

Dato Hamdan Abu Bakar, Brunei Darussalam Head of Delegation Statement
59th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Special Session on UNGASS Preparations
Vienna, Austria, 14-16 March 2016

Excellency the chair person, excellencies and distinguished delegates, ladies and gentleman,

1. I am honoured to have this opportunity to speak at the 59th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Let me begin by congratulating Your Excellency on assuming the Chair of this session. I am confident that under your able leadership and wise guidance, this meeting will achieve our common aspirations and the outcomes will reflect the respect all nations have with each and everyone of us present here today.

2. Brunei Darussalam is fully aware that the narcotic threats are inevitable in every country due to its transnational nature and Brunei Darussalam is no exception to this phenomenon. In tackling this problem, we have to work closely with other countries as this is a common and shared responsibility at all levels.

ASEAN Statement

3. I would like to take this opportunity to support and echo what my esteemed colleague, His Excellency Desmond Lee, Senior Minister of States, Ministry of Home Affairs of Singapore who spoke for Singapore and concurrently on behalf of the ASEAN Member States. Brunei Darussalam together with other ASEAN Leaders during the 27th ASEAN Summit reiterated our commitment to realise the region's vision of a Drug-Free ASEAN which includes measures such as strengthening the areas of enforcement, preventive education, treatment and rehabilitation, research and alternative development.

Sovereignty of the State

4. The drug policy reforms recently undertaken by some countries, which seek to decriminalise or even to legalise the consumption of controlled drugs may work in those countries, however we are in the position that it should not be made applicable to all countries as there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach in addressing drug issues. In deciding the best approach to address the drug problem in every

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country, the sovereign right of each state needs to be respected in deciding and implementing policies, taking into account the diverse political, economical, social and cultural contexts as well as the norms of society of each country.

International Drug Conventions

5. We recognize the three international drug conventions as the cornerstone of all drug policies with the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on the international cooperation towards an integrated and balanced strategy to counter the world drug problem and also the Joint Ministerial Statement in 2014 as complementary documents to achieve its targets and goals leading up to 2019. We should continue to retain their relevancy in deciding and implementing drug policies and we reaffirm our support to the CND in its role as the principal body for drug policies.

Comprehensive and Balanced Approach in Demand and Supply Reduction Strategy

6. Brunei Darussalam adopts a multi-pronged and balanced approach encompassing a demand and supply reduction to promote national security, health and socio-economic development in line with the inspiration of the Government of Brunei Darussalam's to consistently tackle drug problem as the weakening of the country's social and economic condition has been attributed to the threats and dangers of drug abuse. A comprehensive and balanced approach must also consider best practices that are scientific evidence-based and also one that takes into account the importance of protecting our people, particularly women, youth and children.

7. We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our unwavering commitment in fighting the drug menace and is prepared to be steadfast in our stance and will continue to intensify our anti-drug efforts. We would also like to commend the preparatory work for the United Nation General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem next month and we look forward to the adoption of its outcome document.

Thank you.