Statement by the Head of the Italian Delegation,  
H. E. Ambassador Filippo Formica,  
on the occasion of the 57th Session of the CND High Level Segment  

High level review of the Political Declaration and of the Plan of Action  

Vienna, 13 - 14 March 2014  

Mr Chairman, excellencies, distinguished delegates,  

Mr Chairman, I would like first of all to thank you for your leadership and dedication, be assured of the support of my delegation in your endeavours  

Whilst fully aligning with the EU statement, I would like to share a few comments in my national capacity.  

We are pleased that Member States reached consensus on the Joint Ministerial Declaration, that will guide us in the next five years.  

The mid-term review gives us the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the objectives agreed on in 2009 and to the full and universal implementation of the international drug conventions. The CND has confirmed its role as the central drug policy-making body within the UN system and I am sure it will do the same also in the run up to the 2016 Special Session of the General Assembly.  

We are grateful to the UNODC and to the INCB for their fundamental technical and scientific contribution and we look forward to their inputs in the coming years, including the preparation of the 2016 UNGASS.  

We welcome the adoption of the Joint Ministerial Statement. Nevertheless, as pointed out by the European Union, we regret that we missed the opportunity to make progress against the use of death penalty.
In the past years Italy has adopted an integrated and balanced approach towards addiction, focusing both on demand and supply reduction. Addiction is a priority for our national public health system. It is tackled in an integrated and comprehensive manner by all relevant institutions.

This balanced approach has led Italy to very positive results: we have recorded a decrease in the overall use of drugs as well as in the number of drug-related deaths and infections.

Our demand reduction policies are covering a wide range of fully integrated measures in the field of prevention, treatment, recovery, risk and harm reduction, and prevention of drug-related diseases, such as HIV and hepatitis.

Risk and harm reduction measures should aim at preventing harm for the health of our citizens, whilst minimising social deviance and the risk of mortality, infectious disease and criminality, encouraging early contact between drug users and healthcare services, providing suitable treatments and ensuring full recovery.

Italian prevention policies aim at providing assistance and concrete support to parents, families, educators, teachers and, most importantly, to young people, through early prevention and detection initiatives for vulnerable groups, as well as ad hoc training and awareness raising activities for families and teachers.

Throughout the years, our objective has been not only the protection of health of each individual, but also public health as a whole. We have successfully increased activities aimed at preventing drug-related accidents at the workplace as well as for drivers.

The joint ministerial statement emphasizes the threat posed by new psychoactive substances. Since 2009, through our national early warning system, we have been monitoring this evolving phenomenon, also on internet. We have increased cooperation among all relevant authorities for data collection and sharing on the production, distribution and effects of these substances.
We believe that drug addiction is a public health problem, a "brain
disease", a very complex condition affecting different aspects of the
human being, from the medical, psychological, educational and social
point of view. We can prevent, treat and heal such a disease.

Scientific evidence indicates that we need multiple knowledge and skills,
in order to tackle drug addiction in the most effective manner. We should
approach the patient in a coordinated, integrated and multidisciplinary
way, incorporating all relevant scientific branches.

Italy is promoting the elaboration of specialised educational programmes
focussed on a single and multidisciplinary neuro-science, "Addictology",
integrating in a comprehensive manner different branches relevant to
prevention, treatment and rehabilitation measures, such as medicine,
psychology, education and social sciences.

Italy is engaged in evaluating the outcome of treatments provided by
Public Addiction Services and by Therapeutic Communities, on a
permanent basis, in order to define the most effective models for
treatment, complete rehabilitation and reintegration of drug users into
society and workplace.

We are pleased that the Ministerial Statement underlines the specific needs
of vulnerable groups, including women and children, within drug demand
interventions. In the last years Italy has been actively engaged in the
implementation of the CND resolution "Promoting strategies and measures
addressing specific needs of women in the context of comprehensive and
integrated drug demand reduction programmes and strategies",
cooperating with UNODC, UNICRI and the Council of Europe in the
elaboration of special guidelines and specific training initiatives.

We strongly support community-oriented initiatives and projects aimed at
creating healthy, drug-free local communities and designed to foster the
rule of law and to combat drug-related organised crime.

Italy is actively engaged in countering national and international drug
trafficking, at national, regional and international level. Source and transit
countries are a priority for our international cooperation. Whilst fully taking into account country-specific conditions, we strive to concentrate our resources and technical assistance on the most concrete initiatives, that proved to be successful for supply reduction.

An effective international legal framework to counter drug trafficking is crucial. In this respect, we are pleased that the Joint Ministerial Statement reaffirms the importance of the full and universal implementation of the Palermo Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols and the Merida Convention against Corruption.

I thank you for your attention.