

United Nations Global Drug-Free World Conference



United Nations Global Drug Free World Conference Sustainable Solutions per the UNGASS 2016 Drug Consensus Empowerment of Women / Education / Justice / Sports The Creation of Sustainable Well Communities

Friday, March 22, 2024
1:15 PM-2:30 PM Conference Room 6

One would be hard-pressed to identify a societal ill more insidious and destructive than drug and substance abuse, which initiates gender-based violence, erodes sexual morality and security in entire communities. Justice, gender equality, and social consciousness are impossible in a drugged, unaware society. Global drug abuse affected a staggering 275 million people worldwide in 2021 while over 39.5 million people suffered drug use disorders (2021 World Drug Report, UNODC).

Women who use drugs tend to progress to drug use disorders faster than men. In addition to the familial responsibilities' women face, they may experience further barriers in accessing treatment that include increased fear of legal sanctions, increased social stigma, lack of childcare and fear of losing custody of children while in treatment.

Women who use drugs are more likely to visit the emergency room and fatally overdose due to substance abuse; And are also members of certain population groups, for example, trauma and violence survivors, sex workers, prisoners or members of ethnic minorities, And face more severe vulnerabilities, including higher levels of stigma and discrimination.

The 68th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68) will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on March 11-22, 2024. The priority theme consists of the empowerment of all women and girls by ensuring their inalienable human rights to exist in secure, drug free environments, free of gender violence. The session will also review the agreed conclusions of the 63rd session, “Social protection systems, access to public services, improved economic opportunities and sustainable infrastructure for empowerment of women and girls. “

In the Northern Triangle of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, the drug problem is mainly responsible for the skyrocketing levels of violence. In Honduras, femicide has increased by 93 percent since 2009 directly linked to increasing levels of sexual violence and sex trafficking. In Colombia, women in rural areas are mainly responsible for the food safety of their families, but the fumigation of coca crops affects other crops and water sources.

Regional organizations in Europe and the Americas have addressed the gender based consequences of the world drug problem: 1. Women are equally or more likely to have misused pharmaceutical drugs; 2. The more advanced the country, the higher the proportion of females among drug users; 3.. Drug abuse is strongly correlated with unwanted pregnancies, poor birth outcomes, and child abuse or neglect; 4. Higher stigma faced by female drug users.

Between 2005 and 2010 in Europe and the Americas, women’s lifetime use of tranquilizers and sedatives far exceeded men’s. Women tend to develop the medical and social consequences of drug use faster than men, including having more difficulty quitting, and being more prone to restarting after quitting.

Women’s participation in the drug trade is on the rise worldwide, especially among women who lack education, economic opportunity, or have been victims of abuse. In Latin America, the previous economic activities of most women involved in the drug trade include domestic labor and prostitution.

When women do become part of criminal gangs and drug trafficking, they are often forced to have sexual relations with other members as part of their initiation. While there are exceptions, women are delegated low-ranking, low-paying, high-risk positions.

Women, and especially those from ethnic minorities, disproportionately act as drug mules - often forced to swallow or insert drugs into their bodies being misled about the quantities they will be carrying, the means of transporting them or where they will be going. Because many countries determine punitive measures on the weight and class of the drugs women receive much harsher legal repercussions with the population of women imprisoned for drug-related offenses on the rise.

In Latin America, between 2006 and 2011, the female prison population almost doubled, with the vast majority incarcerated for drug-related offences. Prison systems typically lack

gender-sensitive policies, structures, or staff, and women are often subject to sexual violence in prisons and lack access to sexual and reproductive health facilities.

Substance abuse is one of the main causes of gender-based violence. Empirical evidence from Myanmar reveals that proximity to drugs makes women more vulnerable to physical and sexual violence, exploitation, and psychological abuse.

A majority of young, trafficked women come from poor backgrounds, often from families with high levels of domestic violence, alcoholism, and drug abuse, or missing family members because of drug related issues. The above suggests that women's involvement in drug use and the drug trade reflects the decreased economic opportunities and lower political status that women face in everyday life.

Even when women may not directly participate in drug use or the drug trade, they are often responsible for mitigating the associated risks for themselves and for their families, and they are forced to carry the double and triple burden of care when families break apart and community life deteriorates.

When women are persecuted for drug related offenses, they meet the same challenges as they do in other circumstances: a judiciary system that discredits their testaments, and punishment that neglects their circumstances as women. Furthermore, the criminal networks involved in drug trafficking are also involved in sex trafficking.

Drug trade and drug production often take place in countries that are fragile due to political instability, conflict, or poverty and the already marginalized members of society are the most susceptible to its negative effects. Therefore, apart from a more humane and balanced approach to international drug control efforts, centered on human rights and emphasizing the public health dimensions of this crisis, this approach must also be gender responsive. And for that, we need many more countries to collect and use sex-disaggregated data.

Legal systems must take into account the differentiated needs and circumstances of women and men. For example, Costa Rica has recently reformed its laws on prison sentences to make them more gender sensitive -reducing sentences from a minimum of 8 years and maximum of 20, to a minimum of 3 years and maximum of 8 years for women who live in poverty / are head of an economically vulnerable household / care for minor children, senior citizens or persons with disabilities / are senior citizens living in vulnerable situations..

Our global responsibility to mothers is outlined in Articles 3 and 33 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, as adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989: In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. Article 33 states to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Accordingly, The Foundation for a Drug Free World, COJEP International and Time for Truth Foundation are delighted to co-host a conference meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York during CSW68. We seek –

- 1. To reaffirm as citizens of the world, our commitment to the power of fact-based education and evidence-based prevention initiatives in helping women, families and communities overcome the drug epidemic.**

- 2. To acknowledge that women’s empowerment in all facets of life would be the first line of defense at the family and community levels against the destructive effects of this drug crisis.**

- 3. That early intervention with proper education per UNGASS 2016 is key to empowerment of families, women, girls, and communities.**

- 4. To work as united groups in coordination with the UN Sustainable Goals in the creation of partnerships and progress between nations thereby eliminating drug addiction and violence; And**

- 5. To empower the UN Sustainable Goals in the development of effective evidence-based drug education programs that empower and safeguard women; and enable the creation of sustainable well communities.**

Our Global Forum will be attended by official state representatives, youth coalitions, health professionals, scientists, sports figures, diplomats, NGOs, media, and national artists.

The distinguished conference speakers were chosen to present the results of large scale national and international programs, scientifically founded data and conclusions so as to empower collaboration of like-minded humanitarian / scientific / governmental / social groups; thereby reducing global drug abuse by education in the truth about drugs; empowering the status and safety of all women; reducing gender-based violence; protecting justice, equality for women; and creating community wellness. The conference intends to align with, empower and advance the United Nations Humanitarian Purpose and Sustainable Goals.

World Drug Conference Program

1- Moderator - President of the Foundation for a Drug Free World – The Americas Chapter and Time for Truth Foundation - Dr. Bernard Fialkoff

2- Moderator - Global Ambassador of the Foundation for a Drug Free World / COJEP United Nations Representative - Dr. Hugues Sanon

Welcome & Introductory Remarks:

Dr. Bernard Fialkoff; President of the Foundation for a Drug Free World – The Americas Chapter and Time for Truth Foundation (3 minutes)

Video Presentation (3 minutes)

- **Truth about Drugs - 3 Public Service Announcements**

<https://youtu.be/x7dBuJQDSz8>

<https://youtu.be/OyHhSuHyU4E>

<https://youtu.be/XwCLecDzFdY>

1st Speaker (3 minutes)

Cónsul General Cesar Cedeño; Cónsul del Consulado General de la Republica Dominicana en Puerto Rico

- **Subject; Governmental direction and programming of a national drug education / sports approach to handling drugs and addiction and providing alternative proactive alternatives. Controlling violence / femicide / sexual violence / trafficking; fostering women’s rights; creating sustainable Dominican communities free of illicit drugs / violence and associated consequences.**

- **2nd Speaker (3 minutes)**

- **His Royal Highness Tomas Reyers Cabili the 2nd, Sultan a Dimasangkay, Vice Consul of Montenegro**

- **Subject: Women’s rights, temperance on drugs, respect for religious beliefs in remediation of gender-based violence, drug associated violence and the creation of safe sustainable communities.**

3rd Speaker (3 minutes)

- **Honorable Senator George Borrello 57th Senate District**

Subject: The importance of a partnership and cooperation between local government, United Nations and other international organizations to promote a drug Free world; safeguarding women and families through drug education and prevention

- **4th Speaker (3 minutes)**

- **Chautauqua County Executive PJ Wendel**

- **Subject: Educational programs to empower women's status, protect pregnant mothers and their children during the formative years**

- **5th Speaker (3 minutes)**

- **Dr. Susan Weiss PHD; Director of Extramural Research at the National Institute of Drug Abuse; US National Institute of Health**

- **Subject The effects of vaping and marijuana on pregnant women and their offspring.**
- **The effects of marijuana on brain development of youth between ages 13 to 25 years of age.**

6th Speaker (3 minutes)

- **Luz Nereida Velez; WAPA TV Anchorwoman, Awarded Emmy and Emmy Silver Circle Awards in Puerto Rican Broadcasting and Media Sectors**
- **Subject; Effects of drugs in gender-based violence, sexual abuse, deprivation of liberty and human rights of women. Salient, workable solutions for the future.**

7th Speaker (3 minutes)

- **President Ali Gedikoglu, Founder and President of Cojep**
- **Subject: The importance of drug control to reduce gender-based degradation and injustice; and empower women, families and sustainable communities.**

8th Speaker (3 minutes)

- **Dr. Hong, Founder of FOWPAL and Tai Ji Men Qigong Academy**
- **Subject: The reduction of drug use and the empowerment of women through the application of conscience and love. Integrity and pride in producing a well outlook thereby enhancing social and economic position / power.**

9TH Speaker (3 minutes)

- **Dr. Yvette Rodriguez; President Elect of Puerto Rican CCDPR / Dr. Martha Mutis; President of Hispanic Dental Association; Fellow of International College of Dentistry**
- **Subject: The health practitioners' role in creating well communities; safeguarding women and families through scientifically sound education on the truth about drugs; their deleterious oral, systemic, and physiologic effects. Preserving health, creating smiles / confidence and empowering women by avoiding drug degradation and the associated mental consequences.**

10th Speaker (3 minutes)

- **Dr. Juan Nunez DDS; Dr. Juan Alcantara MD; Executive Board of Universidad Católica Nordestana and Dominican Medical / Dental Association**
- **Subject- The role of education and sports in the formation / enlightenment of health care professionals in educational institutions. Achieving community well-being, women's rights and wellness via comprehensively trained doctors and inter-organizational collaboration.**

11th Speaker (3 minutes)

- **President Renee Besseling Founder of OVOM Global Drug Education Foundation
Former President Europe Against Drugs : President Asa Graaf; Sweden Say No To Drugs**
- **Subject: The role of collaboration for a drug free lifestyle to reduce violence and its attendant consequences on women. Factual education to empower women and families, thereby controlling drugs and safe-guarding communities, enhancing wellness, infrastructure and empowering women with more secure and prosperous economic and social positions.**

12th speaker (4 minutes)

- **Judy Bechar; International Recording Artist; Khai Aziz; International Recording Artist**
- **Subject – Songs on Living Drug Free, Drug Degradation and A New Chance**

Acknowledgements of Special Guests/Ambassadors/ Diplomats/Elected officials by Ambassador Dr. Hugues Sanon (5 minutes)

Concluding Remarks and Group Photos - Dr. Bernard Fialkoff (5 minutes)

Our partners:

- **Drug Free World; COJEP; Time for Truth Foundation, NIH / NIDA; Honduran National Police; Dominican Medical / Dental Society; Dominican Catholic Medical School Nordestana; FOWPAL; Tai Ji Men Qigong Academy; HDA; Guatemalan Seccatid; Honduran Council of Drugs; Dominican Consulate; Honduran College of Dentists; Puerto Rican College of Dentists; FE Foundation; Iconic Sports; WAPA TV; TWTH Foundation; Canal America TV**