

**STATEMENT**  
**Sixty-first Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs**  
**Vienna, 12-16 March 2018**

Jamaica welcomes the opportunity to participate in this the Sixty-first Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and, in particular, the normative discussions related to the implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem and follow-up to the 2016 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem.

Madam Chair

Jamaica reaffirms its commitment to its obligations under the three international drug control treaties and other applicable international law, and in keeping with this commitment, continues to take efforts to address the illicit cultivation, manufacture and trafficking of narcotic drugs and other controlled substances. This includes efforts aimed at crop eradication, as well as alternative development strategies to divert traditional marijuana farmers into the regulated cannabis industry in order to address illicit cultivation. Jamaica is also working actively to tackle illegal transshipment of drugs, including in collaboration with regional and bilateral partners.

Nonetheless, we maintain that the current international drug control architecture does not allow for the requisite policy space to design appropriate domestic policies suited to changing national realities, such as consideration of cultural perspectives and practices, safeguarding of the right to freedom of religion and consideration for the human development of our citizens, in keeping with SDGs 3 and 16, in particular. Jamaica also reiterates its call for the establishment of a follow-up mechanism to review the drug control architecture and propose a recalibration of the response of the international community in keeping with evolving realities and the need to formulate dynamic policy responses undergirded by scientific and medicinal research that complement development objectives, while remaining consistent with the rule of law.

Madam Chair,

While the UNGASS outcome document did not address these shortcomings, we recognise the important advances it made in the need for comprehensive and balanced strategies; alternatives to incarceration for minor drug offences; the importance of scientific evidence in the evaluation of drug policies; and alternative development and demand reduction. We,

therefore, look forward to opportunities to continue dialogue on the highlighted gaps, as we approach the expiration of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action in 2019. Jamaica also looks forward to the outcome of the decision by the WHO's Expert Committee on Drug Dependence to review cannabis and cannabis-related substances in relation to, inter alia, their potential therapeutic applications.

Jamaica also continues to emphasize the importance of an inclusive approach in the development of a post-2019 framework and in this vein, expresses its appreciation for the responsiveness of the CND Secretariat to concerns of Member States without representation in Vienna. We wish to take the opportunity to reaffirm recognition of the CND as the principal policymaking body in the United Nations system for drug-related matters, and our presence here, despite not having permanent representation in Vienna, is a testament to that recognition.

In this context, the Government of Jamaica is pleased to announce its candidature to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs for the period 2020-2023. We believe that Jamaica's membership of the Commission will contribute to developing innovative policies and programmes on drug control consistent with applicable international law, and advance the strengthening of support for multilateral cooperation in tackling the world drug problem.

Madam. Chair,

Jamaica takes this opportunity to express its commitment to continued engagement with all UN Member States to devise an adequate response to the world drug problem in the post-2019 era.

I thank you.