STATEMENT
BY ZAMBIA AT THE OCCASION OF THE 61ST SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS HELD IN VIENNA AUSTRIA
FROM 12TH TO 16TH MARCH 2018

Agenda Item 3: General Debate

Chairperson,

Excellences,

Distinguished delegates,

I wish to join other delegations in congratulating Her Excellency, Ambassador Alicia Buenrostro Massieu, and Permanent Representative of Mexico on her appointment as the Chair of the 61st Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). Your leadership and guidance during this Session of the CND are greatly appreciated by my delegation. Further, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to other members of the Bureau and assure you of my delegation’s support.

Chairperson; First and foremost, Zambia wishes to align itself with the statement made by the African Group on combating the world drug problem at this 61st Session of CND.
Chairperson; it is a well-known fact that drug trafficking and drug abuse continue to impose serious social, health, security and economic costs on communities throughout the world and pose serious threats to the realisation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for many nations including Zambia. In ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages, one of the targets of SDG 3 is to strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.

In this regard Zambia has developed and launched the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) 2017-2021 a national document which is aimed at the realisation of SDGs through promoting integrated approaches and implementation of government policies in clusters. The Country, therefore is developing a broad-based Drug, Alcohol and Substance Policy that will strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including illicit drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol, in line with the dictates of the 7th National Development Plan.

Chairperson; Zambia recognizes that the three International Drug Conventions and related Protocols are firm pillars for the Global Drug Prevention and Control. Therefore, calls for legalization of some illicit drugs, such as cannabis, for recreation purposes are against the spirit of the international drug control conventions, and go beyond the public health needs of society. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in conjunction with World Health Organisation (WHO) should continue to provide timely technical guidance and evidence based information on medical use of drugs such as cannabis.
Chairperson; my Country recognises and is in full support of the UNGASS outcome document entitled ‘Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem’. Hence, Zambia will continue to innovatively invest its efforts and resources in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Outcome document within its cultural, economic and social contexts, and we wish to reaffirm our determination to address public health, safety and social problems resulting from the drug scourge.

Finally, Chairperson, We reiterate that combating the world drug problem requires a balanced and integrated approach. In this regard, countries that produce illicit drugs must continue to put in place and enhance measures that will effectively curtail the trafficking of drugs across borders and continents. Zambia remains committed to implementing international instruments on combatting the world drug problem through strengthening international, regional and local efforts and cooperation.

Chairperson, Count on us for support and full participation during this 61st Session of the CND.

I thank you.