



Civil society involvement at the UN level: Does it work?

Jamie Bridge

Chair, Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs
Co-Chair, Civil Society Task Force on Drugs

A (very) Brief History of CSI in Vienna

- 1946:** The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) established
- 1954:** 6 NGO representatives attended the 9th CND
- 1984:** 28 NGO representatives attended the 43rd CND
- 1998:** UNGASS provided new levels of CS access
- 2006:** First resolution on civil society participation (49/2)
- 2008:** “Beyond 2008” initiative with 300 NGO representatives
- 2014:** Civil Society Task Force (CSTF) launched for the UNGASS
- 2016:** 11 CS speakers, and “contributions” from around 60 NGOs
- 2017:** 197 NGO representatives attended the 60th CND



The Vienna NGO Committee

- VNGOC was established in 1983
- Links NGOs with the Vienna-based drug control agencies
- Open to all NGOs – currently around 190 members
- **Broad spectrum of views and experiences**
- Supports engagement in Vienna
- Organises “informal dialogues” with key figures

The Current Situation in Vienna

- Vast improvement in CSI and appreciation of civil society
- Participation to all ECOSOC-registered NGOs
- NGOs are “observers” – but can:
 - Attend all ‘public’ meetings (but not “informals”)
 - Make oral interventions in the main session
 - Organise and participate in side events
 - Submit written and video contributions

Remaining Challenges

- Some governments remain wary of civil society
- Tensions re: “the Vienna consensus” and naming countries
- Increasing reliance on closed “informal” negotiations
- No financial support for participation
- Often there is also a lack of capacity to engage

CSI in Vienna: Does it work?

- Unquestionable shift in narrative over past decade
- 1998 UNGASS: CS groups lobby successfully against SCOPE (Strategy for Coca and Opium Poppy Elimination)
- Beyond 2008: Remains a pivotal moment and document
- 2016 (VNGOC and NYNGOC): CS presence at the meeting was widely felt – and the outcome was progressive
- 2018: “If you look at the delegates faces, it really touched us”



CIVIL SOCIETY TASK FORCE ON DRUGS (CSTF)

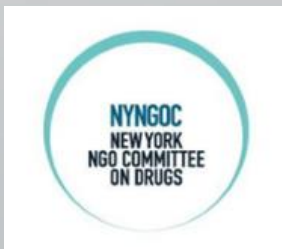


The Civil Society Task Force

- Building on UNGASS 2016
- Focused on “Ministerial Segment” in March 2019
- Joint initiative of VNGOC and NYNGOC
- 35 representatives, selected through open calls:
 - 18 regional representatives from 9 regions
 - 5 representatives of “affected populations”
 - 5 representatives of “global issues”
 - 7 person Steering Committee

The Civil Society Task Force

- Advocacy for meaningful CSI for March 2019
- Speaker selection for CND and related meetings
 - Mandated by CND Resolution 61/10
- Global online civil society consultation
 - Results launched in December 2018
 - Position paper to be submitted in early 2019
- Civil Society Hearings in New York and Vienna



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facebook.com/CSTFonDrugs
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Co-Chairs: Jamie Bridge (VNGOC): info@vngoc.org
Heather Haase (NYNGOC): newyorkNGOC@gmail.com

Western Europe Reps: Ann Fordham (IDPC): afordham@idpc.net
Mulka Nisicmulka (EURAD): mulka@eurad.net

