



United Nations

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

**Report on the reconvened
sixty-third session
(2–4 December 2020)**

**Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 2020
Supplement No. 8A**

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Note

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[21 December 2020]

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Executive summary

The present summary has been prepared pursuant to the annex to General Assembly resolution 68/1, entitled “Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council”, and the annex to resolution 72/305, entitled “Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council”, in which it is stated that the subsidiary bodies of the Council should, *inter alia*, include in their reports an executive summary. The reconvened sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs was held from 2 to 4 December 2020.

The present document contains the report on the reconvened sixty-third session. Chapter I contains the text of the resolution and decisions adopted by the Commission, including the decisions recommended by the Commission for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. During the session, the Commission considered strategic management, budgetary and administrative questions; implementation of the international drug control treaties; contributions by the Commission to the work of the Economic and Social Council, in line with General Assembly resolution 72/305, including follow-up to and review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and matters relating to the organization of the sixty-fourth session of the Commission.

During its reconvened sixty-third session, the Commission recommended the following decisions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council: (a) “Improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: extension of the mandate of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime”; and (b) “Report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on its reconvened sixty-third session”.

In addition, the Commission adopted a resolution entitled “Implementation of the budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme” and a decision entitled “Voting procedure on the scheduling recommendations of the World Health Organization (Expert Committee on Drug Dependence) on cannabis and cannabis-related substances at the reconvened sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs”.

Under the agenda item on implementation of the international drug control treaties, the Commission decided on the voting procedure on the World Health Organization (WHO) scheduling recommendations on cannabis and cannabis-related substances. The Commission decided to delete cannabis and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and not to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended. Following the decision not to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended, the Commission, in line with the conditionalities set out in the WHO recommendations, did not vote on the recommendation to delete dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule II of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the recommendation to add tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended or the recommendation to delete tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule I of the 1971 Convention. The Commission also decided not to delete extracts and tinctures of cannabis from Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended. The Commission further decided not to add a footnote to the entry for cannabis and cannabis resin in Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended to read “Preparations containing predominantly cannabidiol and not more than 0.2 per cent of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol are not under international control”. Following the decision not to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended, the Commission decided by consensus not to add to Schedule III of the 1961 Convention as amended preparations containing

delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol), produced either by chemical synthesis or as preparations of cannabis, that are compounded as pharmaceutical preparations with one or more other ingredients and in such a way that *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol) cannot be recovered by readily available means or in a yield that would constitute a risk to public health.

Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft decisions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

1. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

Draft decision I

Improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: extension of the mandate of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The Economic and Social Council, recalling its decision 2017/236, entitled “Improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: extension of the mandate of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime”, in which it, inter alia, reaffirmed Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 52/13 of 20 March 2009 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolution 18/3 of 24 April 2009 and decided to renew the mandate of the working group until the part of the sessions of the Commissions to be held in the first half of 2021, decides to extend the mandate of the working group, as set out in Council decision 2017/236, until the reconvened sessions of the Commissions to be held in December 2021, at which time the Commissions should carry out a thorough review of the functioning of the working group and consider the extension of its mandate beyond 2021.

Draft decision II

Report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on its reconvened sixty-third session

The Economic and Social Council takes note of the report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on its reconvened sixty-third session.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council

2. The attention of the Economic and Social Council is drawn to the following resolution, adopted by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its reconvened sixty-third session, and to the action taken pursuant to General Assembly resolution [46/185](#) C, in section XVI of which the Assembly authorized the Commission to approve the programme budget for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme:

Resolution 63/6

Implementation of the budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Exercising the administrative and financial functions entrusted to it by the General Assembly in its resolution [46/185](#) C, section XVI, paragraph 2, of 20 December 1991,

Having considered the report of the Executive Director on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,¹ as well as the additional information provided to the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the Office for its deliberations,

Reaffirming its resolution 62/9 of 13 December 2019,

1. *Notes* that the report of the Executive Director on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provides information on the adjustments to the consolidated budget;
2. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue to fully implement Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 62/9 and regularly report on its implementation to the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the Office;
3. *Requests* the Co-Chairs of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the Office to establish, in consultation with Member States and with the support of the Secretariat, a workplan for 2021 with clear time frames to follow up on and review the full implementation by the Office of the mandates contained in resolution 62/9 and the present resolution;
4. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue to report on the financial and governance impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis and on the response of the Office to the crisis, and to present recommendations that may improve its response to potential future crises;
5. *Also requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to present suggestions for possible solutions to the budget shortfalls, including those deriving from the liquidity crisis under the regular budget and the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, as well as information on any savings realized and any possible reallocation of resources;
6. *Approves* the revised budget for general-purpose funds for the biennium 2020–2021 in the amount of 4,982,600 United States dollars;
7. *Endorses* the revised budget for special-purpose funds and programme support costs for the biennium 2020–2021 as indicated below:

¹ [E/CN.7/2020/16-E/CN.15/2020/16](#).

Resource projections for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme

	<i>Resources (thousands of United States dollars)</i>		<i>Posts</i>	
	<i>Approved budget, 2020–2021</i>	<i>Revised budget, 2020–2021</i>	<i>Approved budget, 2020–2021</i>	<i>Revised budget, 2020–2021</i>
General-purpose funds				
Post	3 425.6	3 178.1	11	11
Non-post	1 393.6	1 804.5		
Subtotal	4 819.2	4 982.6	11	11
Special-purpose funds	338 331.5	236 568.7	103	103
Subtotal	338 331.5	236 568.7	103	103
Programme support cost funds				
Post	11 301.6	20 913.4	68	68
Non-post	3 050.6	5 381.7		
Subtotal	14 352.1^a	26 295.1^b	68	68
Total	357 502.8	267 846.4	182	182

^a Allocation for 2020.

^b Allocation for 2020–2021.

8. *Notes* that the estimated resource projections above are subject to the availability of funding;

9. *Welcomes* the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to increase transparency in budget presentation and in this regard requests the Executive Director of the Office to ensure that the estimated cost of projected activities of the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies, as well as the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board, are duly and distinctly reflected in future consolidated budget documents;

10. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to present information on the financial implications of the long-term strategy for the Office, as well as information on potential reallocations to address those implications.

Decision 63/16

Voting procedure on the scheduling recommendations of the World Health Organization (Expert Committee on Drug Dependence) on cannabis and cannabis-related substances at the reconvened sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

At its 1st meeting, on 2 December 2020, the Commission, recalling its decision 63/14 of 4 March 2020, bearing in mind the unprecedented circumstances resulting from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and related measures, and taking into account the complexity and interconnectedness of the recommendations of the World Health Organization (Expert Committee on Drug Dependence) on cannabis and cannabis-related substances:

(a) Decided to vote on all recommendations of the World Health Organization (Expert Committee on Drug Dependence) on cannabis and cannabis-related substances on 2 December 2020, at its reconvened sixty-third session;

(b) Also decided to apply the following voting procedure, which does not set a precedent for any future decision-making by the Commission:

- (i) The reconvened session will be held with the physical presence of one representative of each member of the Commission, for voting and decision-making, and the online participation of other Member States and stakeholders;
- (ii) The Commission will vote on the recommendations by roll call, in the following order: recommendation 5.1,² recommendation 5.2.1,³ recommendation 5.2.2,⁴ recommendation 5.3.1,⁵ recommendation 5.3.2,⁶ recommendation 5.4,⁷ recommendation 5.5⁸ and recommendation 5.6;⁹
- (iii) Bearing in mind the conditionalities introduced by the Expert Committee on Drug Dependence regarding the adoption of recommendations 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.1 and 5.3.2, and in order to avoid having a substance scheduled under two conventions, if recommendation 5.2.1 is rejected by the Commission, there will be no consideration of and no vote on recommendations 5.2.2, 5.3.1 and 5.3.2. Following the same reasoning, in the case that recommendation 5.2.1 is approved and recommendation 5.2.2 is rejected by the Commission, recommendation 5.2.1 will be deemed to be reconsidered and rejected and there will be no vote on recommendations 5.3.1 and 5.3.2. In the case that recommendation 5.3.1 is approved and recommendation 5.3.2 is rejected by the Commission, recommendation 5.3.1 will be deemed to be reconsidered and rejected. Furthermore, if recommendation 5.2.1, to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol,¹⁰ is rejected, recommendation 5.6, to add certain preparations containing dronabinol to Schedule III of the 1961 Convention as amended, will be deemed to be rejected;
- (iv) Given the time limitations of the online interpretation platforms, States members of the Commission will be provided with an opportunity to make statements in explanation of vote immediately after the completion of votes on all recommendations, to be followed by statements by other Member States and stakeholders.

² To delete cannabis and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol.

³ To add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended.

⁴ To delete dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule II of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, subject to the adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the recommendation to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended.

⁵ To add tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended, subject to the adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the recommendation to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended.

⁶ To delete tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule I of the 1971 Convention, subject to the adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the recommendation to add tetrahydrocannabinol to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended.

⁷ To delete extracts and tinctures of cannabis from Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended.

⁸ To give effect to the recommendation of the fortieth meeting of the Expert Committee on Drug Dependence that preparations considered to be pure cannabidiol (CBD) should not be scheduled within the international drug control conventions, by adding a footnote to the entry for cannabis and cannabis resin in Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended to read "Preparations containing predominantly cannabidiol and not more than 0.2 per cent of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol are not under international control".

⁹ To add preparations containing *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol), produced either by chemical synthesis or as preparations of cannabis, that are compounded as pharmaceutical preparations with one or more other ingredients and in such a way that *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol) cannot be recovered by readily available means or in a yield that would constitute a risk to public health to Schedule III of the 1961 Convention as amended.

¹⁰ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

Decision 63/17

Deletion of cannabis and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol

At its 1st meeting, on 2 December 2020, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs decided by a roll-call vote of 27 votes to 25, with 1 abstention, to delete cannabis and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol.¹¹ The voting was as follows:

In favour: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, India, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay;

Against: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt, Hungary, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Russian Federation, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan;

Abstaining: Ukraine.

Decision 63/18

Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol

At its 1st meeting, on 2 December 2020, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs decided by a roll-call vote of 23 votes to 28, with 2 abstentions, not to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol.¹² The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Ecuador, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Jamaica, Morocco, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;

Against: Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt, El Salvador, India, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United States of America, Uruguay;

Abstaining: Nepal, Ukraine.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

Decision 63/19

Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to delete extracts and tinctures of cannabis from Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol

At its 1st meeting, on 2 December 2020, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs decided by a roll-call vote of 24 votes to 27, with 2 abstentions, not to delete extracts and tinctures of cannabis from Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol.¹³ The voting was as follows:

In favour: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay;

Against: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt, Hungary, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Russian Federation, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan;

Abstaining: Nepal, Ukraine.

Decision 63/20

Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to add a footnote to the entry for cannabis and cannabis resin in Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol to read “Preparations containing predominantly cannabidiol and not more than 0.2 per cent of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol are not under international control”

At its 1st meeting, on 2 December 2020, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs decided by a roll-call vote of 6 votes to 43, with 4 abstentions, not to add a footnote to the entry for cannabis and cannabis resin in Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol¹⁴ to read “Preparations containing predominantly cannabidiol and not more than 0.2 per cent of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol are not under international control”. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Australia, Canada, Ecuador, Peru, South Africa, Thailand;

Against: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czechia, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay;

Abstaining: Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Ukraine.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Decision 63/21

Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to add to Schedule III of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol preparations containing *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol), produced either by chemical synthesis or as preparations of cannabis, that are compounded as pharmaceutical preparations with one or more other ingredients and in such a way that *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol) cannot be recovered by readily available means or in a yield that would constitute a risk to public health

At its 1st meeting, on 2 December 2020, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs decided by consensus not to add preparations containing *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol), produced either by chemical synthesis or as preparations of cannabis, that are compounded as pharmaceutical preparations with one or more other ingredients and in such a way that *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol) cannot be recovered by readily available means or in a yield that would constitute a risk to public health to Schedule III of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol.¹⁵

¹⁵ Ibid.

Chapter II

Strategic management, budgetary and administrative questions

3. At the 3rd and 4th meetings of the reconvened sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held jointly with the reconvened twenty-ninth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on 3 and 4 December 2020, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs considered agenda item 4, which read as follows:

“4. Strategic management, budgetary and administrative questions:

(a) Work of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime;

(b) Directives on policy and budgetary issues for the drug programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime;

(c) Working methods of the Commission;

(d) Staff composition of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other related matters.”

4. For its consideration of item 4, the Commission had before it the following:

(a) Report of the Executive Director on the implementation of the consolidated budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ([E/CN.7/2020/16-E/CN.15/2020/16](#));

(b) Report of the Executive Director on gender balance and geographical representation within the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ([E/CN.7/2020/17-E/CN.15/2020/17](#));

(c) Note by the Secretariat on the work of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ([E/CN.7/2020/3/Add.1-E/CN.15/2020/3/Add.1](#));

(d) Draft proposed programme plan for 2022 and programme performance for 2020 for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ([E/CN.7/2020/CRP.20-E/CN.15/2020/CRP.1](#));

(e) Note by the Secretariat on the working methods of the UNODC Governing Bodies during the COVID-19 pandemic ([E/CN.7/2020/CRP.21-E/CN.15/2020/CRP.2](#));

(f) UNODC Strategy 2021–2025 ([E/CN.7/2020/CRP.22-E/CN.15/2020/CRP.3](#)).

5. The Director of the Division for Management of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Director of the Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs of UNODC and the Chief of the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies of UNODC also made introductory statements. The representative of Brazil, in her capacity as Co-Chair of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC, also made an introductory statement.

6. Statements were made by the representatives of Colombia, China, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Switzerland, Canada, Japan, Jamaica, the Russian Federation, Pakistan, Brazil and Cuba. Statements were also made by the observers for the Islamic Republic of Iran and Bangladesh.

7. Joint statements were made by the observer for the Philippines on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, by the observer for the European Union on behalf of the

European Union and its member States, and by the observer for Singapore on behalf of the Group of Friends for UNODC Research.¹⁶

8. At the 4th meeting, on 4 December, the representative of the United States and the observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran made statements in exercise of the right of reply.

A. Deliberations

9. Speakers recognized the challenges associated with the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic for programme planning and delivery, and commended the efforts undertaken by the Office, including with regard to ensuring the business continuity of the governing bodies of the Office. UNODC was also commended for its continued programme delivery, and the importance of further supporting Member States, including in the light of the current pandemic, was underscored. The Office's delivery of high-quality operational and technical assistance, which complemented its practical and policy-relevant research and normative work, was appreciated.

10. Several speakers underscored the crucial role of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC in enhancing the transparency and accountability of the Office and strengthening cooperation and trust between Member States and UNODC. Appreciation was expressed for the work of the Co-Chairs of the working group. Several speakers underlined that the working group served as a useful forum for regular consultations and review, including on matters related to the Office's programme plans, programme implementation and financial, administrative and other issues. The importance of providing information in a transparent and timely manner in order to support decision-making by the commissions was highlighted, and the extension of the mandate of the working group until December 2021 was welcomed. The importance of developing a clear schedule of meetings for 2021 was emphasized by a number of speakers.

11. Several speakers commended the Executive Director of UNODC for the UNODC Strategy 2021–2025, which she had presented to the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC and referred to at the present session, noting the relevance of the Strategy and expressing appreciation for her leadership in the process of developing the Strategy. They welcomed the open and inclusive dialogue on the Strategy that had been held pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 62/9 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolution 28/4. A number of speakers acknowledged that the Strategy provided a clear vision, as well as guidance on the mandates and thematic areas of work of the Office. They underscored the importance of involving Member States in planning the implementation of the Strategy and providing regular updates to Member States on progress made. Some speakers underscored the importance of coordination among United Nations entities and with other regional and international organizations working in related fields, and of multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with civil society.

12. Several speakers reiterated the importance of adequate, predictable and stable funding for UNODC to ensure the implementation of its mandates and the continuity of high-quality operational and technical assistance, in particular to developing countries. Several speakers expressed concern regarding the challenges the Office faced in the light of the current regular budget liquidity crisis, as well as the shortfall in general-purpose funding, which could affect the Office's ability to efficiently maintain core programmatic functions. It was noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had further exacerbated the financial situation of the Office. Several speakers called upon

¹⁶ Chile, Colombia, France, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Russian Federation, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United States and European Union.

donors to consider making non-earmarked contributions. Several speakers welcomed efforts undertaken to implement fully and in a timely manner Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 62/9 and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice resolution 28/4. UNODC was also encouraged to increase transparency regarding the use of programme support cost funds and to broaden their distribution, and to report thereon.

13. The efforts made by UNODC with regard to the implementation of the United Nations development system reform and the United Nations management system reform were welcomed by several speakers. Several speakers underscored the importance of keeping Member States regularly informed about the Office's progress in implementing the reforms.

14. The need to strengthen results-based management, with a view to enhancing transparency and accountability, and the integration of monitoring and evaluation, was underscored by a number of speakers. The importance of implementing the recommendations by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and reporting on progress made in that regard was underscored.

15. The progress made by UNODC in achieving gender equality in its staff composition was welcomed by several delegations, and the importance of achieving equal representation, particularly at the senior levels, was underscored. The importance of ensuring the integration of gender perspectives in all aspects of the programming and work of the Office was highlighted. Appreciation was expressed for the efforts of the Executive Director in that regard, including in her capacity as an International Gender Champion.

16. Several speakers expressed the view that greater efforts were needed to increase geographical diversity and equitable geographical representation in the staff composition of the Office, in particular at the senior levels. UNODC was commended for its outreach, recruitment and retention efforts and related activities, including the "diversity corner" launched in 2020. Several speakers expressed concern about the insufficient progress made in the efforts to enhance the representation of developing countries, in particular those that were unrepresented or underrepresented. The Executive Director was requested to intensify efforts to increase geographical diversity, and the positive effect that would have on the work of UNODC was highlighted.

17. Reference was made by delegations to the zero-tolerance policy of the United Nations regarding sexual exploitation and harassment, and in that regard the Office was called upon to continue its efforts to implement the relevant recommendations.

18. Reference was made to the note by the Secretariat on the working methods of the UNODC Governing Bodies during the COVID-19 pandemic (E/CN.7/2020/CRP.21-E/CN.15/2020/CRP.2), and appreciation was expressed for the efforts in facilitating the participation of all members of the Commission.

19. Several speakers underscored the significance of research for the work of UNODC, emphasizing the importance of impartiality, transparency and the use of verified and reliable data. The need to explore funding arrangements for research while safeguarding its integrity and independence was highlighted. In that regard, the importance of UNODC providing technical assistance to Member States to strengthen their data collection and information analysis capacities was underscored.

20. One speaker requested that a stand-alone agenda item, on the implementation of the United Nations system common position on drug-related matters and the work of the related United Nations system coordination task team, be added to the provisional agenda of the Commission.

B. Action taken by the Commission

21. At its 4th meeting, on 4 December 2020, the Commission recommended to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of a draft decision entitled “Improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: extension of the mandate of the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime”, on the extension of the mandate of the working group until the reconvened sessions of the Commissions to be held in December 2021 ([E/CN.7/2020/L.10](#)). (For the text of the draft decision, see chap. I, sect. A, draft decision I.)

22. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted a resolution on the implementation of the budget for the biennium 2020–2021 for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme ([E/CN.7/2020/L.11](#)). (For the text of the resolution, see chap. I, sect. B, resolution 63/6.)

Chapter III

Implementation of the international drug control treaties

23. At the 1st, 2nd and 4th meetings of its reconvened sixty-third session, on 2 and 4 December 2020, the Commission considered agenda item 5, entitled “Implementation of the international drug control treaties”.
24. For its consideration of item 5, the Commission had before it a conference room paper on the World Health Organization (WHO) scheduling recommendations on cannabis and cannabis-related substances, outlining the considerations of the recommendations by the Commission during its sixty-second and sixty-third sessions (E/CN.7/2020/CRP.19).
25. At the 1st and 2nd meetings, statements were made by the representatives of Turkey, China, the United Kingdom, Hungary, Canada, Germany (on behalf of States members of the European Union),¹⁷ Switzerland, Brazil, Chile, the Russian Federation, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, the United States, Mexico, France, Pakistan, Libya, Australia, Thailand, Japan, Morocco, Cuba, El Salvador, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Algeria, Angola, Peru, Jamaica, Egypt, Nigeria, Ecuador, Afghanistan¹⁸ and the Russian Federation (on behalf of 29 States).¹⁹
26. Statements were made by the observers for Singapore, Cyprus, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.
27. A statement was made by the President of the International Narcotics Control Board. Statements were also made by the observers for Smart Approaches to Marijuana, the Interdisciplinary Centre for Cannabis Research, Rwanda Youth Impact and the Transnational Institute.
28. At its 4th meeting, the Commission continued its consideration of agenda item 5.
29. The Chief of the Laboratory and Scientific Section of UNODC and the observer for WHO made introductory statements.
30. Statements were made by the representatives of Ukraine, Canada, the United States, Mexico and Nigeria. The observer for Kazakhstan also made a statement.

A. Deliberations

1. Changes in the scope of control of substances

(a) **Consideration of the draft decision submitted by the Chair on the voting procedure on the scheduling recommendations of the World Health Organization (Expert Committee on Drug Dependence) on cannabis and cannabis-related substances at the reconvened sixty-third session of the Commission**

31. The Chair introduced a draft decision entitled “Voting procedure on the scheduling recommendations of the World Health Organization (Expert Committee on Drug Dependence) on cannabis and cannabis-related substances at the reconvened sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs” (E/CN.7/2020/L.12), by which the Commission would alter the default voting procedure on those recommendations, bearing in mind the unprecedented circumstances resulting from

¹⁷ Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

¹⁸ The statement was submitted in writing for posting on the Commission website.

¹⁹ Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Belarus, Burkina Faso, China, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and related measures and taking into account the complexity and interconnectedness of the WHO recommendations on cannabis and cannabis-related substances.

32. The Chair recalled that rule 55 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council provided that, “when a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session unless the commission so decides”. Hence, in accordance with rule 55, the Commission would need to vote a second time if it wished to reconsider a recommendation. Notwithstanding rule 55, the Commission, before it proceeded to vote on the WHO recommendations, adopted the draft decision, including the provision that, in the case that recommendation 5.2.1 is approved and recommendation 5.2.2 is rejected by the Commission, recommendation 5.2.1 will be deemed to be reconsidered and rejected, and in the case that recommendation 5.3.1 is approved and recommendation 5.3.2 is rejected by the Commission, recommendation 5.3.1 will be deemed to be reconsidered and rejected.

(b) Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to delete cannabis and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of the 1961 Convention as amended (referred to as recommendation 5.1)

33. The observer for WHO explained that in the 1961 Convention as amended, cannabis and cannabis resin were described, respectively, as the flowering or fruiting tops of the cannabis plant and as the separated resin obtained from the cannabis plant. The observer reported that the Expert Committee on Drug Dependence had noted that adverse effects of cannabis had been well documented. The immediate effects of consumption included impairment of movement and cognitive function, while long-term cannabis use was associated with increased risk of mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression and psychotic illness. Cannabis could cause physical dependence in people who use the drug daily or near daily; the withdrawal symptoms that occurred upon abstinence included gastrointestinal disturbance, appetite changes, irritability, restlessness and sleep impairment. The observer stated that the Expert Committee had also noted that there were medical uses for cannabis, in particular for cannabis preparations that were orally administered. He mentioned that a number of countries had registered and authorized the use of cannabis preparations for the treatment of medical conditions such as chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting, pain, sleep disorders, certain forms of epilepsy, and spasticity associated with multiple sclerosis. Cannabis and cannabis resin were included in Schedule I and Schedule IV of the 1961 Convention as amended. Substances included in both of those schedules were particularly liable to abuse and to produce ill-effects and had little or no therapeutic use. The observer for WHO concluded that the evidence presented to the Expert Committee did not indicate that cannabis and cannabis resin were particularly liable to produce ill-effects similar to the effects of the other substances in Schedule IV of the 1961 Convention as amended, such as fentanyl analogues, heroin and other opioids.

(c) Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended (referred to as recommendation 5.2.1)

34. The observer for WHO noted that the main psychoactive substance in the cannabis plant was one of the four stereoisomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ^9 -THC). That substance was used medically and was sometimes known by its international non-proprietary name, dronabinol. At present, Δ^9 -THC also referred to the principal compound in illicit cannabis-derived psychoactive products. It was currently placed in Schedule II of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971. The liability to abuse of Δ^9 -THC was almost identical to that of cannabis and the adverse effects of Δ^9 -THC were also almost identical to those of cannabis. The observer reported that the Expert Committee had noted that the risks of abuse and ill effects were particularly pronounced for those smoked cannabis-derived psychoactive

products, such as butane hash oil, that contained very high Δ^9 -THC concentrations. A substance liable to similar abuse and productive of similar ill-effects as that of a substance already scheduled within the 1961 Convention as amended, would, in accordance with the conventions, be scheduled in the same way as that substance. As Δ^9 -THC was liable to similar abuse as cannabis and had similar ill-effects, it met the criteria for inclusion in Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended.

- (d) **Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to delete dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule II of the 1971 Convention, subject to the adoption by the Commission of the recommendation to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended (referred to as recommendation 5.2.2)**

35. As the condition contained in the WHO recommendation that the Commission must have first accepted the addition of dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended was not fulfilled, the Commission did not consider the recommendation to delete dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule II of the 1971 Convention.

- (e) **Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to add tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended, subject to the adoption by the Commission of the recommendation to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended (referred to as recommendation 5.3.1)**

36. As the condition contained in the WHO recommendation that the Commission must have first accepted the addition of dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended was not fulfilled, the Commission did not consider the recommendation to add tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended.

- (f) **Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to delete tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule I of the 1971 Convention, subject to the adoption by the Commission of the recommendation to add tetrahydrocannabinol to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended (referred to as recommendation 5.3.2)**

37. The condition contained in the WHO recommendation that the Commission must have first accepted the addition of tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended was not fulfilled, as, owing to the conditionality outlined above, the Commission had not voted on and thus not accepted the addition of tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended. Therefore, the Commission did not consider the recommendation to delete tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule I of the 1971 Convention.

- (g) **Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to delete extracts and tinctures of cannabis from Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended (referred to as recommendation 5.4)**

38. The observer for WHO noted that extracts and tinctures of cannabis were preparations that were produced by application of solvents to cannabis. They were currently placed in Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended. Extracts and tinctures included both medical and non-medical preparations, for example, those with high concentrations of Δ^9 -THC such as butane hash oil. While the medical extracts and tinctures were administered orally, those produced and used illicitly were

normally inhaled following heating and vaporization. The observer for WHO stated that extracts and tinctures of cannabis encompassed preparations that had psychoactive properties produced by Δ^9 -THC, as well as those that did not, for example, those considered to be pure cannabidiol (CBD), such as Epidiolex. In line with the 1961 Convention as amended, preparations were defined as mixtures, solids, or liquids containing a substance in Schedule I or II and were generally subject to the same measures of control as that substance. The Expert Committee on Drug Dependence had noted that, under the definition of “preparation” in the 1961 Convention as amended, all products that were identified as extracts and tinctures of cannabis were considered to be preparations of cannabis.

- (h) **Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to add a footnote to the entry for cannabis and cannabis resin in Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended to read “Preparations containing predominantly cannabidiol and not more than 0.2 per cent of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol are not under international control” (referred to as recommendation 5.5)**

39. The observer for WHO recalled that, at its fortieth meeting, the Expert Committee had considered a critical review of cannabidiol and had recommended that preparations considered to be pure cannabidiol should not be scheduled within the international drug control conventions. Cannabidiol was found in cannabis and cannabis resin but did not have psychoactive properties and had no potential for abuse and no potential to produce dependence. Cannabidiol had been shown to be effective in the management of certain treatment-resistant, childhood-onset epilepsy disorders. It had been approved for that use in the United States and the European Union. Cannabidiol could be chemically synthesized or prepared from the cannabis plant. The approved medication was a preparation of the cannabis plant. The Expert Committee had noted that medicines without psychoactive effects that were produced as preparations of the cannabis plant contained trace amounts of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ^9 -THC; dronabinol). The cannabidiol preparation approved for the treatment of childhood-onset epilepsy contained not more than 0.15 per cent Δ^9 -THC by dry weight of plant-derived material and had no effects indicative of potential for abuse or dependence. The observer for WHO noted that the recommendation to add the respective footnote had been made in keeping with the recommendation that preparations considered pure cannabidiol should not be controlled, and recognizing that trace levels of Δ^9 -THC may be found in such preparations, while acknowledging that chemical analysis of Δ^9 -THC to an accuracy of 0.15 per cent might be difficult for some Member States.

- (i) **Consideration of a proposal from the World Health Organization to add preparations containing *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol), produced either by chemical synthesis or as preparations of cannabis, that are compounded as pharmaceutical preparations with one or more other ingredients and in such a way that *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol) cannot be recovered by readily available means or in a yield that would constitute a risk to public health to Schedule III of the 1961 Convention as amended (referred to as recommendation 5.6)**

40. In its procedural decision (E/CN.7/2020/L.12), the Commission decided that if the recommendation to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended was rejected, the recommendation to add preparations containing *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol), produced either by chemical synthesis or as preparations of cannabis, that are compounded as pharmaceutical preparations with one or more other ingredients and in such a way that *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol) could not be recovered by readily available means or in a yield which would constitute a risk to public health to Schedule III of the 1961 Convention as amended would be deemed to be rejected.

(j) Consideration of the outcome of the forty-third meeting of the Expert Committee on Drug Dependence of the World Health Organization

41. Pursuant to Commission resolution 58/11, in preparation for the scheduling decisions to be taken by the Commission at its sixty-fourth session, the observer for WHO presented to the Commission information on the outcome of the forty-third meeting of the Expert Committee on Drug Dependence, held online from 12 to 20 October 2020.

2. Other matters arising from the international drug control treaties

42. Appreciation was expressed for the support provided by UNODC, WHO and the International Narcotics Control Board in the implementation of the three international drug control conventions, and the importance of enhancing the efficiency of the scheduling system was underlined. Some speakers underscored the importance of addressing the ongoing opioid crisis, and challenges related to synthetic drugs. Speakers also shared information on national efforts to address the world drug problem, including with regard to addressing the situation of people with drug use disorders in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

43. One speaker emphasized that tramadol continued to pose a risk to public health at the national, regional and international levels, and called for international control of tramadol, as domestic control had not been effective.

B. Action taken by the Commission

44. At its 1st meeting, on 2 December 2020, the Commission decided on the voting procedure on the WHO scheduling recommendations on cannabis and cannabis-related substances at the reconvened sixty-third session of the Commission. (For the text of the decision, see chap. I, sect. B, decision 63/16.)

45. At the same meeting, the Commission decided by a roll-call vote of 27 votes to 25, with 1 abstention, to delete cannabis and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of the 1961 Convention as amended. (For the text of the decision, see chap. I, sect. B, decision 63/17.) The voting was as follows:

In favour: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, India, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay;

Against: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt, Hungary, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Russian Federation, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan;

Abstaining: Ukraine.

46. Also at the same meeting, the Commission decided by a roll-call vote of 23 votes to 28, with 2 abstentions, not to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended. (For the text of the decision, see chap. I, sect. B, decision 63/18.) The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Ecuador, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Jamaica, Morocco, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;

Against: Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt, El Salvador, India, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya,

Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United States of America, Uruguay;

Abstaining: Nepal, Ukraine.

47. Following the decision not to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended, the Commission, in line with the conditionalities set out in the WHO recommendations, did not vote on the recommendation to delete dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule II of the 1971 Convention, the recommendation to add tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended, and the recommendation to delete tetrahydrocannabinol (isomers of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) from Schedule I of the 1971 Convention.

48. Also at its 1st meeting, the Commission decided by a roll-call vote of 24 votes to 27, with 2 abstentions, not to delete extracts and tinctures of cannabis from Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended. (For the text of the decision, see chap. I, sect. B, decision 63/19.) The voting was as follows:

In favour: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay;

Against: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brazil, Burkina Faso, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt, Hungary, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Russian Federation, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan;

Abstaining: Nepal, Ukraine.

49. At the same meeting, the Commission decided by a roll-call vote of 6 votes to 43, with 4 abstentions, not to add a footnote to the entry for cannabis and cannabis resin in Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended to read "Preparations containing predominantly cannabidiol and not more than 0.2 per cent of *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol are not under international control". (For the text of the decision, see chap. I, sect. B, decision 63/20.) The voting was as follows:

In favour: Australia, Canada, Ecuador, Peru, South Africa, Thailand;

Against: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czechia, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay;

Abstaining: Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Ukraine.

50. Following the decision not to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) to Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended, the Commission decided by consensus not to add preparations containing *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol), produced either by chemical synthesis or as preparations of cannabis, that are compounded as pharmaceutical preparations with one or more other ingredients and in such a way that *delta*-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol) cannot be recovered by readily available means or in a yield that would constitute a risk to public health to Schedule III of the 1961 Convention as amended. (For the text of the decision, see chap. I, sect. B, decision 63/21.)

51. Statements in explanation of vote were made by the representatives of Turkey, China, the United Kingdom, Hungary, Canada, Germany (on behalf of States

members of the European Union),²⁰ Switzerland, Brazil, Chile, the Russian Federation, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, the United States, Mexico, France, Pakistan, Libya, Australia, Thailand, Japan, Morocco, Cuba, El Salvador, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Algeria, Angola, Peru, Jamaica, Egypt, Nigeria, Ecuador, Afghanistan,²¹ the Russian Federation on behalf of 29 States,²² and Ukraine.²³ Statements were also made by observers.

52. Statements in explanation of vote by Commission members and statements by Member States that are not members of the Commission have been made available in conference room paper E/CN.7/2020/CRP.24.

²⁰ Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

²¹ The statement was submitted in writing.

²² Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Belarus, Burkina Faso, China, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

²³ The statement was submitted in writing.

Chapter IV

Contributions by the Commission to the work of the Economic and Social Council, in line with General Assembly resolution 72/305, including follow-up to and review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

53. At its 4th meeting, on 4 December 2020, the Commission considered agenda item 9, entitled “Contributions by the Commission to the work of the Economic and Social Council, in line with General Assembly resolution 72/305, including follow-up to and review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

54. The Chair made an introductory statement.

55. Statements were made by the representative of China and the observer for the Plurinational State of Bolivia. The observer for the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care also made a statement.

Deliberations

56. Speakers emphasized the importance of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and effectively addressing the world drug situation, on the basis of the principle of common and shared responsibility. Reference was made to the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development and the importance of accelerating sustainable solutions to achieve the Goals. Speakers shared information on national efforts in addressing the world drug problem, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Chapter V

Provisional agenda for the sixty-fourth session of the Commission

57. At its 4th meeting, on 4 December 2020, the Commission considered agenda item 10, entitled “Provisional agenda for the sixty-fourth session of the Commission”. The Chair introduced the item and brought to the attention of the Commission matters relating to the organization of work for its sixty-fourth session.

58. The representatives of Switzerland, the Russian Federation, the Netherlands, Germany, Nigeria, Mexico, Canada, Kenya, Pakistan and Algeria made statements. The observer for Portugal also made a statement.

A. Deliberations

1. Duration of the sixty-fourth session and other arrangements

59. The Commission decided that the regular part of its sixty-fourth session would be held from Monday, 12 April, to Friday, 16 April 2021, with pre-session consultations to be held on 9 April 2021. The Commission also decided that the reconvened part of its sixty-fourth session would be held on 9 and 10 December 2021.

60. The Commission further decided that, in accordance with its decision 55/1, the firm deadline for the submission of draft resolutions would be one month prior to the commencement of the session, namely, by noon on Monday, 15 March 2021.

61. The Commission also decided to hold a ceremonial segment on the first day of the sixty-fourth session, to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the fiftieth anniversary of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971.

62. Owing to the difficulty of predicting the developments of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission decided that the extended Bureau would continue to discuss the logistical arrangements for the sixty-fourth session.

2. Provisional agenda for the sixty-fourth session of the Commission

63. The Chair of the Commission recalled that, in its decision 2020/214, the Economic and Social Council had approved the provisional agenda for the sixty-fourth session of the Commission.

64. One speaker reiterated the request that a stand-alone agenda item, on the implementation of the United Nations system common position on drug-related matters and the work of the related United Nations system coordination task team, be added to the provisional agenda of the sixty-fifth session of the Commission. The same speaker requested that the Commission hear a briefing on the work of the United Nations system coordination task team during the regular part of the sixty-fourth session, when considering agenda item 7, entitled “Inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem”. Several speakers expressed support for the inclusion of an additional agenda item. Several other speakers underlined that the United Nations system common position on drug-related matters and the work of the related United Nations system coordination task team could be adequately addressed under the existing agenda item 7, and expressed their opposition to adding a stand-alone agenda item.

65. One speaker proposed that the focus of the general debate at the sixty-fourth session should be on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world drug problem. The speaker also proposed that the Commission adopt a joint statement or declaration at its sixty-fourth session on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which could then be submitted as a substantive contribution by the Commission to

the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council to be held in 2021, the thematic focus of which was to be “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”.

B. Action taken by the Commission

66. At its 4th meeting, on 4 December 2020, the Commission decided on the dates, deadlines and arrangements for its sixty-fourth session as set out in paragraphs 56–59 above.

Chapter VI

Other business

67. At its 4th meeting, on 4 December 2020, the Commission considered agenda item 11, entitled “Other business”.
68. No issues were raised under the agenda item.

Chapter VII

Adoption of the report of the Commission on its reconvened sixty-third session

69. At its 4th meeting, on 4 December 2020, the Commission adopted the parts of its report on the organization of the session ([E/CN.7/2020/L.1/Add.8](#)), as orally amended, and on agenda items 4 and 5 ([E/CN.7/2020/L.1/Add.9](#) and [E/CN.7/2020/L.1/Add.10](#)). The Commission decided that, in line with past practice, the present report would be brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council and that a draft decision on the report of the Commission on its reconvened sixty-third session, to be recommended to the Economic and Social Council for adoption, would be included in the report on the reconvened session (see chap. I, sect. A, draft decision II). The Commission also decided to entrust the finalization of the report to the Chair of the Commission, with the assistance of the Rapporteur.

Chapter VIII

Organization of the reconvened session and administrative matters

A. Opening and duration of the session

70. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs held its reconvened sixty-third session in Vienna from 2 to 4 December 2020.

71. The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 2011/259, entitled “Joint meetings of the reconvened sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice”, decided that, starting in 2011, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice would hold joint meetings during their reconvened sessions for the sole purpose of considering agenda items included in the operational segment of the agendas of both Commissions, with a view to providing integrated policy directives to UNODC on administrative, budgetary and strategic management issues. The Council also decided that the practice of holding back-to-back reconvened sessions of both Commissions would be continued to enable each Commission to consider, in separate meetings, agenda items included in the normative segment of its agenda.

72. The Commission held a total of four meetings during its reconvened sixty-third session. Pursuant to Council decision 2011/259, one meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs was held jointly with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in order to consider item 4 of the agenda of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and item 3 of the agenda of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

73. At the joint plenary meeting, the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Chair of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice made statements.

B. Attendance

74. The arrangements for the organization of the reconvened sixty-third session had been endorsed by the Commission by means of a silence procedure on 13 November 2020. In accordance with those arrangements, the session was conducted in a hybrid format. Commission members were allowed to be physically present in the conference room, while other Member States and stakeholders joined online.

75. The reconvened sixty-third session was attended by representatives of the 53 States members of the Commission. Also attending were observers for 69 other States Members of the United Nations, as well as non-member States, representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations.

C. Election of officers

76. On 11 June 2020, the Group of Western European and other States nominated Wolfgang Amadeus Brühlhart (Switzerland) for the office of Second Vice-Chair for the second half of the sixty-third session, upon the withdrawal of Ghislain D’hoop (Belgium) from the position, as arranged. At its 1st meeting, on 2 December, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs elected the Second Vice-Chair.

D. Documentation

77. The documents before the Commission at its reconvened sixty-third session are listed in conference room paper E/CN.7/2020/CRP.18/Add.1.

E. Closure of the session

78. At the 4th meeting, on 4 December 2020, a closing statement was made by the Chair of the Commission. Statements were also made by the representatives of Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Kenya and China.
