



Kingdom of the Netherlands



**GLOBAL
INITIATIVE**
AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

SIDE EVENT AND RECEPTION

TAKING FORWARD THE ACCRA CALL TO ACTION ON DRUG MARKETS IN WEST AFRICA

9 MARCH 2026
16:30–17:30 (Side event in M5)
17:30 - 19:30 (reception outside
M5)

Venue: Hybrid
(Room M5), Vienna
International Centre

[CLICK HERE
TO JOIN ONLINE](#)

Reception
17:30 - 19:30
MOE ground floor
(outside M5)

The co-hosts invite attendees to a reception, timed for Iftar, immediately following the side event, generously supported by the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Over the last five years, the markets for synthetic drugs and cocaine across West Africa have expanded sharply. A growing range of new synthetic drugs, mostly manufactured outside the region, have targeted local consumers, fuelling unprecedented consumption and causing significant public health harm. Furthermore, the global cocaine trade is operating on an unprecedented scale, with record production in Latin America, and West Africa is playing an increasingly important logistical role in international trafficking routes, particularly towards Europe, where consumption is growing.

This is why, in November 2025, the governments of Ghana and the Netherlands, along with the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC), convened a high-level dialogue titled 'Mapping the Future of Drug Markets in West Africa: Synthetics, Cocaine, Criminal Money and Strategic Responses' in Accra.

Dialogue participants, including ministers from Ghana, the Netherlands, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Liberia and Sierra Leone, agreed to adopt the 'Accra Call to Action', which was formally adopted by Hon. Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ghana. The Call to Action has been submitted to the CND as a Conference Room Paper.

Two regional baseline studies mapping the cocaine and synthetic drug markets were tabled for consultation during the dialogue, key findings were presented, and feedback from stakeholders was incorporated. The baseline studies aim to establish a consensus on the scale of the criminal markets and the actors involved, and will be published in the first quarter of 2026.

This side event and reception will build on the momentum generated during the high-level dialogue at the CND. Key findings from the baseline studies on cocaine and synthetic drugs prepared for the dialogue will be presented, and priorities for the way forward will be established. The event will also consider further action and cooperation on this critical issue between actors in West Africa, Europe and beyond. The session will feature high-level speakers, including from the host governments and partner organizations.

Speakers

- Opening remarks from the Chair, HE Matilda Aku Alomatu Osei-Agyeman, Permanent Representative of Ghana to the UN in Vienna
- Opening remarks from HE Peter Christiaan Potman, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the UN in Vienna
- Lucia Bird Ruiz-Benitez de Lugo, Director of the Observatory of Illicit Economies in West Africa, GI-TOC
- Ghana presentation
- Dutch presentation
- Justice Tettey, Chief, Drugs, Laboratory and Scientific Services Branch, UNODC
- Q and A
- Closing remarks: Dr Olubusayo Akinola, Head of Social Welfare, African Union Commission
- Moderator: Elsadig MohamedAhmed, Senior Expert, GI-TOC/Head of the Secretariat of the Eastern and Southern Africa Commission on Drugs



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EVENT SUPPORTERS

TAKING FORWARD THE ACCRA CALL TO ACTION ON DRUG MARKETS IN WEST AFRICA



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