

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

**62ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS (CND)
VIENNA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE
VIENNA, AUSTRIA
15 MARCH 2019**

**STATEMENT
BY H.E MRS AMIRA EL FADIL MOHAMED,
AFRICAN UNION COMMISSIONER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

Your Excellency, Chairperson of the 62nd Session of the CND,

All Protocols Observed

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me begin by congratulating Ambassador Mirghani Abbaker Altayeb Bakhit, on his election as Chair of the 62nd session of the CND. I am representing the African Union as Commissioner for Social Affairs under whose purview drug control falls.

Chairperson, as we consider progress against the goals and recommendations set out in the 2009 political declaration and the UNGASS outcome document, allow me to reflect on progress by the African Union. I can assure you that the policy organs of the AU have indeed been proactive and forward looking in the area of drug control.

The African Union Commission is responsible for formulating strategic continental policies and frameworks; coordinating and monitoring policy implementation at Member State level; as well as leveraging technical assistance to Member States.

The African Union has been promoting a balanced and integrated approach to drug control through its strategic frameworks. In 2012 the African Union adopted the AU Plan of Action on Drug Control for the period 2013 to 2018, based on the 2009 UN Political Declaration and Plan of Action and its balanced and integrated approach between supply reduction, demand reduction, harm reduction and international cooperation. Later this year, we hope to approve a new Plan of Action for

2019 to 2023 – building on the seven operational pillars of the UNGASS document.

Our key achievements include:

In drug demand reduction:

- The establishment and strengthening of national drug use epidemiology systems in 20 African Union Member States. Another 10 national surveillance systems will be established this year.
- Production of Africa's first consolidated drug use surveillance report.

In prevention and treatment:

- The rolling out of Regional Masters' training on Drug Demand Reduction using the Universal Treatment Curriculum for substance use disorders.
- Production of the African Union's first Compendium of Best Practices in the Prevention and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders, and the
- Implementation of the African Union Continental Minimum Quality Standards for Drug Treatment (2012).

As far as **availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes** is concerned, African Union Member States have been implementing the Common African Position on Controlled Substances and Access to Pain Management Medication (2012).

With regards to drug **supply reduction**, the African Union continues to collaborate with international partners to establish regional organised crime observatories in Africa as well as the African Organized Crime Index to combat Transnational Organized Crime.

The African Union has also continued to strengthen strategic and multi-lateral partnerships at continental, regional and international level. UNGASS 2016 recommendations on cross-cutting issues have been incorporated in the revised continental framework on drug control for period 2019-2023.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In line with the Common African Position submitted for the UNGASS, the African Union continues to advocate for evidence-based responses to the health and social harms related to drugs. Respect for human rights, including the rights of people who use drugs, is at the centre of such initiatives.

Finally, I wish to underline the importance of a regional approach. In the case of the African Union, you can imagine that 55 countries are at different stages of developing their national drug strategies and legislation. You will also appreciate that Member States think differently about drugs. The advantage of the AU meetings is that the different approaches can be openly discussed.

As encapsulated in Africa's blue print for social and economic transformation over the next 50 years "Agenda 2063" which espouses the Africa we want, the African Union is committed to prioritizing sustainable development efforts by addressing pervasive poverty, social exclusion and discrimination and thereby providing enabling conditions for gaining licit and sustainable livelihoods.

We take note of the disproportionate impact of the world drug problem in less developed and developing countries where it has undermined

sustainable development, rule of law and governance, public health and peace and security. We reiterate that the Commission's work should complement efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals,

I thank you.