

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

*Address by H.E. Dr. Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, the Interior Minister and
Secretary General of the Drug Control Headquarters of the Islamic Republic of
Iran to the 58th Annual Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs*

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In the name of God
The Merciful, the Compassionate

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

At the very outset, I wish to seize the opportunity and express my warm congratulations to you on your election. I also wish to appreciate UNODC Executive Director, H.E. Mr. Yuri Fedotov and his colleagues for organizing the event and I thank the participating delegations and their representatives for their patience in precisely formulating the agenda of the Special Session.

I hope that the outcome of the conference would play a key role for the realization of the objectives of the 2009 Political Declaration and its Plan of Action as well as the successful holding of the 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session on the global drug problem within the framework of the three relevant UN conventions.

Mr. Chairman,

The UN General Assembly Special Session will provide an opportunity for reviewing the impediments and challenges that have led to the failure to prevent the production and consumption of drugs in different regions of the world.

Moreover, the outcomes of the UN General Assembly Special Session can act as a roadmap for future activities aimed at combating the global scourge of narcotic drugs.

Even though world countries have had considerable progress in proportionate with their social and economic conditions in implementing a balanced strategy for drug control, countering money laundering and enhancement of regional and international cooperation the objectives pursued by the Political Declaration have not been fully realized and regrettably the progress made in the field of drug control has not been steadily achieved in different parts of the world. In other words, the cultivation and production of opiates continues more rapidly and in some regions where opiates' consumption rate has been stabilized or halted they were replaced with synthetic drugs. Meanwhile, drugs that do not fall under UN conventions' control have found their way into the illicit production cycle as precursors. With the growing trend of electronic communications, drug production and consumption have been facilitated and the distance for the transfer of drug-related money between the point of origin and destination has been shortened. For this very reason, world countries' relentless efforts for reinforcing joint border control, obtaining the infrastructures for regional intelligence exchange and promotion of international cooperation have proved to be ineffective in halting the drug flow and drug-related losses more than ever before threaten health and sustainable development in world countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished delegates,

I wish to touch upon some of the hurdles and challenges concerning the global drug problem:

- Failure to materialize the principle of shared responsibility in implementing development projects with priority given to alternative livelihood in areas where there are drug cultivation and production as well as the issue of obtaining equipment and technical assistance to countries of origin and transit;
- Existence of a selective and politically-motivated approach towards the global drug problem and inclusion of irrelevant subjects in this domain;
- Poverty, under-development and low level of awareness in societies concerning the global scourge of illicit drugs.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished participants;

It is worth further supporting the three international conventions as the basis for future activities in combating the scourge of narcotic drugs since the said conventions act as the foundation of the international drug control system and ought to be considered as incontrovertible commitment of world countries. In the meantime, the 2009 Political Declaration and the Plan of Action as instruments agreed upon by world countries can act as the basis for many bilateral and multilateral activities and such a capacity must not be allowed to be influenced by trivial matters or cause any diversion in the global drug control effort.

Within the framework of the Political Declaration and the Plan of Action, the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the need for holding separate roundtable meetings on drug demand reduction, drug supply reduction and countering money-laundering as well as enhancement of regional and international cooperation during the UN General Assembly Special Session in 2016.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I wish to underline the following points in order to contribute to the effectiveness of the campaign against illicit drugs:

- Giving global priority to the issue of alternative livelihood in major areas under drug cultivation and production with the support of the global community;
- Necessity for continued cooperation by world countries in order to hamper the entry of illicit drug-related money into international financial systems;
- Taking into account the need for sharing of experiences in the field of drug demand reduction as a major issue in bilateral, multilateral, regional and international cooperation;
- Need for further support by the global community for strengthening regional cooperation mechanisms in the fields of border control management and operational intelligence-sharing including the Triangular Initiative that has been formed within the framework of cooperation by the Islamic Republic of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan;
- Necessity for designing a mechanism for coordinated and integrated contacts amongst the security and law enforcement agencies of countries and

international bodies for the timely exchange of intelligence in order to carry out operations such as controlled delivery;

- Necessity for obtaining advanced equipment for Afghanistan and its neighboring states in proportionate with the enormity of the drug flow such as X-ray machines, radar systems, etc. for reinforcement of border control and better monitoring of the maritime route as a clear manifestation of the principle of shared responsibility;
- Enhancing intelligence cooperation ranging from the sharing of intelligence about the particulars of criminals to a higher level such as exchange of intelligence on individuals' past criminal records as well as the seizure of drug traffickers' properties.

Thank you for your patience.