

Statement of the Delegation of Portugal
on the thematic discussion on the implementation of the UNGASS outcome
document – *Operational recommendations on strengthening international*
cooperation based on the principle of common and shared responsibility

Vienna, 27 October 2016

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

When addressing the complex challenges posed by the world drug problem, no State can abstain from acting, but no State can act alone. As in many other areas affecting the lives of individuals in contemporary societies all around the world, decisive and proportionate action at the domestic level must be complemented with cooperation among partners, given the transnational nature of many of the different dimensions of the phenomenon.

Over the years, Portugal has been cooperating with a large number of partners in bilateral and multilateral formats. In this session, I would like to give just a few examples of programmes and initiatives funded by the European Union in the field of international cooperation in which Portugal is participating actively at present:

. **SEACOP – Seaport Cooperation Project** – The Portuguese Criminal Police, alongside partner organizations from Spain, France and the United Kingdom, is contributing to the development of capabilities of countries in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean situated along the Cocaine Route. The main purpose of the project is to support countries in their efforts to address the trafficking of cocaine by sea by strengthening seaport control and intelligence capacities in the most sensitive coastal areas. 47 training courses and 7 regional

workshops were already held, covering almost 600 individuals. The project also contributed to the establishment of Joint Maritime Control Units in 18 countries (7 in West Africa and 11 in East Caribbean).

. **AIRCOP – Airport Communication Program** – Portuguese experts have been providing training to individuals in some of the 24 countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean participating in this project developed jointly by UNODC, Interpol and the World Customs Organizations with the aim of strengthening capabilities in the areas of detection, interdiction and investigative techniques in airports of those two regions.

. **EUGARD** – Funded by the European Union and led by the United Kingdom, the project's main objective is to contribute to the development of capabilities dedicated to countering drug trafficking by air in countries of West Africa. As in the other two previous examples, Portugal is participating in the activities carried out under the project by providing experts to conduct training sessions.

In addition, the Portuguese Criminal Police, through its unit specialized in the combat to drug trafficking, participates in several initiatives developed under the Operational Action Plans for the priority threats of cocaine and synthetic drugs defined in the EU Policy Cycle.

Allow me also to refer that Portugal has been actively participating in the COPOLAD Programme, a EU comprehensive programme, addressing both drug demand and drug supply reduction, which aims to improve the coherence, balance and impact of drugs policies, through the exchange of mutual experiences between the national institutions responsible for drugs policies in the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean.

During the first phase of the programme, which was concluded last year, the General Directorate on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies was particularly involved in the elaboration of the monograph "Quality and Evidence in Drug Demand Reduction: a reference framework for programme accreditation", which identified basic minimum quality and evidence based standards to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the management and implementation of demand reduction programs.

Portugal also played an important role in the national drug observatories component of COPOLAD, sharing its knowledge and experience with the aim of strengthening the foundations to obtain adequate and up to date information on problems related to drugs, which is of utmost importance to define and evaluate drug policies. We are currently participating in the second phase of the programme, which started this year and we will participate in the several foreseen activities, both in the drug demand and drug supply reduction areas.

Along the years, our country has also developed close ties of mutual collaboration with other Portuguese speaking countries, both in the demand reduction and supply reduction field. For instance, our authorities have organized multiple training sessions either in Portugal or directly in some of those countries and national experts provided support and advice to several of its counterparts.

To conclude, let me reiterate that Portugal believes in the merits of humane and proportionate drugs policies based on evidence. Hence, we remain open to listen to other countries' experiences, as well as to share the results of our own drugs policy with our partners, including other States, the scientific community and civil society organizations. Over the past three years, a large number of

delegations visited Portugal to discuss drugs issues or to gather information on our drugs policy, including from countries such as Ukraine, France, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, United States, Japan, Denmark, Sweden, the Philippines, Indonesia, Belgium, Turkey, Germany, Australia, Estonia, Norway, Malta, Kosovo, New Zealand or China.

The exchange of views held during these intersessional meetings on the implementation of the UNGASS outcome document has also played a positive role in that continuous process of building trust and strengthening cooperation among our countries, with the aim of promoting understanding as a basis for constructive and meaningful debates among partners on the present and future of the national and international drugs policies. I would like to thank you all for having shared your data and information with us in these meetings.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.