



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the United Nations
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Statement

by

H.E. Ambassador Miguel Berger

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Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations**

**UN General Assembly Interactive Thematic Debate on
Drugs and Crime as a Threat to Development and launch of
the World Drug Report**

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Mr. Chairman,

First of all, we would like to thank the Executive Director of the UNODC, Mr. Fedotov, for the presentation of the new World Drug Report. We will study the report carefully. We would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly, the Group of Friends in support of UNODC's efforts in the fight against drugs and crime and UNODC for organizing this debate.

We all share the global concern about the detrimental impact of drug abuse and drug trafficking on the political and socio-economic stability of societies, adversely affecting public health, prosperity and safety. Germany therefore welcomes your initiative to convene this debate on the occasion of the UN International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

Illicit drug manufacturing, trade and trafficking pose a threat to international peace and stability in numerous regions of the world, as emphasized by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1943. Illegal armed groups and organized criminals threaten local populations and undermine state authority, creating a hostile environment for economic and social development.

Germany therefore - in cooperation with UNODC - is engaged in a train-the-trainer-academy-program on the fight against drugs. Germany also supports the establishment of the Afghan drug police (CNPA) and provides the necessary technical means for the installation of a forensic laboratory in Kabul. So far, it is the only forensic laboratory in Afghanistan which appears in court and provides expert opinions in criminal cases.

Mr. Chairman,

Drug economies are a consequence of poor rural development, weak governance and insecure environments, not a consequence of climatic and

geographic conditions. Thus, comprehensive and promising drug policies should not focus on repressive means alone but address those framework conditions that enable the proliferation of illicit drug economies.

Together with our partners in the European Union, we therefore favor long term strategies of alternative development, based on rural and sustainable economic development. Germany has been actively engaged in the field of alternative development for more than 25 years in both South America and Asia with remarkable success. In this regard, the German agency for international cooperation (GIZ) implements elements concerning alternative development of the EU-financed Cooperation Programme between Latin America and the EU on drug policies.

Local participation in drug cultivation and trafficking is often caused by desolate alternate life prospects. This is why supporting legal and sustainable alternatives to the narcotics industry in developing countries and emerging economies is essential. Thus, Germany supports projects in Peru and Bolivia with 10 Mio. Euros and 1,2 Mio Euro respectively which promote sustainable alternative crop growing in coca-producing areas. In Laos and Myanmar Germany contributes with 1.6 Mio Euro to UNODC-projects on food security and alternative sources of income in opium plantation areas.

The concept of alternative development should be implemented jointly with reforms of the institutional, legal, commercial and agricultural setting in which illicit economies flourish. Moreover, fundamental notions such as respect for human rights, local ownership, accountability and non-discrimination of vulnerable groups should be integral parts of any approach to alternative development.

We are convinced that involving civil society is crucial for increasing transparency and the legitimacy of decisions. In this regard, Germany underlines the benefits of an active participation of NGOs in UNODC's work and at the Convention on Narcotic Drugs.

Having said this, Mr Chairman,

I would like to emphasize that we believe that Member States should dedicate the same attention and the same priority to demand reduction strategies. It goes without saying that our first priority must always be to prevent people from taking drugs and then to treat addicted persons so as to get them off the drugs. It is only when prevention and treatment have failed, that we must try to reduce the adverse consequences of drug use itself. Addiction is an illness and has to be treated as such.

In summary, Mr. Chairman,

Alternative development should be understood as a means of comprehensively enhancing development in a drug affected environment on the medium and long term, not about reducing the supply of illicit drugs on the short term. We are aware that such endeavours may require commitment and perseverance. However, according to our experiences, alternative development is key to further our joint efforts in combating drug economies and enhancing political stability and social development.

