug policies.

The report provides a complete revision of extended human rights violations committed in the implementation of the international drug control system. It recognizes “alarming tendencies towards a deeper militarization of States’ responses to countering drug related crimes”. In Latin American countries, the introduction of new laws and reforms that promote militarization has resulted in greater use of force, impunity and human rights violations.

The report also portrays alarming numbers of violations in the 'war on drugs' in places like the Philippines and Bangladesh where government policies have promoted extrajudicial killings of thousands of people for their alleged involvement in drug trade or consumption. These extreme cases need urgent response from the Council.

The report also illustrate extended human right problems associated with the drug control system. The disproportionate sentences in drug related crimes and the use of pre trial detention contribute to the overcrowding of prisons. The congestion of criminal justice for cases of drug possession or drug use results in the generalization of trial waivers eroding due process and procedural protections.

The report advances in some recommendations to states to revert these problems, including revising their legislation, reducing minimum and maximum penalties and decriminalizing personal use of drugs and minor drug offences.

Finally, the report focuses on the disproportionate impact of drug policies on racial minorities, women, and poor communities.

We call on the Council to urgently respond to and strongly denounce violations committed in the name of drug control policies, including by mandating investigations into cases involving large numbers of deaths, and provide technical expertise to bring state policies in line with human rights standards. Thank you.