

**Statement by Asia-Pacific Group (APG)
at the Ministerial Segment of the 62nd Session
of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)
(Vienna, 14 March 2019)**

[To be delivered on behalf of the APG by Counsellor HU Bin of the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China]

Ambassador Mirghani Bakhiet of Sudan, Chair of the 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs,
Mr. Yury Fedotov - Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,
Mr. Viroj Sumyai- President of the International Narcotic Control Board,

Distinguished Heads of Delegation,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I have the privilege to deliver the statement today on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group. I take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Mirghani Bakhiet on his election as Chair of the 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and to extend my felicitations to the other members of the Bureau. Mr. Chair, let me assure you of the full support and cooperation from the Asia-Pacific Group to make this session successful.
2. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to Ambassador Vivian OKEKE, distinguished Ambassador of Nigeria, as the Facilitator for 2019 preparation, for successfully steering the informal consultations on the outcome of the Ministerial Segment, the Ministerial declaration.
3. We would also like to appreciate the hard work by the Secretariat for preparations of this session.
4. The Asia-Pacific Group remains of the view that while important progress has been achieved over the past decade in addressing and countering the world drug problem, the world drug problem continue to pose a serious threat to the health, security, safety and well-being of all humanity.
5. We reaffirm that the multi-faceted challenge of world drug problem should continue to be addressed in a multilateral setting, including by strengthening the principle of common and shared responsibility, enhancing effective international support and cooperation and promoting an integrated, multidisciplinary, balanced and comprehensive approach to the world drug problem.
6. The Group resolves to further strengthen our collective efforts to achieve the goal of a society free of drug abuse, while recognizing the efforts undertaken by our national authorities on law enforcement, criminal justice, health, education and other relevant authorities, in addressing and countering the world drug problem.
7. 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 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system and underscores the critical importance of complying with these Conventions.

8. The Group reaffirms that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs has the principle role and responsibility in relation to drug control matters and that UNODC is the leading entity within the UN system to address and counter the world drug problem.
9. The Group places special emphasis on the need to further strengthen the ongoing national, sub-regional, regional and international efforts to efficiently address and counter the world drug problem, on the basis of the three international drug control conventions and the 2009 Political Declaration and accompanying Plan of Action, the 2014 Joint Ministerial Statement as well as the Outcome Document of the 2016 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem, which are complementary and mutually reinforcing.
10. The Group stresses the significance of the year 2019, which has been set as the target date in the 2009 Political Declaration. The Group is of the view that this ministerial segment is a welcome opportunity to take holistic stock of the progress achieved and challenges faced in the implementation of our common commitments, and on that basis, to enhance efforts at national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of all the commitments of the past decade, including the goals and targets set out in the 2009 Political Declaration and the accompanying Plan of Action.
11. The Group expresses its firm commitment to ensure that all efforts for demand reduction and related measures, supply reduction and related measures, and international cooperation should be undertaken with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Mr. Chair,

12. The Group recognizes that while existing challenges persist, new challenges and trends have emerged, which must be effectively addressed. The Group reiterates that persistent and new challenges and trends in countering the world drug problem related to drug demand and supply reduction, countering money-laundering and promoting international cooperation including on judicial matters should continue to be addressed in a comprehensive, integrated and balanced approach. The Group further emphasizes the urgent need to respond to the serious challenges posed by the increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime, including trafficking in humans, trafficking in firearms, cybercrime, and, in some cases, terrorism, money laundering and financing of terrorism. Similarly, we should address the significant challenges faced by law enforcement and judicial authorities in responding to the ever-changing means used by transnational criminal organizations to avoid detection and prosecution.
13. The Group expresses great concern that recreational use of Cannabis is legalized or non-criminalized by some Member States. The Group would like to commend the efforts made by INCB to fulfill its mandated role by voicing its concern and encourage the INCB to continue its efforts in this regard.
14. The Group fully supports all efforts aiming at reinforcing regional and international cooperation and coordination to effectively counter illicit cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking in drugs and address supply, demand as well as trafficking in and diversion of precursor chemicals, including inter alia through policy coordination, operational cooperation, and exchange of information, where appropriate.
15. The Group reiterates the need for enhanced North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

16. The Group emphasizes that sustainable and long-term alternative development is an important, lawful, and viable option for preventing, eliminating or reducing the illicit crop cultivation and should be implemented as an integral part of broader illicit drug control policies, including demand reduction, law enforcement, illicit crop eradication and awareness raising.
17. The Group expresses its concern over the threat and challenges posed by the large amount of non-scheduled precursor chemicals and the proliferation of new psychoactive substances (NPS) as well as rapid increase and spread of amphetamine type stimulants (ATS), especially methamphetamine. The Asia-Pacific Group, therefore calls for improving and strengthening cooperation to respond to such threats and challenges, including providing scheduling recommendations and taking action for appropriate international control, bearing in mind the importance of ensuring balance between availability of concerned substances for legitimate purposes and prevention of their diversion, abuse and illicit trafficking.
18. The Group reaffirms its commitments to work towards further promoting comprehensive prevention programs and treatment, care, rehabilitation and social reintegration and related support services, in full compliance with the international drug control conventions and in accordance with national legislation.
19. The Group emphasizes the need to enhance efforts to protect children and youth from drug abuse in multiple settings, including educational settings.
20. The Group stresses the need to promote international cooperation to enhance affordable access to controlled drugs for medical purposes while ensuring that robust measures are in place in accordance with the three drug control conventions and national laws, to prevent their diversion into illicit channels.

Mr. Chair,

21. We are now at the target date set in the 2009 Political Declaration on the world drug problem. Our Group is firmly committed to promoting a society free of drug abuse for which we seek greater cooperation of the international community. The Group is confident that the Ministerial Declaration adopted at this ministerial segment would guide the CND in further promoting the implementation of our common commitments to address and counter the world drug problem.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.