



### **3<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium on Drug-Related Studies - 2025**

***"Advancing a Whole-of-Society Response to Emerging Drug Challenges:  
Equitable Investment and Integrated Action from Policy to People"***

**National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB)**

**9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

#### **Concept Note**

#### **1. Introduction**

The National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) of Sri Lanka serves as the national focal point for drug prevention, control, and treatment efforts. In line with its mandate, the NDDCB is dedicated to promoting research and evidence-based policymaking to enhance the effectiveness of national and community-level responses. Recognizing the critical role of academic and professional communities, the NDDCB prioritizes the creation of inclusive platforms that facilitate dialogue, collaboration, and innovation. Through its international symposiums, the NDDCB brings together scholars, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to share cutting-edge research, successful interventions, and emerging practices. Building on the success of the previous two symposiums, the 3rd International Symposium under the theme “*Advancing a Whole-of-Society Response to Emerging Drug Challenges: Equitable Investment and Integrated Action from Policy to People*” continues this commitment emphasizing the need for integrated, multi-level action and equitable resource allocation to address the growing complexity of drug-related issues both nationally and globally.

#### **2. Background**

The First International Symposium on Drug-Related Studies, organized by the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) in December 2022, marked a historic milestone in Sri Lanka’s drug demand and supply reduction efforts. Under the theme “Joint Commitment for Creating a Drug-Free Society through Best Evidence-Based Practices and Innovative

Approaches,” the symposium was supported by esteemed partners such as JICA and the Colombo Plan. It brought together over 200 national and international scholars, policymakers, and practitioners, providing a dynamic forum for the exchange of knowledge, research, and experiences. The event’s success and the overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants underscored the importance of continued collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and innovation in the field of drug prevention and control.

Building on the momentum of the first, the Second International Symposium, held in 2024, continued this journey under the theme “Balanced and Coordinated Strategy for Building a Drug-Free Community: with Active Citizen Engagement.” This symposium was successfully organized with the generous support of JICA and the Colombo Plan, bringing together a wide range of experts, researchers, and professionals from both national and international backgrounds. The event provided a platform to showcase innovative community models, integrated strategies, and citizen-led approaches to drug demand and supply reduction. The success of the second symposium further strengthened the NDDCB’s commitment to institutionalizing the symposium as a recurring platform for thought leadership and evidence-based policymaking in drug control.

As Sri Lanka navigates a critical phase in its national drug control response, the upcoming Third International Symposium on Drug-Related Studies (2025) emerges as a particularly significant event. Under the theme “Advancing a Whole-of-Society Response to Emerging Drug Challenges: Equitable Investment and Integrated Action from Policy to People,” the symposium will highlight the importance of inclusive, well-resourced, and multi-level action in addressing the complex and evolving nature of drug threats. With the government’s strong commitment to both demand and supply reduction, including enhanced resource allocation for voluntary treatment, community-based interventions, and the strengthening of prevention frameworks, the third symposium is expected to be the most impactful and relevant to date, providing a critical platform for global and national stakeholders to chart a unified and effective way forward.

### **3. Objectives of the Symposium**

- To promote a whole-of-society approach by engaging stakeholders from all sectors including government, academia, civil society, and communities in addressing emerging drug-related threats.

- To emphasize the importance of equitable resource allocation across all levels, from national institutions to grassroots initiatives, in strengthening drug prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and control strategies.
- To facilitate the exchange of knowledge, research, and best practices related to integrated and multidisciplinary approaches for both drug demand and supply reduction.
- To highlight effective models of voluntary treatment and community-based interventions that are sustainable, inclusive, and scalable within national and international contexts.
- To strengthen integrated action by promoting dialogue between health, social, and justice sectors, particularly enhancing the role of law enforcement and the judiciary in balanced, rights-based drug control strategies.
- To strengthen international and regional collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners for building evidence-informed, coordinated responses to complex drug issues.
- To provide a platform for presenting innovative, evidence-based research that informs policy and programmatic decision-making at all levels.
- To support national policy implementation by aligning symposium discussions with ongoing global initiatives and frameworks, including those led by the UNODC, WHO, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### **4. Themes of the Symposium**

The theme of the 3rd International Symposium on Drug-Related Studies – 2025, “Advancing a Whole-of-Society Response to Emerging Drug Challenges: Equitable Investment and Integrated Action from Policy to People,” reflects a growing recognition of the need for coordinated, inclusive, and well-resourced strategies in the global response to the drug problem. This theme emphasizes two critical dimensions: the necessity of equitable investment across all levels of society from national institutions to grassroots communities, and the importance of integrated, cross-sectoral action that connects health, social welfare, law enforcement, education, and justice systems.

In an era where drug threats are becoming increasingly complex, driven by socio-economic disparities, emerging synthetic drugs, transnational trafficking, and new patterns of substance use, single approaches are no longer sufficient. A whole-of-society response entails the meaningful involvement of all stakeholders, governments, civil society, academic institutions, the private sector, and communities in the design, implementation, and evaluation of drug control strategies. It also demands that financial, technical, and human resources are allocated fairly and strategically to ensure that responses are sustainable, inclusive, and locally relevant.

The theme is particularly relevant for Sri Lanka, which is currently at a critical juncture in its national drug control response. While the challenges are substantial, there is growing momentum, supported by strong political will and resource mobilization, to strengthen voluntary treatment services, empower community-based initiatives, and promote balanced law enforcement approaches. Against this backdrop, the symposium will serve as a timely platform to examine how integrated efforts rooted in equity, coordination, and shared responsibility can lead to more effective and humane drug policies both nationally and internationally.

## **5. Symposium Tracks**

The symposium will feature key tracks focusing on both supply reduction and demand reduction, ensuring a comprehensive approach to drug control.

### **Track 1: Strengthening Prevention through Community Engagement and Evidence-Based Strategies**

This track will focus on innovative, science-driven, and culturally sensitive approaches to drug prevention. It will explore effective models of school-based, family-centered, and community-led interventions, highlight the role of digital media and peer education, and examine how to scale preventive strategies through equitable resource allocation and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

## **Track 2: Advancing Treatment and Recovery through Inclusive and Voluntary Approaches**

This session will address the importance of expanding access to voluntary, rights-based treatment and recovery services. It will feature evidence-based therapeutic models, integrated care systems, recovery-oriented frameworks, and successful reintegration programs. Special attention will be given to community-based treatment, human resource development, and sustainable investment in treatment infrastructure and psychosocial support services.

## **Track 3: Enhancing Law Enforcement and Justice Sector Responses through Balanced and Coordinated Action**

Focusing on the supply reduction dimension, this track will examine how law enforcement and judicial systems can play a constructive role in drug control through balanced approaches. Topics will include intelligence-led policing, inter-agency cooperation, alternatives to incarceration, diversion programs, and international collaboration. It will also explore how law enforcement can complement public health approaches and contribute to a whole-of-society response.

## **Track 4: Advancing Scientific and Forensic Capabilities for Drug Detection, Analysis, and Monitoring**

This track will delve into the critical role of scientific research and laboratory-based evidence in drug control efforts. Topics will include advancements in forensic toxicology, analytical chemistry, drug profiling, detection of novel psychoactive substances (NPS), quality assurance in laboratory procedures, and the role of accredited laboratories in supporting law enforcement and public health systems. The session will also promote scientific collaboration for improved monitoring, early warning systems, and the development of national and regional drug data platforms.

### **6. Partnership and Collaboration**

The success of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium on Drug-Related Studies depends significantly on the strength of its partnerships and the spirit of collaboration among key stakeholders. Building on the momentum of the first two symposiums supported by respected partners such

as JICA, the Colombo Plan, and UNODC, this year's event aims to further expand its collaborative platform to promote shared responsibility and mutual learning in addressing the evolving drug problem. This year, NDDCB hopes to receive support from other international and local partners to ensure the effective implementation and wider impact of the symposium.

The National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) recognizes that addressing drug-related issues requires an integrated, multi-sectoral approach. Therefore, the symposium will actively engage a wide range of national and international partners, including:

- Government agencies in health, education, justice, and law enforcement
- Research institutions and universities
- International organizations and development partners
- Civil society organizations and community networks
- Professional associations in the fields of medicine, psychology, social work, and forensic science

The symposium offers a unique platform for these diverse actors to come together to:

- Share scientific knowledge, field experiences, and best practices
- Strengthen networks for joint research, policy development, and technical cooperation
- Foster innovation through interdisciplinary collaboration
- Align national efforts with regional and global frameworks

By promoting collaborative dialogue and cross-border partnerships, the 3rd International Symposium will contribute to the advancement of a comprehensive, inclusive, and well-resourced response to drug-related challenges, fully aligned with both national policy directions and global commitments under the UN drug control conventions and the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **7. Important Dates –**

Open for abstract submission – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Deadline for Abstracts submission – 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Notification of acceptance – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Conference date – 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025

## 8. Presentation mode

### Local Participants: Physical Presentations

- On-site Presentations: Local participants will present their research and findings in person at the symposium venue.

### Foreign Participants: Online or Physical Presentations

- Online Presentations: Foreign participants who cannot attend in person will present their work via virtual platforms. This can include live-streamed presentations, virtual panels, and interactive sessions through video conferencing tools.
- Hybrid Presentations: For those who prefer or can attend physically, foreign participants can present their research in person, contributing to a hybrid symposium experience that combines both physical and online elements.

## 9. Budget Estimation

No	Item	Description	Estimated cost in LKR
1.	Printing and sending invitation cards	• Printing 100 invitation cards for the inaugural session (100 x Rs.200.00)	20,000.00
2.	Printing certificates for the abstract presenters, co-authors, panellists	• Cost for printing of one certificate Rs.200 and need to print 350 certificates	70,000.00
3.	Trophies/plaques/ gifts for Keynote speaker and other panellists	• The cost for one plaque / gift item is Rs.8500.00 and need to be prepared 30 plaques	255,000.00
4.	Conference Proceedings (notebook and customize pen & conference bag or file)	I. Printing of conference proceedings book, 250 books and the cost of one book would be Rs. 2500.00	625,000.00
		II. Printing of customized notebooks, need 250 books with Hardcover customized, with logos/cost for one notebook Rs.1000.00	250,000.00

		I. 250 numbers of customized pens (blue) and the cost for one pen is Rs.250.00	62,500.00
		II. Conference bag with printing logos and title / 250 qts / cost for one bag Rs.2500.00	625,000.00
5.	Conference venue with conference facilities (For three days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference venue with registration area, main conference hall, and display area for all three days</li> <li>• LED backdrop, Sound system, mics, multimedia, podium, Wi-Fi, technical team</li> <li>• Decorations</li> </ul>	900,000.00
6.	Foods and refreshments	Tea & snacks (Morning and evening) / lunch/water for 100 participants x 3 days = 300 servings	900,000.00
7.	Hiring an English-medium announcer	Only for the inaugural session	50,000.00
8.	Hiring Cultural Team	Only for the inaugural session	50,000.00
9.	Photography and Videography	Full 3-day event coverage	200,000.00
10.	Flex, banners and branding	Backdrops, directional boards, and branding for all 3 days	150,000.00
11.	Other expenses	translations fee, and other required items wouldn't be covered through the above budget lines.	30,000.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>4,187,500.00</b>