



The UN may be about to urge all governments across the world to decriminalise the use and possession of all drugs and substances, revealed Sir Richard Branson.

Richard Branson serves on the Global Commission on Drugs Policy, a panel of 22 world leaders and intellectuals advocating drug policy reforms.

Branson posted details of an embargoed UN report on the Virgin website saying he has been shown a report by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) which drastically changed the organisations stance on drug control.

The report was due to be released at a conference in Malaysia last week but has now been delayed. Branson said he published the details early in case the UN will "bow to pressure by not going ahead with this important move".

The UN was preparing to declare "unequivocally that criminalisation is harmful unnecessary and disproportionate", Branson wrote.

"As I'm writing this I am hearing that at least one government is putting an inordinate amount of pressure on the UNODC," he said. "Let us hope the UNODC, a global organisation that is part of the UN and supposed to do what is right for the people of the world, does not do a remarkable volte-face at the last possible moment and bow to pressure by not going ahead with this important move. The war on drugs has done too much damage to too many people already." He continued.

Within hours of the blog post UNODC released a statement saying no such change in policy was imminent and that there had been an "unfortunate misunderstanding".

"The briefing paper on decriminalisation mentioned in many of today's media reports, and intended for dissemination and discussion at a conference in Kuala Lumpur, is neither a final nor formal document ... and cannot be read as a statement of UNODC policy," a spokesperson said.

"It remains under review and UNODC regrets that, on this occasion, there has been an unfortunate misunderstanding about the nature and intent of this briefing paper. UNODC emphatically denies reports that there has been pressure on UNODC to withdraw the document. But it is not possible to withdraw what is not yet ready."

Source: [Independent](#)