

## **‘Aiding Executions: ....**

### **Response to requests for comments – spokesperson for UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**

**17 June 2026**

“...UNODC is part of the UN Secretariat and we would refer you to the position of the UN Secretary-General, who has called on Member States that continue to impose death sentences to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty, without delay. As you may also know, UNODC has the mandate to prepare the quinquennial report of the UN Secretary-General on capital punishment and implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty. The latest report from 2025 can be found here: <https://docs.un.org/en/E/2025/75>.

As UNODC has said many times, the use of the death penalty for crimes not resulting directly and intentionally in death, such as drug-related offences, is incompatible with international standards, including Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which limits the imposition of death penalty only to the “most serious crimes”. Furthermore, the International Narcotics Control Board has encouraged States that impose the death penalty to abolish it for drug-related offences.

UNODC works to strengthen rights-based, balanced responses to drug challenges in line with international commitments. This means the Office engages with all Member States to support implementation of these commitments. The importance of engaging with all Member States reflects the increasingly transnational nature of drug markets and the evolving modalities that facilitate illicit drug flows across borders. Effective responses therefore require broad international cooperation, as excluding any country or region could create gaps that increase risks and harms for all. In this context, UNODC also works to strengthen international cooperation in criminal matters through extradition and mutual legal assistance; as we have noted on several occasions, retention of the death penalty may pose a significant obstacle to such forms of cooperation. UNODC operates globally and provides technical assistance in highly sensitive and complex areas, and human rights risk assessment and mitigation are built into all aspects of the Office’s programming, implementation and review. Along with the rest of the UN system, the Office adheres to the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy with the aim of ensuring that any support provided is consistent with the principles of the UN Charter and international human rights law.

The Office is always working to increase funding for evidence-based drug prevention and treatment support, and we continue to raise awareness of the need for countries to invest in such services, including through the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26 June. As you can see in the 2025 UNODC [Annual Report](#), general or unearmarked contributions represent less than one per cent of total income. That is to say that the vast majority of funds are earmarked by donors for specific activities, for example in the area of drug supply reduction.”