

Media Update-2

26 June 2018

United Nations

Secretary-General Message

**THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE
AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING
26 June 2018**

Drug challenges are among the most complex problems we face, with wide-ranging impacts on health and well-being, families and communities, security and sustainable development.

Addressing them requires a holistic focus across many fronts, as highlighted in the outcome document unanimously adopted by the 2016 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem.

We need international cooperation and effective law enforcement responses to stop organized crime networks and drug traffickers, with full respect for human rights and in accordance with international standards and norms.

At the same time, we need to expand evidence-based approaches to prevention, treatment and support.

The UNGASS outcome document outlines concrete steps for taking such balanced action, rooted in the principle of shared responsibility. It is also flexible enough to allow countries to pursue national drug policies according to their priorities and needs – as I did when I was Prime Minister of Portugal.

In line with the three international drug control conventions, I introduced non-criminal responses to drug possession for personal use, while increasing resources for prevention, treatment and social reintegration, and reinforcing criminalization of drug trafficking.

There are no easy solutions. But my own experience reinforces my strong conviction that we can chart a better path to counter the world drug problem.

Building on agreed international frameworks and using the UNGASS consensus as our guide, I urge countries to advance prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration services; ensure



access to controlled medicines while preventing diversion and abuse; promote alternatives to illicit drug cultivation; and stop trafficking and organized crime – all of which would make an immense contribution to our work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Together, we can ensure that all people can live in health, dignity and peace, with security and prosperity.