

Statement on Agenda Item 22 WHA79 (Statements by NSAs in Official Relation were not permitted on this agenda item).

Progress reports

Report by the Director-General

c. Public health dimension of the world drug problem (decision WHA75(20) (2022))

HAI welcomes the progress report under decision WHA75(20) which provides an essential, evidence-based roadmap for addressing the global drug problem. In particular, we applaud the implementation of treatment standards, including the #ScaleUp initiative for stimulant dependence and updated guidelines for opioid overdose prevention. Moreover, we would further draw attention to the classification of harm reduction and opioid agonist maintenance as essential health services, reinforced by operational guides for needle-exchange programs and innovative projects utilizing long-acting buprenorphine in partnership with Unitaid.

Crucially, true progress requires shifting from punitive paradigms toward an integrated, person-centred response which treats substance use disorders as critical public health priorities rather than isolated criminal justice issues.

If the aspiration of SDG 3.5 to *Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol* within a framework of Universal Health Coverage is to be met, and to transform the evidence of this report into impact Member States and global stakeholders, including civil society and NGOs, need to urgently prioritize

1. **Sustainable Funding:** Explicitly integrating harm reduction and substance use care into national health budgets to secure resilient services despite changing funding landscapes.
2. **Workforce Training:** Rapidly adopting WHO's guidelines to equip frontline healthcare workers.
3. **Crisis Readiness:** Deploying specialized inter-agency training materials to ensure substance use care is maintained during humanitarian emergencies.