**To: OHCHR, UN Human Rights High Commissioner**

Against the background of OHCHR's request for information from the civil society concerning human rights challenges in addressing the world drug problem, we from the Swedish association AMD, Anhöriga Mot Droger, wish to emphasize the importance of the perspective of the family and relatives of people who use drugs.

We see a restrictive and humane drug policy as a necessity to prevent addiction and to ensure relatives to people who use drugs do not have to live in a situation of insecurity and ill health – which is often a consequence of living close to a person with a risk consumption or abuse. A suffering that affects both the user's and the relatives fundamental right to life, liberty and the security of person – as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Not least it affects the child's opportunities to a safe upbringing and possibilities for a future.

With reference to CRC Art 33, children have a right to be protected from the use, production and trafficking of illicit drugs. Despite this, many children grow up in an environment where the consequences of close relatives' drug abuse are constantly present. Unfortunately, the perspective of the child and other relatives is often missing in the drug policy debate as well as policy measures at an international, national and local level.

Most people with addiction need support and help to recover and the closest and most significant help often comes from their relatives; parents, children and siblings. But these groups are rarely asked about their situation and their need for support to be able to cope with their own lives as well as their role in helping a loved one back to a life free from drugs.

Nothing to reach this goal is done in the blink of an eye, it takes both energy and time for those who are supposed to help. Therefore, efforts are needed to coordinate the support from relevant authorities to provide help to the person with addiction, but also to the relatives themselves. In order to maintain people's right to health and freedom and children's right to be protected from drugs, we see a need for a restrictive, humane drug policy. That is, a policy that ensures that consumption is kept down through maintaining the ban on cannabis and other drugs – and focus on preventive efforts and early detection. But it is also a policy that gives the support and treatment needed for people with addiction – where the situation of relatives is not forgotten. Neither their need for support or their involvement in helping their family members to recovery and a life free from drugs.

*Your sincerely,*

*Lena Larsson*Chairperson, Anhöriga Mot Droger

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