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NIGERIA

**STATEMENT BY NIGERIA AT THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE 58TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS (CND) VIENNA,
AUSTRIA**

Let me on behalf of the delegation of Nigeria to the 58th Session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), extend a warm congratulations to you as the Chairperson of the Session and through you to other members of Bureau. Your election without doubt, justifies the implicit confidence this august gathering reposes in your ability to steer the conference to a positive conclusion. I would like to assure you of my delegation's support towards a successful deliberation during the session.

2. Nigerian delegation would like to thank the Secretariat for the preparation so far, including efforts at ensuring timely provision of highly valuable documents for the session.

3. Let me point out that my delegation fully associates itself with the Statements delivered by the G-77 and China, as well as the African Group.

Mr. Chairman

4. The dynamics of the World drug problem remains precarious, giving rise to continued threat to the well-being of societies and individuals. The evolving challenges in some cases are connected to other issues such as transnational organized crime, money laundering and terrorism. These are issues that cannot be wished away. Isolating it as discrete national problem will only make the situation worse. What is required is a well-coordinated transnational and inclusive international strategy in line with principle of common and shared responsibility.

5. My delegation would like to renew the support of Nigeria to the various consultations and negotiations leading to the of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem. Additionally, my delegation reaffirms its commitment to the Joint Ministerial Statement in which Member States conducted a mid-term review that assessed the achievements, the challenges and the priorities for action in the implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action.

6. No doubt, my delegation in the cause of the implementation of the 2009 declaration continues to see reasons why the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGASS) High Level Review be convened in 2016. For my delegation, the review will not only enhance but will also rejuvenate our collective efforts in the fight against illicit drugs and psychotropic substances.

7. My delegation would therefore be looking forward to seeing enhanced collaborative efforts in the implementation of the existing Three International Drug Control Conventions, with leading role assigned to the UNODC. The UNODC has proved to be reliable partners in assisting Member States in addressing challenges faced by them in the implementations of their obligations under the Conventions.

Mr. Chairman

8. Nigeria just like other countries expresses its grave concern over the global surge in the abuse of illicit drugs. It is our conviction that Member States should not lose sight of the public health consequences associated with illicit drugs. The perilous consequences of drug abuse continue to ravage families, communities and society at large.

9. In line with the principle of balanced approach towards countering the world drug problems, Nigeria has adopted measures and programmes to ensure reduction in drug abuse through preventive sensitisation programmes, preventive education, counselling, treatment and rehabilitation of drug dependent persons and community mobilization.

10. Nigeria has strengthened her preventive Drug Education (PDE) Strategies, to facilitate exposing children to early drug preventive measures starting from primary school age.

11. Despite our modest achievements, Nigeria has been among those member states where extensive areas of farm lands are used for illicit Cannabis cultivation. Other concerns include the diversion of precursor chemicals to illicit amphetamine-type production facilities and the complexity of drug trade and related crime.

12. The Nigerian government through integrated and multidisciplinary approach is dealing with the drug problems. As a result large hectares of Cannabis farmlands have

been identified and destroyed. In the year 2014, a total of 4529.15 hectares of farmlands with an estimate of over 53million kg of cannabis were identified and destroyed. This is the highest hectares of farmland destroyed within a year, in the past ten years. Designing a national action plan in line with the UN guiding principles on Alternative Development is a priority.

13. Following the anecdotal health reports and challenges of increase in the dynamics of the abuse of substances not under international control as well as new psychoactive substances. Nigeria has brought Tramadol and Ketamine under national control.

Mr. Chairman,

14. Ketamine is widely used in human and veterinary practice in Nigeria as an anaesthetic. It was placed under national control in 2010 as a proactive measure on account of report of its abuse and the attendant health hazards. International scheduling will enable effective monitoring of movement of Ketamine as well as keeping track on national consumption by relevant competent authority. However it is important that this control takes into account the need for availability and accessibility of Ketamine for medical use especially in developing economies. Placing Ketamine in schedule I of the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances would restrict its use to scientific and research purposes only and therefore hinder availability for medical use. In this regards, my delegation recommends to defer vote for at least one year for further consideration and consultations among member states in order to arrive at amicable solution.

Mr. Chairman

15. At this junction, my delegation would like to make few remarks on some the interactive discussion as follows;

a) On the interactive discussion on Drugs and Crime, Nigeria recognise the need for policy and legal reforms to focus on a balanced and coordinated, holistic and multi-sectorial approach to drug control. In order to adequately address drug use and drug trafficking and criminal activities related to illicit drugs, we are of the view that Member

States should enhance domestic, regional and international cooperation to counter drug-related crimes including countering money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

b) Regarding interactive discussion on Drugs and Health, Nigeria recognises the impact of illicit drug use on society including negative health consequences impact on productivity in monetary terms and costs associated with drug related crime. Whereas there is no doubt that illicit drug use, constitutes a significant health risk, there is an enormous unmet need for drug use prevention and enhancement of facilities for treatment, and rehabilitation of drug dependent persons. We look forward to this interactive discussion to discuss the need to ensure adequate availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes while preventing their diversion and abuse.

c) On the interactive discussion on Drug and Development; Nigeria embraces Sustainable Alternative Development as one of the key strategies to counter illicit crop cultivation as well as to curb the world drug problem. In this regards and for effective alternative development programme, countries must address the driving factors including, political, social and economic issues that led to cultivation of illicit drugs and drug abuse. We would like to encourage UNODC to continue to use its advocacy to give special attention to alternative development in the programs and projects related to counter drug problems. It is however ironic that while lots have been done in enhancing alternative development with regards to coca leave and opium poppy, little has been done on cannabis. We therefore call for the replication of the alternative development projects and experiments done in coca leave and heroin producing countries in the Cannabis producing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

16. In the next coming weeks, Nigeria will be publishing the 3rd edition of her National Drug Control Master Plan. The National Action Plan proffers an integrated, multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach to addressing the drug phenomena. It reiterates the need for sustained commitment to evidence-based drug demand reduction activities, intelligence-led operational model, monitoring and evaluation of programmes in order to track progress made in the implementation of our Drug Control strategies.

Mr. Chairman

17. We appreciate the support of EU to Nigeria through Project NGAV16; Response to Drugs and related Organised Crime in Nigeria. This project is to support the Nigeria government in fighting drugs production, trafficking and use and in curbing related organised crime including counterfeit narcotics and psychotropic substance and it will also enhance narcotics availability for licit use.

18. In the same vein, we acknowledge with thanks, the support of our International partners. Their collaboration enhanced our supply reduction activities through exchange of information, control delivery, joint operations as well as technical assistance and professional capacity building.

19. Lastly, we assure you, once again, of the full support and active participation of Nigeria during this Special Segment and the round table discussion.

I thank you