



**September 28,  
2015**

**12.00-13.30**

**Conference  
Room XXI**

*“Opiates can be used in harm-reduction treatment. But they also provide much-needed relief for pain in illnesses unrelated to drug use. Failure to offer access to opiates for legitimate medical treatment is a violation of the right to health, and needs to be addressed as such in States that have eliminated, or severely limited, their use.”*

**Navi Pillay, former High Commissioner for Human Rights**

*“We know that 90 percent of morphine is prescribed in North America and Europe. In many developing countries, patients with terminal cancer suffer needlessly because doctors cannot prescribe medication due to the misapplication or misunderstanding of the UN drug conventions. The World Health Organization “Access to Controlled Medicines Programme” is a step in the right direction. But we must make sure that access to the essential medicines on the WHO model lists does not become a casualty of the “drug war”.”*

**Kofi Annan, Chair of the Kofi Annan Foundation;  
Commissioner, Global Commission on Drug Policy**

## **THE RIGHT TO HEALTH: ADDRESSING THE DRUG CONTROL BARRIERS HINDERING ACCESS TO CONTROLLED MEDICINES**

Under international drug control law and international human rights law, States have an obligation to ensure controlled medicines are made available to their populations; any restriction of access constitutes a violation of the right to health. Though a number of factors impose barriers to access, including weak healthcare systems and the lack of training of clinicians working on the ground, the international drug control system has been responsible for perpetuating the continual undersupply of controlled medicines.

To address drug control barriers to access to controlled medicines, the governments of Switzerland, Senegal, Uruguay and the Global Commission on Drug Policy will join in for a side event during the 30<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council. This side-event will aim at reviewing the key issues and the impact of the unavailability of controlled medicines on pain control, palliative care, substitution treatment, anesthesia and others, and the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

- **RUTH DREIFUSS**  
Former Federal Counselor for Home Affairs and President of Switzerland; Commissioner, Global Commission on Drug Policy
- **RICARDO GONZALEZ ARENAS**  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the UNOG
- **KEES DE JONCHEERE**  
Director, Essential Medicines and Health Products, World Health Organization
- **DIEDERIK LOHMAN**  
Associate Director, Health and Human Rights, Human Rights Watch

Chaired by:

- **FILLORETA KODRA**  
Vice President, Human Rights Council; Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Albania to the UNOG

Refreshments will be served prior to the side event