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

Speech by Liberato Bautista¹

**March 19, 2024 | Room M6 | Vienna International Center
UN Office at Vienna**

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 mid-term 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. CoNGO'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. CoNGO looks forward to continued UN and NGO collaboration, including NYNGOC's crucial role for the next forty years and beyond!

Side Event - 67th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Taking Stock and the Way Forward for Civil Society in International Drug Policymaking

Commemorating the NYNGOC's 40th Anniversary

Tuesday, March 19 at 8-8:50 AM CET (Vienna)
Room M6, Vienna International Centre

Join online:

<https://shorturl.at/apEL2>



To commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the formation of the New York NGO Committee on Drugs (NYNGOC), this side event will reflect on developments in engaging civil society within international fora on drug policy, significant contributions of civil society to global drug policy and practice, and future opportunities for effective civil society participation.

Speakers:

- **H.E. Ambassador Laura Holgate**, U.S. Permanent Mission to the UN in Vienna
- **Jan Rinzema**, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UN Organizations in Vienna
- **Ninan Varughese**, Senior Adviser, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- **Zaved Mahmood**, Human Rights and Drug Policy Advisor, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- **Fariba Soltani**, Chief, HIV/AIDS Section and Global Coordinator for HIV/AIDS, UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- **Billy Batware**, Programme Officer, Civil Society Unit, UNODC
- **Rev. Dr. Liberato C. Bautista**, President, Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO)
- **Matej Košir**, Chair, Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs (VNGOC)
- **Heather Haase**, Former Chair, New York NGO Committee on Drugs (NYNGOC)
- **Representation from NYNGOC Membership**

Moderator: Nazlee Maghsoudi, Chair, NYNGOC

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