

## **Joint Statement**

### **Intersessional Panel Discussion, organised pursuant to resolution 52/24 of the Human Rights Council**

**5 February 2024**

Mr. President,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the member states of the core group of the resolution 52/24, namely Albania, Brazil, Colombia, Greece, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Portugal, Uruguay and my own country Switzerland.

We thank the OHCHR for the report in fulfillment of the mandate of the resolution and for hosting today's Intersessional Panel

The adoption by consensus of Resolution 52/24 has shown that common language is possible on this topic. However, the negotiation process and numerous amendments have also reminded us that the urgently needed shift away from punitive approaches towards an international drug policy that puts human rights and public health in the center is still heavily contested and continues to require our full attention and increased joint commitment. This shift, though, is even more compelling in the light of the recent rise of synthetic drugs, which poses new challenges while the old ones remain.

Let us make sure, that while tackling emerging drug issues, the importance of a holistic approach is recognized and implemented in balanced, evidence-based policies that address discrimination, and reduce the stigma towards persons who use drugs in order to ensure voluntary access to drug services.

It is encouraging that the report emphasises recent positive developments in the stronger alignment between human rights and drug policy discussions and among international drug policy bodies. We are also pleased to note the stronger involvement of civil society.

To this end, we urge states to implement the key recommendations presented in the report and call upon parties to aim for a progressive health and human rights-based mid-term review of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration.

I thank you.