



**STATEMENT
BY**

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**AT THE SPECIAL SEGMENT OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM TO BE HELD
IN 2016 HELD AT THE OCCASION OF THE 58TH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS**

AGENDA ITEM 3: GENERAL DEBATE

**09 MARCH 2015
Vienna**

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Chairperson,
Excellences,
Distinguished delegates,

1. I join other delegations in congratulating His Excellency, Ambassador Arthayudh Srisamoot, and Permanent Representative of Thailand on his appointment as the Chair of the 58th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. We thank Ambassador Srisamoot for his leadership of this session and pledge our support for the successful conclusion of this Session. We would also like to extend our congratulations to other members of the Bureau.
2. Equally, South Africa commends the Chair of the UNGASS Board, Ambassador Shamaa of Egypt, for his able leadership and assures him of our full support in preparation for the 2016 Special Session.
3. South Africa associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the African Group and the G77 and China respectively.

Chairperson,

4. The 58th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs is faced among others with the responsibility of exchanging views tackling the world drug problem and elaborating on the expected outcomes of the Special Session of the General Assembly (UNGASS) on the world drug problem to be held in 2016. In particular UNGASS will provide the international community with a unique opportunity to review the progress made in the implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action including an assessment of the achievements and challenges in countering the world drug problem, within the framework of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant United Nations instruments.
5. As a country, we are aware the world drug problem remains a challenge for the international community as a whole. It is for this reason that South Africa believes that a discussion on tackling this challenge should foster cohesion amongst members of the international community. We need to summon the unity that prevailed during the elaboration of the 3 drug conventions and the adoption of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action which remain valid today. Thus working together, we can make a more meaningful impact in effectively addressing the world drug problem.

Chairperson,

6. As stated by the President of the International Narcotics Control Board, it is clear that we all must revitalize our collective responsibility towards the full implementation of the international drug control treaties and the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action. We also share the views of the

INCB President that any future approach on drugs should not undermine the implementation of the agreed conventions and instruments. Consequently, my delegation cautions against any premature discussion on new approaches to addressing the world drug problem before we had the opportunity to review the implementation of the already agreed goals set for 2019. Such an approach will be counter-productive and distract us from the challenge at hand.

Chairperson,

7. As we look forward to the exchange of views on the Special Session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016 during the course of this week, we look forward to the holding of the five (5) interactive discussions on the high-level segments of the 2016 Special Session on the world drug problem. Without any shadow of doubt, these interactive discussions will further contribute towards the effective implementation of the 3 drug conventions and the goals and objectives set forth in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action.
8. Allow me Chairperson, to share our views on few Interactive Discussions which are of particular importance to my delegation:
 - a) With regard to the Interactive Discussion on “**Drugs and Health**”, we believe that demand reduction and related matters in the areas of prevention, treatment, as well as health related issues such as HIV/AIDS; and ensuring availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion should be tackled from a public health and law enforcement approach.
 - b) On “**Drugs and Crime**” we believe that supply reduction and related measures related to responses to drug-related crime, countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation require the strengthening of law enforcement measures in the implementation of the 3 drug Conventions and the goals and objectives set forth in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action.
 - c) Concerning the Interactive Discussion on “**Cross-cutting issues: New Challenges, threats and realities in preventing and addressing the world drug problem**”, South Africa is of the view that Member States must defend and abide by their obligations and commitments made under the 3 Drug Conventions and the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action. We are opposed to any form of actions that will undermine the centrality of the international drug control conventions and the goals and objectives set forth in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action.

Chairperson,

9. Today, South Africa like many other nations, finds itself facing significant challenges as far as drugs and crime is concerned. This problem has a potential to create fertile ground for the increase in illicit and dangerous drug-related trafficking activities.
10. The increase in worldwide communication and the globalisation of transport and trade; our well-developed infra-structure and the increase in the movement of people across our borders have provided fertile ground for illicit drug trafficking and the spread of drug habits in South Africa. South Africa and parts of the continent are increasingly being used to transport drugs and precursor chemicals.
11. At the domestic level, South Africa remains concerned over the increase in abuse of cannabis. In order to address this problem, South Africa has embarked on a cannabis eradication strategy in order to curtail the illicit market. This strategy seeks to balance law enforcement measures and illicit crop eradication while at the same time promoting the broader socio-economic issues such as poverty eradication, job creation, housing, health, education and numerous other social development programs.
12. Apart from the above, South Africa continues to face challenges regarding the abuse of other substances such as **Cocaine, Crystal Methamphetamine, Ecstasy, Heroin, Methaqualone** and **Nyaope**. In addition, the illicit trade and diversion of Precursor chemicals also represent a big challenge. In the past three years, our law enforcement has managed to investigate and dismantle over **114 Drug Manufacturing Laboratories**. Over and above, we have also expanded law enforcement training and customs officials within our region in order to address these challenges.
13. Despite the challenges, South Africa will continue to put mechanisms in place to give effect to drug supply, demand reduction and to promote sustainable development and ultimately alleviating drug dependence which is one of the root causes of crime.
14. In conclusion Chairperson, we would like to highlight paragraph 32 of the report of the Executive Director on the activities of the UNODC, which refers to the development of model legislative provisions to combat fraudulent medicines. My delegation wishes to place it on record that not all members' states are involved nor have they all being consulted in this process. We look forward to receive, at the appropriate fora, detailed information regarding the mandate, funding, the selection criteria of the experts involved and the current status of the initiative before we proceed.

Chairperson,

Let me assure you, once again, of the full support and participation of my delegation during this session.

I thank you.