

## **General remarks**

**Jeremy Douglas**

### **2013 WDR launch**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Mr. Yury Fedtov, Security General of UNODC, I would like to deliver my sincere gratitude for all the participants who join with us today for the World Drug Report 2013 launch event. I also would like to thank ONCB, the organizers for their very warm welcome.

-As the Deputy Secretary General noted, illicit drugs have been a persistent problem for the international community despite a series of noble efforts made by national authorities together with UNODC and international partners.

-In fact, illicit drugs remain the largest component of the transnational crime economy here in SE Asia and world wide by quite a wide margin. According to our recent report, titled Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment for EAP, illicit drugs account for more than one-third of illicit proceeds generated by TOC in the region. Trafficking of illicit drugs is not only a great source of revenue for TOC, but also fuels instability, corruption, conflict, and states are left to deal with the challenges.

-Even more importantly public health challenges from drug use bring the problem into the human dimension. Drug users are predominately youth and those trapped in a cycle of use are often marginalized. Related problems including HIV/AIDS,

significantly challenge public health systems and require investment by states and international partners.

-For all these reasons, countering illicit drugs has become an overarching threat to governments, societies, and economies. The message here I would like to deliver is that the whole international community must approach to address this issue with a more strategic and comprehensive understanding of dynamics of illicit drugs.

-I look forward to presenting the World Drug Report and discussing with you.