



Regional drug strategies across the world

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Overview

Drug strategies and plans adopted over the last five years by six intergovernmental organisations engage 148 countries in five continents. Here, we present a brief overview of these documents, looking at their main features and objectives.

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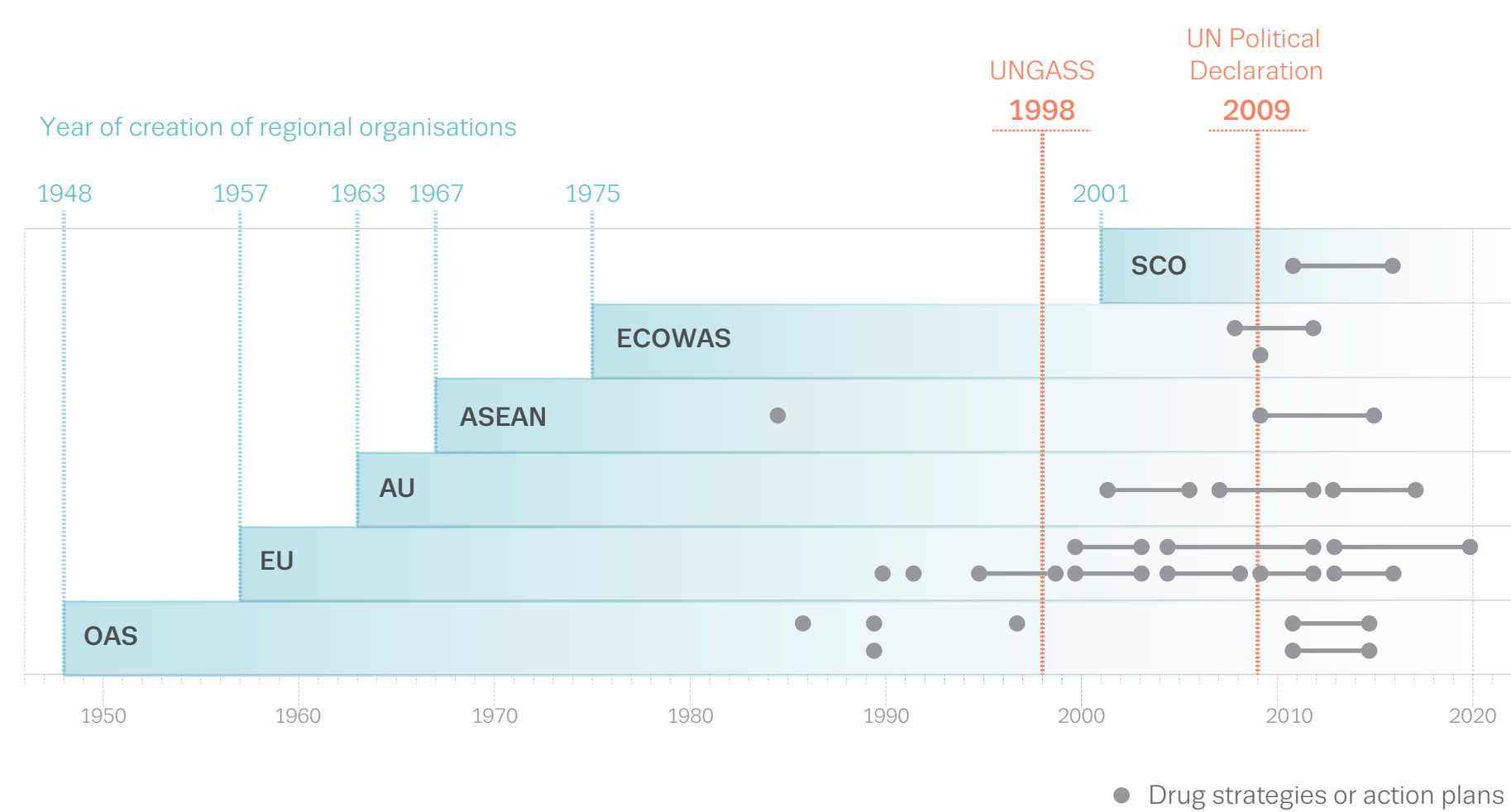
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Current regional drug strategies and plans in regional organisations

Region	Organisation	Number of Member States	Document title
Africa	African Union (AU)	54	AU plan of action on drug control 2013–17
	Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)	15	Political declaration on the prevention of drug abuse, illicit drug trafficking and organised crime in West Africa (Abuja Declaration, 2008) Regional action plan to address the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking, organised crime and drug abuse 2008–11 (*)
Americas	Organization of American States (OAS)	35	Hemispheric drug strategy 2011–15 Plan of action 2011–15
Asia	Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)	10	ASEAN work plan on combating illicit drug production, trafficking and use 2009–15
	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)	6	Counter narcotic strategy of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Member States 2011–16
Europe	European Union (EU)	28	EU drugs strategy 2013–20
			EU action plan on drugs 2013–16

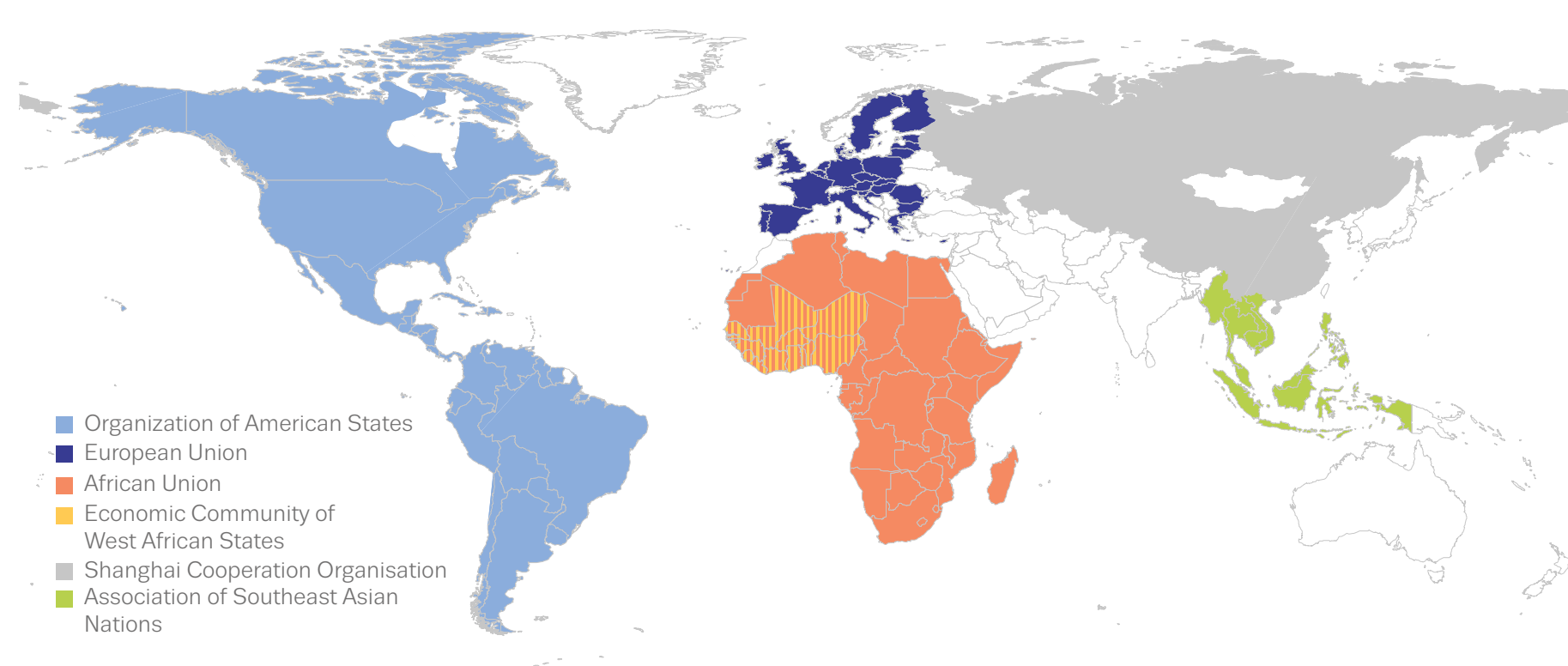
(*) Extended for two years by the ECOWAS heads of States and Governments in 2012.

Regional organisations and drug strategy — timeline



Unique specificities

- OAS:** drug dependence is a chronic relapse disease
- ASEAN, SCO:** qualitative and quantitative targets
- AU:** recognition of the imbalance in drug policy
- ECOWAS:** estimate budget for each action
- EU:** risk and harm reduction; external evaluation



African Union

The AU plan of action on drug control (2013–17) represents a substantial change in African drug policy. It wishes to restore the balance into drug policy with a stronger focus on health care. It aims at improving the health, security and socio-economic well-being of people in Africa by reducing drug use, illicit trafficking and associated crimes. Evidence-based services scaled up to address needs and strengthening of capacity building in data collection are among the expected outputs.

Economic Community of West African States

The ECOWAS plan of action 2008–11 (extended to 2013) engages its 15 Member States on five key policy areas: mobilisation of political leadership, law enforcement cooperation, criminal justice, drug use and related health problems, and reliable monitoring systems. For each of the problems identified, the plan selects an objective, the strategy most suited to reach it, the activities and the responsible party for execution at national and regional level.

Organization of American States

The new OAS hemispheric drug strategy updates the 1997 anti-drug strategy. The new document calls for a rebalance towards a comprehensive and health-oriented approach. The removal on the word 'anti' signifies the shift to helping countries of the region to develop policies focusing not only on supply and control but also on drug dependence. The new document covers five fields: institutional strengthening, demand reduction, supply reduction, control measures, and international cooperation.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations

The ASEAN work plan on combating illicit drug production, trafficking and use (2009–15) reiterates and adopts as an objective the commitment, first made in 1998 by ASEAN governments to achieve a drug-free region by 2020, moved to 2015 by the ASEAN ministers. The ASEAN plan commits the countries to work towards obtaining significant and sustainable reductions in illicit crop cultivation, illicit manufacturing and trafficking of drugs and prevalence of use of illicit drugs. A final assessment of the plan will be undertaken in 2015.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

The main objective of the counter narcotic strategy of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is to drastically reduce illicit trafficking of drugs and precursors and use of drugs by 2017. The strategy focuses on increased law enforcement to counteract the illicit trafficking and production of drugs; a security belt to address drug trafficking from Afghanistan is a key element of the strategy. The strategy addresses the demand reduction aspect of drug control by promoting drug use prevention through mass media campaigns and improvement of medical and rehabilitation care.

European Union

The EU strategy outlines a model for drugs policy in the region that is: *integrated*, combining all aspects of drugs activities; *balanced*, concentrating equally on demand and supply reduction measures; and *evidence-based*, drawing on scientific findings. It is structured around two policy areas: drug demand reduction and drug supply reduction; and three cross-cutting themes: coordination; international cooperation; and information, research, monitoring and evaluation. Two consecutive four-year action plans translate the strategic priorities into specific actions.