

**Statement of the Delegation of Portugal**  
**on the thematic discussion on the implementation of the UNGASS outcome**  
**document – *Operational recommendations on supply reduction and related***  
***measures; effective law enforcement; responses to drug-related crime; and***  
***countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation***

*Vienna, 11 October 2016*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Portugal's geographical location, traditional openness to the world and privileged links with different regions of the globe make its territory vulnerable to the adaptable patterns of international drug trafficking routes and related criminal activities. In 2014, for instance, fifty-nine different international drug routes were identified, many of them associated with the trafficking in cocaine.

The Portuguese authorities have been developing their capacities and adapting their responses to this phenomenon, as part of a broader and integrated drugs policy. As mentioned yesterday in our statement on the «demand reduction» thematic chapter, the move away from a punitive approach directed at drugs users facilitated the reallocation of State resources to the provision of health care services. At the same time, with the decriminalization of drug use and possession for personal use – a topic we will address more thoroughly this afternoon –, scarce and valuable resources could also be directed from the prosecution of drug users to the combat to drug trafficking, money laundering and other related criminal activities. The operational capacity of the law enforcement authorities could be further improved and focused on the crimes of a more serious nature.

Portugal has in place a broad juridical framework designed to address drug-related crime at the national level and to facilitate cooperation with other States and international organizations, as prescribed in the recommendations included in the UNGASS outcome document. Portugal is Party to the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and all its Protocols, to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, to all the relevant international conventions and protocols related to the countering of terrorism and is implementing the provisions against money-laundering contained in all relevant international and multilateral instruments, including the Financial Action Task Force Recommendations.

The UNGASS outcome document recognizes that cooperation between different partners is a key element of an efficient combat to a phenomenon with a strong transnational component. That is why we increasingly value and try to promote the synergies generated between the multilateral structures present in our territory, such as the EMSA – European Maritime Safety Agency, the EMCDDA – European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the MAOC (N) – Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre – Narcotics. We feel privileged and honoured to be able to host these agencies in Lisbon. They generate a positive spillover effect on the development of our own operational capabilities in the combat to trafficking, in particular the one carried out by air and sea.

In this morning's thematic discussion, we would like to focus our attention a little more in depth in the work done by the MAOC (N) – Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre, established in Lisbon since 2007. This initiative, co-funded by the European Union, facilitates cooperation in operations to suppress drug trafficking by land and sea between Portugal and six other Member States: France, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The structure

is staffed by Liaison Officers representing the police, customs, military and maritime authorities of those seven countries, alongside many observers from regional and international organizations, including the UNODC. According to the data gathered by the Centre, from 2007 to July 2016, MAOC (N) supported the coordination and seizure of over 116 tons of cocaine and over 300 tons of cannabis.

Relevant Portuguese civil and military authorities are in close and permanent contact with the MAOC (N) for the deployment of monitoring operations directed at vessels suspected of being involved in transnational drug trafficking activities, using as its main tool the coordination of police actions between law enforcement agencies of different States. As an example of this, I would mention the successful seizure of around 122 kg of cocaine aboard a sailboat in the island of Madeira this past month of July, which involved the cooperation between the Portuguese Criminal Police, the Portuguese National Republican Guard and the MAOC (N).

Portugal is also actively involved in the efforts to address the growing challenges of maritime crime, including illicit activities related to drug trafficking, in other regions of the world, in particular Western Africa. Portugal is currently holding the Presidency of the Extended G7 Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea. The Lisbon Declaration adopted by the Group last June identifies trans-regional trafficking of drugs as one of the problems fueling greater insecurity and instability in the region and calls for the cooperation between partners, regional and international organizations to address it. We remain committed to participating in those efforts.