



STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF AFGHANISTAN

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COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

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Madam Chair,
Ladies and gentlemen,
distinguished delegates,

I wish to start by welcoming you, Ambassador Bente Angell-Hansen into the chair of the 60th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), and express my country's support for your excellent leadership, and reassure you of our full cooperation. We also extend our congratulations to the other members of the bureau. Let me also thank the CND Secretariat for the great support in the preparation for this session.

Narcotic Drugs pose a great challenge and threats to the security, stability and advancement of the people of Afghanistan, the region and the world.

Illicit narcotics and organized crime impact the health situation and addiction rates in our country. Narcotics are the main financial resource for terrorism and the insurgency in our country. Drug cultivation, production, trafficking and laboratories mostly take place and can be found in the insecure areas in the South-West and East of Afghanistan; areas, which are to some extent under the control of the Taliban and other terrorist groups. The Taliban and similar terrorist groups are directly involved in drug trafficking, in cooperation with the international

drug mafia. These issues have also been raised by our permanent representative during the 2016 UNGASS conference in New York.

Based on the existing challenges and threats in Afghanistan, the President of Afghanistan has launched the following efforts in order to address illicit drugs:

- 1- Fight against illicit drugs is one of our government's priorities, next to the fight against terrorism and against the insurgency.
- 2- Renewed efforts have been made to amend and improve the counter narcotics law and related policies; the counter narcotics law is currently under review and to be signed by the President of Afghanistan.
- 3- Establishment of a Commission on Counter Narcotics, which is led by the President of Afghanistan.
- 4- Preparations for the National Implementation Plan for Counter Narcotics in coordination with the international community and our allies. In this plan, Afghanistan's and the international community's responsibilities have been specified.
- 5- Substantial efforts to further improve the National Strategy for Counter Narcotics in coordination with aligned institutions and organizations.

Despite a decrease in the financial support from our international allies, also towards the engagement of Afghanistan's security forces in combating terrorism and establishing security in the country, the government offices tasked with counter narcotics in Afghanistan are continuously conducting law enforcement operations that are led by the Ministry of Interior of Afghanistan, with many achievements accomplished so far.

In 2016, 683 tons of illicit drugs and chemicals were seized in Afghanistan, during 2,209 operations, marking a 196% increase compared to 2015. 2,572 drug traffickers including 525 major traffickers and 12 traffickers whose names were also on the international black list were arrested, as well as 26 members of the Taliban who were involved in drug trafficking. In 2016, we also destroyed 102 drug laboratories, signifying a 500% increase compared to 2015.

Challenges and problems:

- 1- Cultivation of drugs and drug trafficking in the insecure areas in the South and the West of Afghanistan, which in parts are controlled by the Taliban and other terrorists groups.
- 2- Direct links between Taliban and drug traffickers, and Taliban's own involvement in drug trafficking.
- 3- Lack of capacity in our law enforcement institutions, given the actual threat of narcotics.
- 4- Lack of financial and technical support from the international community and regional countries in our efforts to counter narcotics.
- 5- Lack of equipment to detect illicit drugs at airports, custom ports, insufficient capacity towards checking drug trafficking routes, as well as lack of border management and intelligence information sharing.

- 6- Lack of cooperation and coordination in controlling precursors along the main routes of drug trafficking countries.

Suggestions:

- 1- Give priority to the fight against illicit drugs on the regional and international levels, and strongly support all countries where the level of drug cultivation and drug production remains high, but also to those countries that find themselves on the main routes of illicit drug trafficking.
- 2- Empower law enforcement departments to effectively counter narcotics on different levels and to match the actual threats.
- 3- Establish a fundamental agricultural infrastructure to decrease poverty and to provide alternative and sustainable livelihoods to the farmers of Afghanistan.
- 4- Strengthen regional cooperation and establish a mechanism to implement regional agreements.
- 5- Strengthen border control management and custom ports management of Afghanistan in order to prevent drug trafficking as well as to prevent precursors exported into Afghanistan.
- 6- Provide state-of-the-art equipment and machinery for Afghanistan in order to decrease opium cultivation and enabling destruction of heroin production facilities.

At the end, I would like to thank UNODC and the supporting countries, especially the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the European Union and Japan for providing capacity-building for the law enforcement institutions in Afghanistan and in particular for the National Special Police Forces of Anti-Narcotics and the National Police of Afghanistan.

Thank you, Madam Chair