



**Statement of the Group of 77 and China  
during the 69th session  
of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Vienna, 9-13 March 2026,  
delivered by H.E. Shambhu S. Kumaran,  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India**

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China thanks H.E. Ambassador Shambhu S. Kumaran, for Chairing the 68<sup>th</sup> session, and congratulates H.E. Ambassador Andranik Hovhannisyan, Permanent Representative of Armenia, on his election as the Chair of the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission, as well as 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 expresses its support to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and reiterates its commitment to continue working with the UNODC to address and counter the world drug problem.

3. The Group would like to express its appreciation for the dedicated work of the Bureau and the Secretariat for the preparation and organization of this session.

4. We also reaffirm the role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as the principal policymaking body of the United Nations with prime responsibility for drug control matters and recognize the efforts of the relevant United Nations entities, in particular those of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the treaty-mandated roles of International Narcotics Control Board and other relevant international organizations for addressing and countering the world drug problem.

5. The Group remains committed to implementing the 2009 Political Declaration and its Plan of Action, to addressing the challenges and priorities for action identified in the Joint Ministerial Statement adopted at the High Level Review in March 2014, as well as implementing the UNGASS 2016 outcome document and the 2019 Ministerial Declaration.

6. The Group reiterates its support for the “High-Level Declaration by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the 2024 Mid-Term Review, following up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration”, as an important reaffirmation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem.

7. The Group also takes positive note of all initiatives and efforts of its Member States, which contribute to the work of the Commission, including, inter alia, through tabling resolutions.

Mr. Chair,

8. The Group takes note of the World Drug Report 2025 and the International Narcotics Control Board Annual Report 2025. We are concerned that, despite the significant efforts made by Member States, the challenges posed by the world drug problem persist and continue to evolve. We stress the need for the international community to increase their concerted efforts to effectively address and counter it.

9. The Group reiterates that addressing and countering the world drug problem is a common and shared responsibility that should be undertaken in a multilateral setting through effective, concrete and increased sub-regional, regional, and 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, public security, safety and wellbeing of all humanity.

10. The Group stresses the importance of international cooperation, enhanced capacity building initiatives, programs and activities, provision of equipment and technology and technical assistance, particularly for developing countries, in an open, transparent and equitable manner, to enable them to have sufficient resources to address and counter the world drug problem.

11. The Group expresses serious concern over the ongoing financial constraints of the UNODC that stem from the liquidity crisis in the United Nations regular budget. The Group emphasizes that efforts of the UNODC to adapt to financial limitations should not negatively affect the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building for developing countries, upon their request, to effectively address and counter persistent and emerging drug-related challenges.

12. The Group remains strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations development system and to avoid promulgating and imposing any unilateral coercive measures and actions on developing countries not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to improve solidarity, enhance international cooperation and reinforce States' capabilities to address and counter the world drug problem.

13. The Group underscores the important role played by all relevant stakeholders, including law enforcement, judicial and health-care personnel, civil society, the scientific community and academia, as well as the private sector, in supporting our efforts to implement our joint commitments at all levels, and underscore the importance of promoting relevant partnerships.

14. 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.

15. The Group reaffirms its 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 principles of equality and mutual respect among States, non-intervention in internal affairs of States as well as for all human rights, fundamental freedoms, the inherent dignity of all individuals.

16. The Group reiterates that efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

Mr. Chair,

17. The Group reaffirms its commitment to prevent, reduce and eliminate illicit cultivation, production, manufacturing, trafficking, of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the diversion of and illicit trafficking in precursors and money-laundering and illicit financial flows related to illicit drugs; as well as the illicit demand and abuse of drugs by promoting effective and comprehensive scientific evidence-based initiatives and measures aimed at minimizing the adverse public health and social consequences of drug abuse.

18. The Group notes with great concern the persistent disparities on progress made in ensuring the access, availability and affordability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, particularly for pain relief and palliative care. In this regard, the Group urges all Member States to take concrete actions to ensure access, availability and affordability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes and remove any imposed barriers.

19. The Group notes with great concern that drug use disorders pose multifaceted challenges and that the demand for treating drug-related disorders remains largely unmet, and that people who use drugs, including those who inject drugs, are still disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS and other bloodborne infections. The Group urges Member States to continuously improve, inter alia, prevention, treatment, health care, rehabilitation and recovery to cater for all affected groups.

20. The Group recalls also the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and recognizing the importance of promoting sustainable and viable livelihoods for the Indigenous Peoples and local communities affected by or vulnerable to the illicit cultivation of crops used for the illicit production and manufacture of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

21. The Group recognizes the importance of increased efforts to promote viable economic alternatives to the illicit cultivation, production, manufacturing, and trafficking of drugs, including, through long-term comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable alternative development programs, including preventive alternative development programs, and development-oriented interventions and initiatives that benefit all and in particular those local communities and regions affected by or at risk of the illicit cultivation of crops used for the production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and the illicit manufacture and production of and trafficking in drugs, as well as other illicit drug-related activities in urban and rural areas.

22. The Group notes the negative impact of transnational criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking on public security, human dignity, safety and wellbeing of societies, and their role in the surge of violence in some regions, and stresses the need to embrace a comprehensive approach aimed at addressing and countering the expansion of such activities.

23. The Group acknowledges that the States most affected by the transit of drugs, especially developing countries, have made important contributions to and sacrifices in countering illicit drug trafficking and preventing illicitly trafficked substances from reaching end markets. We emphasize the need to provide concrete, sufficient and sustainable technical and capacity building support to these States to bolster their efforts to curb illicit drug trafficking and deal with associated challenges.

24. The Group expresses concern regarding the proliferation of and surge in the illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and use of synthetic drugs. We urge all Member States to take

concrete actions to tackle this issue as one of the priorities within our efforts to address and counter the world drug problem.

25. The Group recognizes that illicit drug-related activities can affect the environment and local communities and acknowledges the need to address these adverse effects and their root causes.

26. The Group emphasizes the need for continuous support from UNODC to Member States upon their request to support and enhance their national efforts to establish a balanced, integrated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary and scientific evidence-based approach to address and counter the world drug problem, especially on the implementation of the three international drug control conventions and of all our international drug policy commitments.

27. The Group recognizes that there are persistent, new and evolving challenges that should be addressed with ambitious, effective, improved and decisive actions, including where appropriate, innovative measures in conformity with the three international drug control conventions.

28. In this regard, the Group also recognizes that the three international drug control conventions 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.

Mr. Chair,

29. The Group reaffirms our commitment based on the principle of common and shared responsibility to implement tangible and efficient measures, within our respective means, to counter criminal organizations involved in illicit drug trafficking, and to address the increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime, and we express our resolve to strengthen sub-regional, regional and international cooperation in this regard.

30. 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.

31. In this regard, the Group recognizes the importance of appropriately mainstreaming a gender and age perspective into drug-related policies and programmes and that appropriate emphasis should be placed on individuals, families, communities and society as a whole, with a particular focus on women, children and youth, with a view to promoting and protecting health, including access to treatment, safety and the well-being of all humanity.

32. The Group expresses its serious concern regarding the inadequate implementation of the principle of equitable geographical representation and low level of representation of developing countries in the UNODC. The Group notes that geographical representation within the UNODC, as reflected in the report of the Executive Director released on 3 October 2025, indicated that over 50,6% of UNODC staff comes from only one regional group. We call on the UNODC to take immediate steps to increase the number of UNODC personnel from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States across all levels, especially at senior levels. The Group looks forward to regular reports from Secretariat on this matter.

33. The Group of 77 and China emphasizes the need for the international community, in particular developed countries by providing means of implementation, to accelerate and improve the ongoing efforts to address and counter the world drug problem.

34. The Group expresses deep concern on the prevailing humanitarian emergencies resulting from armed conflicts in Member States or territories of the Group, including in the Gaza Strip, and recalls the obligations of States to ensure the availability of internationally controlled narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical purposes, which are used in anesthesia and for pain management and the treatment of mental health and neurological conditions.

Thank you for your attention.