Statement by H.E. Simon M. Maruta Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Namibia to Austria and the United Nations, at the Special Segment of the 59th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). Vienna, 15 March 2016

Your Excellency Ambassador Vladimir Galuška, Chairman of the Commissions on Narcotic Drugs
Your Excellency Ambassador Khaled Shamaa, Chair of the UNGASS Board
Your Excellency Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. Chairman

At the outset, allow me to express my warm congratulations to you on your election as Chairman of the 59th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. I would also like to extend my congratulations to other members of the Bureau. Let me reassure you of my delegation’s full support during this session. We are confident that with your excellent skills we will have fruitful deliberations.

The high attendance at this Session and the growing number of States to this Commission is proof, that drug problem is a global problem and must be addressed in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the African Group.

This meeting is significant to all of us here and the International Community at large as it presents the collective opportunity for Member States to assess the progress made in the implementation of the Political Declaration and its plan of Action since its adoption in 2009 and thereafter the Economic and Social Council’s decision 2011/259 to call this gathering the “Joint meeting of the reconvened sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice”.

With regards to the UNGASS outcome document, Namibia reiterates her support to General Assembly resolution 70/181 that, inter alia, requested the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to produce a short, substantive, concise and action-oriented document comprising a set of operational recommendations, based upon a review of the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, including an assessment of the achievements as well as ways to address long-standing and emerging challenges in countering the world drug
problem, within the framework of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant United Nations instruments.

Mr. Chairman,

Namibia is fully aware that the world drug problem remains a common and shared responsibility that should be addressed in a multilateral setting through effective and increased international cooperation and demands an integrated, multidisciplinary, mutually reinforcing, balanced and comprehensive approach to supply and demand reduction strategies, and reaffirm our unwavering commitment to ensuring that all aspects of demand reduction, supply reduction and international cooperation are addressed in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

While my Country recognize the fact that the fight against drugs is a common and shared responsibility which requires an integrated and balanced approach, we are calling upon the international community to cooperate and counter the increase in drug trafficking as well as the use of women and girls in these illegal activities.

No illicit manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic substances take place in Namibia. However, the usage of illicit drugs with cannabis being the most commonly used drug, has been on increase in previous years. This has resulted in Namibia becoming a safe haven for drug smugglers and drug trafficking. Moreover, Namibia has now moved from being a transit route for drug smugglers to a consumer country, where an increasing number of people are being arrested for possession of various types of drugs such as dagga (marijuana), cocaine, crack cocaine and heroin.

The scourge of substance abuse continue to ravage our communities, families and, particularly, our youth, as it goes hand in hand with poverty, crime, unemployment, dysfunctional family life, escalated of chronic diseases and premature death. The problem of substance abuse should be addressed in partnership with other countries and international organizations/institutions.

The production of drugs continues to be a major problem and obstacle to development in many parts of the world, particularly in the developing world. Higher drug use in developing countries could also undermine recent progress in drug control.
Namibia reiterates its commitment to ensure the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion, abuse and trafficking and emphasizes that one of the main important aspects to improving availability is ensuring their affordability. Furthermore, Namibia notes with concern the persistence of unaffordability of pain relief medications in the developing countries, in particular due to their high prices set by pharmaceutical industries.

Namibia urges all Member States, particularly the developed countries to take necessary measures to transfer the required technology and knowhow as well as to encourage pharmaceutical industry to manufacture high quality pharmaceuticals that are affordable and cost effective, including the manufacture of generic pharmaceutical preparations.

Mr. Chairperson

In conclusion I would like to call upon Member States to abolish the use of death penalty as a penal code for drug related offences, and urges Member States that still have death penalty in their statues to abolish it or put it under moratorium and to consider alternative measures to punishments for drug related offenders.

My delegation therefore looks forward to fruitful deliberations and positive outcome of this meeting which will certainly enrich the UNGASS 2016.

I thank you.