

29 June 2012

Arabic, English and French only\*

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**Twenty-second Meeting of Heads of National  
Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa**

Accra, 25-29 June 2012

Agenda item 9

**Adoption of the report**

**Draft report**

*Rapporteur:* Solomon Caulker (Sierra Leone)

**Addendum**

**Consideration of topics by working groups**

**Issue (b): Good practices and strategies in the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers**

1. The working group held 2 meetings on 26 and 27 June 2012. In its consideration of the topic under review, the working group made the following observations:

(a) Drug addiction is a health disorder and should be recognized and addressed as such in the treatment and rehabilitation policies and programmes of States;

(b) At present comparable information concerning illicit drugs, their use and drug dependence is very difficult to obtain as different agencies (law enforcement, health, treatment) hold pockets of data in isolation and this information needs to be amalgamated;

(c) More public funding is needed for dedicated facilities that meet the specialist but linked needs of treatment and rehabilitation. At present, many African treatment facilities are part of psychiatric hospitals and can only offer limited assistance;

(d) Young drug offenders are at particular risk when custodial jail sentences for drug abuse are handed down. Treatment, social assistance and social

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\* Arabic, English and French are the working languages of the subsidiary body.



reintegration programmes should be considered as an alternative instead of the usual penal measures;

(e) Competing priorities for national budgets add to the difficulties in reaching and providing affordable, diversified and effective prevention and treatment services to the poor, disadvantaged and socially isolated in the community.

2. The working group drew up the following conclusions:

(a) Policymakers need factual, objective, reliable and comparable information concerning illicit drugs, their use, numbers seeking or receiving treatment, supply reduction statistics to develop effective drug control strategies and policies;

(b) Political commitment and budgetary support was essential in promoting and implementing effective drug control strategies, and each country should have in place a national drug strategy which was comprehensive, balanced and tailored to their specific needs;

(c) New approaches for dealing with offenders who are drug abusers such as outreach programmes for young people, alternative sentencing and specialized training for prison officers working with drug dependent inmates should be encouraged and implemented;

(d) Persons affected by illicit drug use and drug dependence, together with their family members, needed access to affordable prevention and treatment services.

3. The following recommendations were made with regard to the topic entitled Good practices and strategies in the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers:

(a) Governments should be encouraged to gather factual, reliable and comprehensive information concerning the situation in their countries with respect to both illicit drug trafficking and drug use, so as to develop and implement strategies that are effective to combat drug abuse and reduce its impact on their communities;

(b) Governments should review their current strategies to ensure that affordable treatment and prevention services that cover a broad range of addictions are available to their citizens affected by illicit drug use and dependence;

(c) Governments should be encouraged to introduce within their criminal justice systems appropriate procedures to enable drug abusers to be provided treatment and rehabilitation as a supplement to prison.