

## Taking Stock and the Way Forward for Civil Society in International Drug Policymaking: Commemorating the NYNGOC's 40th Anniversary

## Speech by Liberato Bautista<sup>1</sup>

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Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. I want to thank all governments, UN entities, and civil society groups collaborating on this side event at CND67.

- 1. Congratulations, New York NGO Committee on Drugs, on passing a significant milestone after forty years of supporting civil society in engaging with the UN system! As the only committee of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN working on drug and drug policy issues and practice, I extend CoNGO's thanks for all your contributions to these issues and concerns.
- 2. The NYNGOC has played an essential role over the last four decades in supporting the work of the CND and UNODC, including during the "Beyond 2008" NGO forum, which preceded the 2009 High-Level Meeting on Drugs, as well as more recent examples of the Civil Society Task Force, which facilitated global NGO participation at the 2016 UNGASS and the 2019 Ministerial Segment, and by facilitating global civil society participation for the 2024 midterm review.
- 3. These civil society engagements are examples of the essential role of civil society in multilateral and global governance, which are in keeping with the implementation of ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 governing NGO participation at the UN, especially in all ECOSOC functional commissions, including CND, and not just in Vienna but UN systemwide worldwide.
- 4. Our advocacy for robust NGO engagement with the UN and its member states occurs against a backdrop of shrinking civic space. *Co*NGO's constant refrain is for equitable access to the

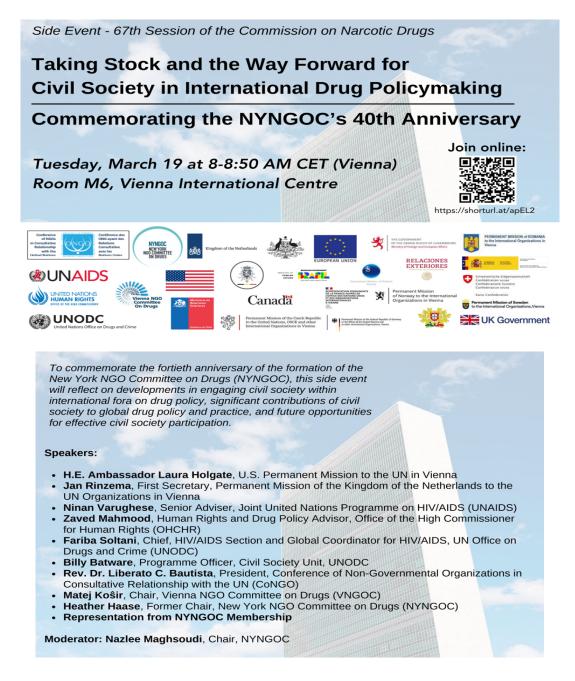
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physical premises and the substantive agenda of the UN.

- 5. Effective collaboration among diverse entities can enhance system-wide coherence between drug control and the UN pillars of peace and security, human rights, and sustainable agenda, including Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. Such collaboration is critical to crafting a pact for a shared and collective future.
- 6. *Co*NGO looks forward to continued UN and NGO collaboration, including NYNGOC's crucial role for the next forty years and beyond!



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