

Statement to the reconvened 48th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (7-9 Dec., 2005) made on 8th December, 2005 on behalf of the Vienna NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs

Thank you Mr Chairman for giving me the floor.

The Vienna NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs welcomes the decision to explore aspects of alternative development in the thematic debate during the 49th Session of the Commission.

Like HIV/AIDS, this is a theme which is relevant to the work of many UN bodies and agencies, for example, UNICEF, the World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO, FAO and HABITAT. In recent years UNODC has begun to work in partnership across the UN family and it would be valuable to have feed-back on the practical results of these partnerships in the field of alternative development.

For our part, NGOs and not-for-profit organisations have been engaged in alternative development at many levels, including micro-financing, support for education and health improvement and self-help and sustainable development at the local level. We would be pleased to contribute to preparations for the thematic debate and to assist in identifying possible contributors.

As delegations may know, during each regular session of the Commission the NGO Committee has held a one day Mini-Forum to explore a specific theme and with speakers from around the world. During the 49th Session this Forum will also be concerned with alternative development. It is our hope that it will compliment the thematic debate and provide an opportunity to examine in depth this important topic.

We look forward to working with the Secretariat in the preparations and to assisting the Commission in its consideration of this key area for efforts to reduce the supply of and demand for illicit drugs.