



**ONE VOICE ONE MESSAGE**

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## **Let's Make Drug Prevention and Demand Reduction the Highest of Priorities – for the sake of our children - our emerging generations!**

OVOM (One Voice One Message) is a community-led organisation, that seeks to increase the prevention of drug use globally to ensure the health and safety of all people. More than that, drugs destroy the lives of so many and addiction is the most preventable disease on our planet. This is supported by many OVOM affiliates and like-minded organisations that care for the future of our current and emerging generations.

OVOM and affiliates are therefore completely supportive of the **United Nations International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking** which is observed on **June 26** each year.

To quote the UN's World Drug Report, 2023, "the world drug problem is a complex issue that affects billions of people worldwide.

Let us stand together to create a world where individuals recognize the danger of the drugs' industry and those struggling with drugs and abuse receive the support they need, ensuring that compassion and understanding prevail.

OVOM stands for the Rights of the Child to grow up in a drug-free environment, as young people are our future and families of all socio-economic levels need support in this area of health concern. **Prevention starts here.**

As a basis for this stance, the following facts should be considered. The results of the 2023 [Global Organized Crime Index](#) show that 187 of the 193 UN member states have a domestic market for synthetic drugs – more than the number of countries with a heroin market.

Without a strong Demand Reduction strategy, our communities and their young people will fall prey to the clever (but highly deceptive) tactics of those who would make money out of their drug trafficking. Sadly, many young people are being caught in a web where they become dependent on drugs and traffickers use this to persuade them to form syndicates to traffic more drugs.

Synthetic drugs are proving to be [the future of illicit drug economies](#), and CND member states are recognising the fact that they are currently ill-prepared to respond to the threats that these substances have to public health and security.

OVOM wants drug policies to prioritize prevention, early intervention, judicial supervision, treatment and aftercare. Afterall, 'Prevention is better than Cure', in all other aspects of health related issues. We are also concerned about: the mental health of our young, the common incidence of family violence that ensues with a drug-affected member of the family, the road carnage and the neglected children.

Is this not enough to take a stronger stance on prevention, demand reduction and the community literacy campaigns that more jurisdictions could invest in?

This would save the enormous waste of government expenditure on health and mental health issues in the longer term – and more importantly result in healthier communities, saving millions of lives. According to the UN: For every dollar spent on prevention, at least 10 dollars can be saved.

**Let's re-visit the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 33. Let's, as a global movement, agree that this has to be a priority, and should be taken into consideration, when drug policy decisions are being made.**

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