

F. Special topics

1. Extrajudicial responses to suspected drug-related offences

325. Under the international drug control conventions, States parties are required to act in a manner consistent with the rule of law in their responses to drug-related offences and in their treatment of suspected offenders. In the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016, the international community reiterated its commitment to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights, fundamental freedoms and the inherent dignity of all individuals, and the rule of law in the development and implementation of drug policies.

326. The international drug control conventions require that criminal justice responses to suspected drug-related criminality include internationally recognized due process standards, which reject extrajudicial sanctions. With respect to drug abuse, the conventions commit to a humane and balanced approach, requiring the parties to give special attention to and take all practicable measures for the prevention of drug abuse and the early identification, treatment, education, aftercare, rehabilitation and social reintegration of the persons affected.

327. The international drug control conventions require that drug-related crime be addressed through formal criminal justice responses, an approach consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which require adherence to internationally recognized due process standards.

328. The Board notes with serious concern that in several countries, in particular in South and South-East Asia, extrajudicial acts of violence endorsed by senior officials of those countries continue against persons suspected of drug-related activities, frequently at the direct behest of senior political figures or with their active encouragement or tacit approval.

329. The Board has communicated with the Governments of the States in which extrajudicial acts of violence have been reported to seek clarification and to remind them of their obligations under the international drug control conventions, including the requirement to respect the rule of law and due process when carrying out their obligations under those conventions.

330. In the pursuit of its mandate, the Board will continue to monitor these developments and to draw the attention of the international community to them.