



Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the 63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 2-6 March 2020, delivered by

H.E. Ambassador Ganeson SIVAGURUNATHAN, Permanent Representative of Malaysia

Vienna, 2nd March 2020

H.E. Ambassador Mansoor Ahmad Khan,

H.E. Madam Ghada Waly,

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to speak today on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

1. The Group of 77 and China felicitates Ambassador Khan on his election as the Chair of the 63rd session of the Commission, as well as to the other elected members of the Bureau. The Group pledges to the Chair its full cooperation to make the present session a success.
2. The Group gladly welcomes H.E. Madam Waly, the new Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director General of the United Nations Office in Vienna, and looks forward to working with you to achieve more progress toward better policies and programs to effectively address and counter the world drug problem.
3. The Group also appreciates the Secretariat for carrying out the preparatory work for this session.

Mr. Chair,

4. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation for the commendable efforts of the Chairperson in finding a way forward through informal consultations with Member States on the WHO recommendations, on the changes in the scope of control of substances of cannabis and cannabis-related substances.
5. The Group calls upon all States to duly consider the potential social, economic, administrative, legal and other implications of WHO's recommendations on control of cannabis and cannabis-related substances, where applicable.
6. The Group reiterates that the world drug problem remains a common and shared responsibility that should be addressed in a multilateral setting through effective, concrete and increased international cooperation, based on an integrated, multidisciplinary, mutually

reinforcing, balanced, scientific evidence-based and comprehensive approach with a view to promoting and protecting the health, safety and well-being of all humanity.

7. The Group remains strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations Development System and avoiding restrictive measures and actions not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to improve solidarity, international cooperation framework and reinforce States' capabilities to address and counter the world drug problem.
8. The Group recognizes the efforts undertaken by our authorities from the law enforcement, criminal justice, health, education and other relevant authorities, in addressing and countering the world drug problem.
9. The Group reiterates that the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, and other relevant international instruments constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system.
10. The Group reaffirms its unwavering commitment to ensuring that all aspects of demand reduction and related measures, supply reduction and related measures, and international cooperation are addressed in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs of States, all human rights, fundamental freedoms, the inherent dignity of all individuals and the principles of equal rights and mutual respect among States.
11. The Group reaffirms our commitments to prevent, significantly and measurably reduce or eliminate illicit cultivation, production, manufacturing, trafficking, of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as well as the diversion of and illicit trafficking in precursors and money-laundering related to illicit drugs; as well as the illicit demand and abuse of drugs by promoting effective and comprehensive scientific evidence-based initiatives as well as initiatives and measures aimed at minimizing the adverse public health and social consequences of drug abuse. The Group reiterates the need for strengthening international cooperation, in this regard, and also reaffirms the need to address drug-related socio-economic issues related to the illicit cultivation, manufacture and production of, and trafficking in drugs through the implementation of long-term comprehensive and sustainable developments oriented and balanced drug control policies and programmes.

Mr. Chair,

12. The Group notes with concern the harmful effects of the increasing non-medical use of Tramadol and invites Member States to collect and share data in order to facilitate the consideration of placing of the substance under international control to prevent its diversion for illicit use while ensuring its access and availability for medical and scientific purposes.
13. Transit States and other Member States continue to face multifaceted challenges, and the Group reaffirms the continuing need for cooperation and support, including the provision of technical assistance to, inter alia, enhance their capacities to effectively address and counter the world drug problem, in conformity with the 1988 Convention, and, as appropriate, the other Drug Control Conventions.
14. The Group welcomes the adoption of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, “Strengthening our actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem”.
15. The Group remains fully committed to implementing the 2009 Political Declaration and its Plan of Action, to addressing the general challenges and priorities for action identified in the Joint Ministerial Statement adopted at the High Level Review in March 2014 and the UNGASS 2016 outcome document in its entirety.
16. To effectively address and counter the world drug problem in light of the collective commitments, it is of critical importance to enhance international cooperation, at all levels, based on the established principle of common and shared responsibility, in particular with developing countries. In this context, the Group:
 - a. Highlights the need to further strengthen North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;
 - b. Calls upon the international community to provide sufficient resources including financial resources, concrete capacity-building assistance, technical assistance, technology and equipment to developing countries, upon request, to assist them in building their capacities;
 - c. Calls for enhancing efforts to address drug abuse prevention, including in educational settings;
 - d. Urges the international community to provide support, upon request, to law enforcement, criminal justice, health and education authorities of the developing countries to assist them in addressing the persistent and emerging challenges;
 - e. Calls for the provision of assistance to developing countries, upon request, for improving the availability, access and affordability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion;

- f. Calls for enhanced international cooperation to promote inclusive economic growth and support initiatives that contribute to the sustainability of social and economic development as well as poverty eradication;
- g. Calls upon the international community to support sustainable and long-term alternative development programs, including preventive alternative development, which are part of sustainable crop control strategies, taking into account the UN Guiding Principles on Alternative Development;
- h. Invites Member States to take appropriate measures to address the diversion and illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in as well as misuse of precursors, including acetic anhydride under international control and to tackle the misuse of pre-precursors and substitute or alternative precursors for illicit drug manufacturing;
- i. Emphasizes that international assistance to developing countries, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility, should be without any conditions;
- j. Emphasizes the need for strengthened international cooperation to tackle money-laundering related to drug trafficking, in particular by effectively identifying, tracing, freezing, seizing, confiscating and returning assets and proceeds of crime.

Mr. Chair,

- 17. The Group emphasizes the need for sustainable and sufficient resources for the UNODC to enhance its capacity-building initiatives, programmes and activities particularly for developing countries, including for the provision of the equipment and technical assistance.
- 18. The Group particularly reiterates its growing concern that concrete and sustainable efforts are still lacking to enhance representation of developing countries in the staff composition of the Office, particularly developing Member States that are unrepresented and underrepresented in the Secretariat of UNODC. The situation at the professional, senior and policy-making levels is of notable concern given the lack of representation of developing countries. We call on UNODC to take serious and concrete measures to improve the representation of developing countries in line with General Assembly resolutions.
- 19. The Group expresses the need to respond to the serious challenges posed by the increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime, including, trafficking in persons, trafficking in firearms, cybercrime and money-laundering, and, in some cases, terrorism including money-laundering in connection with the financing of terrorism, by using an integrated, multidisciplinary approach, such as through promoting and supporting reliable data collection, research and, as appropriate, intelligence- and analysis-sharing to ensure effective policymaking and interventions.

20. The Group recognizes that there are persistent, new and evolving challenges that should be addressed in conformity with the three international drug control conventions, which allow for sufficient flexibility for States parties to design and implement national drug policies according to their priorities and needs, consistent with the principle of common and shared responsibility and applicable international law.
21. The Group reaffirms its determination to address and counter the world drug problem and to actively promote a society free of drug abuse in order to help to ensure that all people can live in health, dignity and peace, with security and prosperity, and reaffirm our determination to address public health, safety and social problems resulting from drug abuse.
22. The Group of 77 and China emphasizes the need for the international community, in particular developed countries by providing means of implementation, to accelerate the ongoing efforts to address and counter the world drug problem.

Thank you for your attention.