

Government of Pakistan
Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination

Press release

UNODC Representative for Pakistan Mr. Cesar Guedes called upon Federal Minister for National Health Services, Aamer Mehmood Kiani along with the Goodwill Ambassador Mr. Shehzad Roy.

Islamabad: October 01, 2018-The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Representative for Pakistan, Mr. Cesar Guedes called on Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Mr. Aamer Mehmood Kiani along with his team and the National Goodwill Ambassador for UNODC Pakistan Mr. Shehzad Roy.

Cesar Guedes told the Federal Minister that UNODC Country Office is working with the Government of Pakistan, civil society stakeholders and partners to help address Pakistan's development challenges, specifically in relation to drug and crime issues. UNODC's work includes research and analytical work to increase knowledge and understanding of drug-related issues and expand the evidence base for policy and operational decisions.

UNODC Representative said that UNODC in collaboration with the Ministry of Narcotics Control carried out the National Drug Use Survey in 2013. According to this survey 6.7 million people had used one or more illicit substances in a year and out of these, 4.25 million were considered to be dependent on drugs requiring structured treatment for their drug use disorder. A significant proportion of drug dependents also have a range of drug associated physical and mental health problems which needs to be assessed and treated in a holistic manner.

The outcome document of the 2016 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem also recognizes drug dependence as a complex, multi factorial health disorder, and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 which is health related goal, in its target 3.5: talks about "Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol".

Shehzad Roy informed the Federal Minister that he is being the UNODC Goodwill Ambassador, he feels that its time we should bring a paradigm change in bringing some changes in the health policy.

Federal Minister welcomed the UNODC team and was very forthcoming. UNODC Representative briefed the Federal Minister on the drug situation in the country and discussed that drug addiction as a health issue as it was also reaffirmed in United Nation General Assembly Special Session on world Drugs Problem (UNGASS) in April 2016 that countries should deal it as a health issue.

Federal Minister Aamer Mehmood Kiani said that he would be happy to work with UNODC as drug dependence treatment is very important issue which needs work under the health policy for which we will constitute a committee and would like inputs from UNODC.

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