

SUBMISSIONS FORM

Thank you for registering for the 48th ECDD Information Session, which will take place on 20 October 2025 from 10:00 to 13:00 Central European Summer Time (CEST).

This form allows you to submit a written statement; request to make an oral presentation; and upload any additional information you'd like to be considered by the 48th ECDD.

If you wish to make a statement or presentation on more than one substance, you will need to complete a form for each of them. Kindly note only submissions related to substances under review by the 48th ECDD may be accepted.

For any questions about the ECDD Information Session or this form, please contact ecddsecretariat@who.int with the subject "48th ECDD Information Session"

0. Contact details

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I confirm that the views expressed here represent the views, decisions or policies of the institution with which I am affiliated: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Type of organization:

- ☐ I am representing myself
- ☒ I am representing civil society (including NGOs, think tanks, and charities)
- ☐ I am representing an academic institution
- ☐ I am representing a commercial organisation
- ☐ I am representing a governmental institution
- ☐ Other: _____

I would like to request to make an intervention on the following 48th ECDD agenda item:

- ☒ Critical review: Coca leaf
- ☐ Critical review: MDMA-FUBINACA
- ☐ Critical review: N-pyrrolidino isotonitazene (Isotonitazepine)
- ☐ Critical review: N-Desethyl etonitazene

1. **Submit a written statement (Deadline 15 October at 23:59 CEST)**

Written statements should be limited to 3000 characters (about 500 words) and may be sent in English or Spanish. Additional content may be uploaded separately as annexes to the statement.

Statements received will be compiled into a report to be presented to the 48th ECDD.

Additional content -including confidential material, published or unpublished data and PowerPoint slides- uploaded as Annexes will be considered by the secretariat and will not be published.

Please type your written statement below, **maximum 500 words**:

The ECDD's Hands Tied: The Structurally Impossible Descheduling of the Coca Leaf from Schedule I

Distinguished Chair, dear members of the ECDD, all delegates here,

The forthcoming evaluation of the coca leaf by the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence offers a moment of historic importance. It invites the international community to reflect on the coherence and fairness of the *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)*.

Yet it must be acknowledged that, under the current structure of the Convention, an effective descheduling of the coca leaf from Schedule I is **legally impossible** without a formal treaty amendment.

The coca leaf (*Erythroxylon Lam.*) holds profound cultural, medicinal, and nutritional significance for Indigenous and Andean communities. Nevertheless, since 1961 it has been treated as equivalent to cocaine. This is because coca, alongside opium and cannabis, constitutes one of the three botanical pillars upon which the Convention's control system was built.

Under **Articles 2(6), 26, and 27**, the coca leaf is subject to all control measures applicable to Schedule I substances, irrespective of its formal inclusion in the Schedule. Therefore, even if the ECDD were to recommend, and the Commission were to approve, its removal, the same control obligations would remain in place.

Such descheduling would result only in a change of terminology, not of substance. It could even generate **regressive effects**:

1. The coca leaf would remain fully controlled;
2. It would lose access to Article 2(9), which permits exemptions for industrial or non-medical uses;
3. The system would face a new inconsistency, applying narcotic drug controls to a substance no longer defined as one.

This would neither correct a historical error nor advance the decriminalisation of traditional and medicinal practices. Instead, it would perpetuate the rigidity of a system that has constrained Andean States and Indigenous peoples for over six decades.

If this process is to honour the principles of the United Nations — respect for cultural diversity, human rights, and scientific evidence — it must move beyond scheduling debates to address the **structural limitations of the Convention itself**.

We therefore urge Member States, the WHO, and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to:

- Recognise the legal and structural barriers inherent in the Convention;
- Acknowledge the distinct cultural and pharmacological nature of the coca leaf; and
- Initiate an inclusive dialogue toward a coherent and equitable reform of the international drug control system.

Only through such reflection can we move from symbolic revision to substantive reform, and honour the spirit of the United Nations Charter by upholding the dignity and rights of the peoples for whom the coca leaf remains a living heritage.

In memoriam Joep Oomen, Jorge Hurtado and so many friends of the coca leaf

Thank you, Chair.

If you wish to include supplementary material, you may attach the file(s) to your email (maximum 20 MB):

png, gif, doc, docx, ppt, odt, jpg, pdf, png, jpeg files accepted

Submitting a written statement is highly encouraged before requesting to make an oral presentation, so that all point of views are included regardless of the number of speakers that are finally included in the Open Session agenda. You may write an expanded version of the presentation summary you are about to submit in the next section.

2. **Submit your interest to make an oral presentation (Deadline 9 October at 23:59 CEST)**

There are a limited number of time slots available for presentations, therefore the ECDD Secretariat may not be able to accommodate all requests to be on the open session agenda. All requests for interventions will be considered, and further instructions will be sent to successful candidates, no later than **14 October 2025**. Successful requests for presentations will be allocated 3-5 (tbc) minutes at the meeting.

Oral presentations in this 48th ECDD Information Session may be delivered in English or Spanish. If you wish to present in another official UN language, you may do so, providing your own translation services (e.g. through English subtitles on videos).

Please type a summary of your proposed intervention below, **maximum 200 words**:

Please attach in your email the slides you will use during your presentation. If you do not wish to use slides, you do not need to attach anything.

Maximum 20 MB

During the presentation you will be responsible for sharing your slides on screen yourself. Please ensure the slides you use during your presentation are identical to the slides you attach now.

ppt or pdf files accepted

If you prefer to present a pre-recorded video at the meeting, you may attach it in your email.

mp4, mov, mpeg files accepted