



VIENNA CHAPTER

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. JORGE ARMANDO FELIX, HEAD OF THE BRAZILIAN DELEGATION, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF THE 77 AND CHINA, AT THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT OF THE 46TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS (VIENNA, APRIL 16TH 2003)

Madame Chairperson,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We are pleased to see you presiding over this mid term evaluation of the implementation of the goals established by the XX Special Session of the General Assembly.

As we engage in this very important task, let me thank the Executive Director for the thoughtful recommendations contained in his biennial reports. His two additional contributions to this ministerial meeting, namely the reports on a strategic vision for the UN activities in this field and on a renewed commitment to deliver, will no doubt leave a strong imprint on our findings and deliberations.

This meeting represents a defining moment in our common struggle against the scourge of drugs. Our objective is not only to assess the level of implementation of commitments contained in the 1998 Political Declaration and Plans of Action. We must also renew our political commitment to the global fight against drugs and set clear policy directives thereupon for the years ahead, in keeping with the principle of shared responsibilities and an integrated approach to the fight against the illicit demand and supply of drugs.

The reaffirmation of our shared responsibilities necessarily implies a renewed commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation, particularly in the form of increased technical assistance and the provision of additional financial resources by international organizations and developed countries in support of the efforts by developing countries to confront the drugs issue in all its manifestations.

International cooperation must adequately address the needs of producing countries, transit countries, as well as the requirements of developing countries affected by growing demand and a surge in drug-related violence and crime.

The global problem of drugs affects individual countries and regions in different ways. We must always keep in mind the fact that in developing countries the problem of drugs strikes societies already struggling with the enormous consequences of poverty and social exclusion.

In this context international cooperation in the fight against drugs can only be effective if it reinforces developing countries efforts to promote sustainable development.

Madam Chairperson,

Our Group reiterates also the need for strong and effective bilateral, regional and international cooperation to counter the threats posed by the continuing linkages between illicit trafficking of drugs and terrorism, money laundering, illicit traffic in arms and other forms of transnational organized crime.

The Group reiterates the importance of alternative development, including preventive alternative development, especially for those countries that have adopted measures to reduce and eradicate illicit drug crops. Greater international cooperation is needed to support alternative development and preventive alternative development programs and projects, as well as for interdiction programs and reinforcement of

national intelligence systems devoted to the neutralization of drug trafficking groups.

In accordance with the principle of shared responsibility, we also call for greater market access for products originating from alternative development programs.

The Group reiterates the need to maintain the balance between licit supply of, and licit demand for, opiates and opiate-derivatives for medical and scientific purposes.

The Group also considers that control of cannabis cultivation, by far the most widely and frequently abused of the drugs listed in drug control treaties (CND Res. 45/8), is a very important issue, taking into account that cultivation is on the increase in Africa as well as in some parts of Latin America, with negative social and economic consequences. In this context, the Group is also alarmed that decriminalization policies of the use of cannabis by certain developed countries may hamper efforts towards supply reduction.

Madam Chairperson,

The Group of 77 and China wishes to renew its hope that through a strong consensus with the recommendations of this ministerial meeting, and also through reinforced international cooperation and treaty implementation, we will be able to advance in our journey towards a world free of the scourge of illicit drugs, in which the reduction of poverty and all forms of drug related violence and crime will promote better standards of living and dignity for all. Effective fight against the illicit use of drugs must be our contribution to world peace and development.

Thank you.