



*Chairperson of the Commission on  
Narcotic Drugs at its sixtieth session*

11 November 2017

Dear Ms. Bivar,

I have the pleasure to write in reference to your letter of 16 October, outlining the outcome of the 48th Session of the Statistical Commission and the discussed report on an international roadmap to improve drug statistics as part of its multiannual work plan.

Let me take this opportunity to also thank you for the video message by Mr. Georges-Simon Ulrich, vice chair of the Statistical Commission, at the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March 2017.

The CND, as part of its comprehensive mandate to analyse the global drug situation and based on obligations deriving from the three international drug control conventions, has always stressed the importance of high quality statistical data to develop evidence-based policy directions. In this vein, at the 60<sup>th</sup> session in March 2017, the Commission in its resolution 60/1, entitled "*Preparations for the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 2019*", highlighted the importance of strengthening the capacity to develop reporting mechanisms, including by identifying gaps in the current drug statistics and by exploring possibilities to strengthen existing data collection and analysis tools at the national level. In the same resolution, the CND invited UNODC, as the leading entity in the United Nations system for addressing and countering the world drug problem, in close cooperation with Member States, to reflect on possibilities to strengthen and streamline its existing data-collection and analysis tools, including improving the quality and effectiveness of the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ, the annual data collection exercise on illicit drug managed by UNODC).

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs very much values the work of the Statistical Commission and is looking forward to further strengthening the collaboration between our two commissions. There are two forthcoming events, which I would like to mention:

Pursuant to CND resolution 60/1, UNODC is organising an Expert Consultation as a first step to reflect on ways to improve the current data collection on drugs, including the ARQ, and to discuss activities to support countries in the production of drug relevant statistics. This Expert Consultation will take place in Vienna from 29-31 January 2018 and will gather national experts from drug-related institutions involved in the collection and analysis of drug statistics, including from National Statistical Offices, experts responsible for drug-related data working in international and multi-national organizations, and academics with expertise in the measurement and analysis of the world drug problem. The Expert Consultation will also consider the Report on an international road map to improve drug statistics, discussed at the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the Statistical Commission, as one of the inputs to the discussion. We very much hope that also representatives of the Statistical Commission will be in a position to participate in this technical consultation.

Ms. Wasmália Socorro Barata Bivar  
Chair, United Nations Statistical Commission

In my capacity as Chair of the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission, I am further planning to organize a special event on drug statistics to take place in Vienna on 7 December 2017, from 2pm to 3pm, in the margins of the reconvened 60<sup>th</sup> session of the CND. The panel discussion will aim to discuss practices and challenges in relation to data quality and the national capacity to produce drug statistics and will further provide an opportunity to identify technical challenges and solutions for consideration at the Expert Consultation meeting in January 2018. I would very much welcome, if you would nominate one or two representatives from the Statistical Commission to participate in the panel with a view to continuing our enhanced cooperation with an open dialogue between the two Commissions.

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs is looking forward to closely work with the Statistical Commission,

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Bente Angell-Hansen".

Bente Angell-Hansen  
Permanent Representative of Norway to the  
United Nations (Vienna)