



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

To: Ms. Joanne Csete, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Ms. Raminta Stuikyte, Central and Eastern European Harm Reduction Network
Mr. Nikos Dedes, European AIDS Treatment Group
Mr. Joseph Amon, Human Rights Watch
Mr. Daniel Wolfe, Open Society Institute

cc: H.E. Ambassador Dalius Šekoulis
Permanent Representative of Lithuania
President of ECOSOC
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania
to the United Nations

H. E. Ambassador Hans Lundborg
Permanent Representative of Sweden
to the United Nations (Vienna)
Chairman of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

H.E. Ambassador Eugenio Maria Curia
Permanent Representative of Argentina
to the United Nations (Vienna)
First Vice-Chairman designate of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO

Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director, UNAIDS

Message: Please see the attached letters from Ms. Kuniko Ozaki, Director, Division for Treaty Affairs, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



Letter Ms Csete.pdf



Letter Ms Stuikyte.pdf



Letter Mr Dedes.pdf



Letter Mr Amon.pdf



Letter Mr Wolfe.pdf



Letter OSI.pdf

Vienna International Centre, P.O. Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria, Telephone: (+43-1) 26060-0 Fax: (+43-1) 26060-5866



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

26 February 2007

Dear Ms. Csöte,

I refer to your letter to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, dated 6 February 2007, concerning the participation of non-governmental organizations at meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and its Committee of the Whole. I appreciate the concerns expressed, but would like to point out that any decisions regarding whether or not a meeting should be private is a matter for the Commission or its subsidiary organs.

As you are aware, the Extended Bureau of the Commission, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/30, is charged with the preparations of the meetings of the Commission. For this purpose, the Secretariat may be called upon to provide advice on the application of the Rules of Procedure of the Functional Commissions of the Economic and Social Council, on the understanding that any decision on the matter will be that of the Commission or the subsidiary organ concerned.

For your information, I am not aware that the Extended Bureau has concluded its discussions on this matter nor what recommendation it may make to the Commission.

I would like to take this opportunity to bring to your attention that UNODC has over the years actively led efforts to promote the greater involvement of civil society. UNODC has sponsored a large number of projects and activities with grassroots organizations around the world, providing technical and financial support whenever possible. The Office has assisted the organization of regional and global NGO-led events and also provides support to the NGO community with the organization of the NGO forums that have taken place every year during the sessions of the Commission. Furthermore, the Office is currently engaged in providing support to NGO community with the organization of series of activities designed to provide a channel to bring to the attention of Member States the contribution being made by community-based organizations toward achieving the goals set at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly.

Yours sincerely,



Kuniko Ozaki

Director

Division for Treaty Affairs

Ms. Joanne Csöte
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
c/o Open Society Institute
Nador, UTCA II
H-1051 Budapest
Hungary
Fax +361 327 3101

- 2 -

cc: H.E. Ambassador Dalius Čekoulis
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26 February 2007

Dear Ms. Staikyte,

I refer to your letter to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, dated 6 February 2007, concerning the participation of non-governmental organizations at meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and its Committee of the Whole. I appreciate the concerns expressed, but would like to point out that any decisions regarding whether or not a meeting should be private is a matter for the Commission or its subsidiary organs.

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Yours sincerely

Kimiko Ozaki

Director

Division for Treaty Affairs

Ms. Raminta Staikyte
Central and Eastern European Harm Reduction Network
c/o Open Society Institute
Nador UTCA 11
H-1051 Budapest
Hungary
Fax +361 327 3101

- 2 -

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Office on Drugs and Crime

26 February 2007

Dear Mr. Dedes,

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Yours sincerely,

Kuniko Ozaki

Director

Division for Treaty Affairs

Mr. Nikos Dedes
European AIDS Treatment Group
c/o Open Society Institute
Nador UTCA II
H-1051 Budapest
Hungary
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UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

26 February 2007

Dear Mr. Amon,

I refer to your letter to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, dated 6 February 2007, concerning the participation of non-governmental organizations at meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and its Committee of the Whole. I appreciate the concerns expressed, but would like to point out that any decisions regarding whether or not a meeting should be private is a matter for the Commission or its subsidiary organs.

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Yours sincerely,



Kuniko Ozaki
Director

Division for Treaty Affairs

Mr. Joseph Amon
Human Rights Watch
c/o Open Society Institute
Nador UTCA 11
H-1051 Budapest
Hungary
Fax +361 327 3101

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First Vice-Chairman designate of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO

Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director, UNAIDS



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

26 February 2007

Dear Mr. Wolfe,

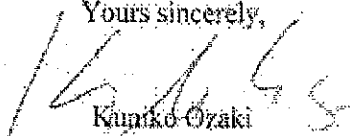
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Yours sincerely,


Kuniko Ozaki
Director

Division for Treaty Affairs

Mr. Daniel Wolfe
Open Society Institute
Nador, UTCA 11
H-1051 Budapest
Hungary
Fax +361 327 3101

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Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO

Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director, UNAIDS

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OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

NADOR, UTCA 11, H-1051 BUDAPEST, HUNGARY. TEL.(36 1) 327 3100/EXT. 2023
FAX (36 1) 327 3101

Fax

To: Antonio Maria Costa

From: EATG, HRW, CEEHRN, OSI, CHALN

Fax: +43 1 26060 5866

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Public Health Program



H.E. Ambassador Dalits Čekuolis
Permanent Representative of Lithuania
President of ECOSOC
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the United Nations
708 Third Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10017

H.E. Ambassador Hans Lundborg
Chair, Commission on Narcotic Drugs and
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations
Embassy of Sweden
Obere Donaustrasse 49-51
Vienna

Antonio María Costa
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Vienna International Centre
Wagramer Strasse 5
A-1400 Vienna
Austria

February 6, 2007

Excellencies:

As representatives of ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations who have attended the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), we write to express our concern and discontent with the recent recommendation by the Extended Bureau, relayed by CND secretary Andres Finguerut, that the Committee of the Whole should be a "private" meeting excluding NGOs. This recommendation violates the spirit of NGO inclusion as expressed in CND resolution 49/2 and by former Secretary General Annan's call for greater engagement of civil society actors.

The Extended Bureau has not to our knowledge provided a rationale for its decision, which endorses a change of practice that would seriously hinder transparency and civil society participation in the international response to illicit drugs and efforts to prevent transmission of blood-borne diseases such as HIV, HCV and other drug-related harms. The decision appears to have been made without consultation with NGOs, though with legal advice from UNODC. It is unclear on what grounds NGOs, as opposed to other observers such as IGOs, would be excluded

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from the Committee of the Whole. Furthermore, member states already have, and have exercised, the option to convene private meetings to draft and negotiate resolutions.

The Extended Bureau's recommendation that the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole propose NGO exclusion at the opening session raises the urgent need for clarity on CND procedures and for action to underscore the importance of NGO involvement and transparency.

We urge ECOSOC and other concerned parties to oppose the recommendation that NGOs be excluded, and to intervene in this matter. It is also important to clarify the procedures through which such a proposal might be adopted or rejected, and to communicate these in writing as soon as possible to the Vienna NGO committee, to ECOSOC-accredited NGOs seeking to register to attend the CND, and to the chair of the Committee of the Whole.

Sincerely,

Joanne Csics, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Raminta Stanikyte, Central and Eastern European Harm Reduction Network
Nikos Dedes, European AIDS Treatment Group
Joseph Amon, Human Rights Watch
Daniel Wolff, Open Society Institute

cc:

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