Address by
H.E. Ms Blanka Jamnišek,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations, OSCE and other International Organisations

High Level Segment of the 57th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

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Mr/Ms Chair, distinguished Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Slovenia fully associates itself with the statement made by Greece on behalf of the European Union. Illicit use of drugs is a complex and difficult problem that stretches across national borders, is truly global in nature and impacts all components of human security.

Through our commitment to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation and through sharing of our experiences, we are increasing the potential for effective interventions within and beyond any individual country. Much progress has been made to address the world drug situation, but the problem is not solved.

We firmly believe, that we should further debate and strive to agree upon the programs of drug demand reduction all over international community, including on risk and harm reduction, as well as on policies related to the use of cannabis, since the initiatives to legalise cannabis, not only for medical purposes, are many and are strong, also in Slovenia.
Slovenia is currently adopting in our Parliament our new Drugs Strategy, which is based on an integrated, multidisciplinary and balanced approach.

Drug demand reduction represents a key element in this strategy, which signals our commitment to measurably reduce the illicit use of drugs and the harm it causes to public health and society.

In order to achieve these objectives the Drugs Strategy calls for numerous actions of which many have already been successfully implemented, based on previous strategies. They include measures to improve access to and the effectiveness of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs, targeted in particular at socially disadvantaged groups, children and families at risk. Furthermore, the Drugs Strategy includes a wide range of harm-reduction measures as an integral part of overall drug prevention and treatment policies.

We wish to underline our strong support to risk and harm reduction policies and practice. Our experience with harm reduction program, taking into account the data of its impact, have shown that in Slovenia, risk and harm reduction interventions have been successful, helping to prevent the spread of infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, tuberculosis) and the number of drug-related deaths.

We support what also the Youth Meeting concluded: "People who use drugs are in a difficult situation and we have to help them, not punish them."

In addition, Slovenia stresses the importance of prevention, including discouraging the initial use, improving information, education and training, as an essential part of drug demand reduction activities.
All these elements are based on the respect for human rights, human dignity and human life. Slovenia is opposed to measures that do not respect human dignity and thus strongly opposes to the use of death penalty in all circumstances. And, as UNODC Executive Director Mr. Fedotov said, the use of death penalty in drug related offences is not in line with the drug control conventions.

Slovenia believes that no country alone is able to resolve the problem we address today. Mutual cooperation continues to be essential and over the years, Slovenia has been working intensively towards strengthening regional cooperation and promoting the sharing of information within all relevant international organizations.

In the past Slovenia has focused and will continue to focus on the strengthening of cooperation in the area of drugs with South Eastern European countries. Three years ago Slovenia has established a Bilateral Technical Assistance Program for the countries in the region. One of its main priorities is the implementation of measures in the field of drug use and illicit drug trafficking, also with helping them prepare their National Drug Strategies.

Please allow me to reiterate once again Slovenia’s firm commitment to international efforts for addressing the world drug problem. Only through a joint effort by all members of the international community, on both the governmental and non-governmental side, progress can be achieved. CND is the leading body that can help us take the right direction.

Madam/Mr Chair and honoured delegates, I thank you for your attention.