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Rep. of Korea

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador SONG Young-wan
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea
at the fifty-eighth Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Vienna, 9–17 March 2015**

Special segment

Agenda Item 8: *Preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem in 2016*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the outset, my delegation would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of this important meeting. I have every confidence that under your able leadership our deliberations will achieve fruitful results.

My delegation would also like to associate itself with the statement of the Asian Group and echo the thanks for convening this special segment in preparation for the United Nations General Assembly special session on the world drug problem (UNGASS) in 2016.

Preparations for UNGASS 2016

The Republic of Korea is looking forward to the special session, and we attach great importance to encouraging and promoting the active involvement of all stakeholders in consultations to ensure an adequate, inclusive and effective preparatory process. We appreciate the extensive efforts by the Commission and the Board in this regard, and are confident that all necessary measures will be taken to ensure efficient and timely preparation for the special session in 2016.

Laying this groundwork will help Member States make the most of opportunities for high-level and wide-ranging discussions leading up to 2019 to further implement the commitments and targets set out in the Political Declaration

and Plan of Action. We note that efforts to date to implement the Political Declaration and Plan of Action have resulted in considerable successes, including sustainable reductions in illicit drug cultivation through alternative development and improvements in treatment delivery.

However, the international community has also suffered serious setbacks, with production and use of illicit drugs on the rise in some regions. Thus we welcome all opportunities to facilitate the sharing of experiences gained and lessons learned on effective approaches to combating the world drug problem at the national, regional and international levels. Such exchanges are essential to developing a shared understanding of the challenges and problems we face and for indicating the way forward. Given the toll that illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption continue to take on our societies, we hope that the outcome of the 2016 special session will be practical and forward-looking, resulting in action-oriented recommendations that contribute to increased and more effective international cooperation.

With regard to the special segment of this fifty-eighth session, we look forward to the five interactive discussions on supply and demand reduction, alternative development and other cross-cutting issues. We appreciate in particular that the panels will include representatives from regional groups, UN organizations and civil society. We hope they result in substantive contributions to preparations for the high-level workshops at UNGASS 2016 through the exchange of expertise and sharing of practical experiences and lessons learned.

Significance of Drug Conventions and International Instruments

Mr. Chairman,

In light of persistent and new challenges to our efforts to counter the serious threat posed by the world drug problem to the health, safety and well-being of all humanity, we must continue to implement our commitments under the Plan of

Action. With the three international drug control conventions comprising the cornerstone of our efforts, we urge all Member States to fully and effectively implement them.

Balanced and Humane Approach

As the Executive Director of the UNODC underlined in the 2014 *World Drug Report*, sustainable success in countering the world drug problem requires a balanced, cooperative, comprehensive and integrated approach, addressing both supply and demand. In this regard, Korea underlines its support for a humane, human rights-centered approach that combines public health and criminal justice efforts consistent with UNGA resolution 67/193. With an integrated and balanced demand reduction policy equally as important as supply reduction, both have been incorporated into Korea's National Drug Control Strategy. The Korean government is also mindful of the important role of civil society and is working with the medical community, relevant NGOs and the press to develop and implement effective drug demand reduction programs focusing on vulnerable groups such as youth.

International Cooperation

With globalization and increasing mobility creating new opportunities for drug crime, bilateral agreements on extradition and mutual legal assistance have become an essential part of successful international cooperation. Korea has been active in concluding such agreements as well as pursuing other forms of bilateral cooperation. We believe that international cooperation efforts should consider ways and means of transforming the patchwork of disjointed actions addressing only some aspects of the world drug problem into an integrated and seamless network. In this regard, my government would like to emphasize its strong commitment to participating in and contributing to building and strengthening regional and international cooperation networks, especially in the area of information sharing, extradition and mutual legal assistance. Here we envision the

creation of a web-based global network between central and relevant authorities of member states responsible for mutual legal assistance and extradition by making the most of today's information and communication technology.

Countering New Psychoactive Substances

International cooperation has accomplished much, and the international community is better off as a result of the steps we have taken together to address the common and shared responsibility of the world drug problem. However, information-sharing, cooperation and coordination at the regional and international levels must be further improved, especially in light of new trends and challenges. The rapid worldwide proliferation in new psychoactive substances (NPS), for example, raises a red flag about our efforts to deal with emerging problems. We anticipate that this session of the CND will elaborate effective ways of constraining the illegal spread of new psychoactive substances and produce suggestions for strengthening the implementation of the three drug conventions, while taking into account the needs of the scientific and medical communities.

Last but not least, my delegation hopes that our deliberations and discussions at this session will yield ideas and inspiration that provide new perspectives and impetus to strengthen each Member State's drug policies and the network of international cooperation. My delegation would like to assure you of its full support and active participation and will do its best to contribute to creating such inspiration.

Thank you. Mr. Chairman. /END/