

H.E. Ambassador Dubravka Plejic MARKOVIC, Permanent Representative of Croatia

**SPECIAL EVENT OF THE
COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS -
COMMEMORATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST
DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING AND
LAUNCH OF WORLD DRUG REPORT 2019**

Wednesday, 26 June 2019

10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Boardroom C

Thank you very much for giving me the floor.

Excellencies, distinguished Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues,

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak today. I would also like to thank UNODC for again preparing such an excellent and comprehensive report.

We know that while there have been many achievements in addressing the world drug problem, many challenges still remain today. In particular, this year's World Drug Report stresses that there is lack of effective, scientific evidence-based and rights-based treatment interventions. You will recall that the importance of undertaking a public health approach and treating the drug problem as a "rights" issue has been reaffirmed by the Ministerial Declaration, which we adopted at the 62nd session of the Commission in March.

The 2019 World Drug Report also provides an analysis of the adverse health consequences of the drug use in prison settings. Let me recall that the importance of adequate, proportionate and effective response to drug-related offences has been highlighted in the three international drug control conventions – the principle that we also resolved to promote in the Ministerial Declaration.

I would also like to underscore the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into all stages of the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of drug policies. I note with concern that, according to the 2019 Report,

women are disproportionately affected by the non-medical use of sedatives and tranquillizers. It is therefore crucial that we develop gender-sensitive measures that take into account the specific needs and circumstances faced by women and girls who use drugs.

As we learned today from the presentation by Ms. Angela Me, we are facing a range of different challenges that need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner – with “health interventions supporting justice interventions” and “justice interventions supporting health interventions”.

We are also fully aware of the need to generate solid statistical evidence, including on phenomena that are inherently hidden and that we need to address any lack of capacity or scarcity of resources to produce statistical data.

I would like to therefore emphasize that if we wish to address and counter the world drug problem in an efficient manner, there can be no substitute for coordinated international action - in a spirit of common and shared responsibility. Let me recall in this regard that, in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, we committed to strengthening cooperation and coordination at the bilateral, regional and international levels with a view to advancing the implementation of all the joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem.

It goes without saying that learning from each other – discussing the challenges faced, successes achieved and lessons learnt – is crucial in advancing the implementation of all our international drug policy commitments, in follow up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration. And I am convinced that the findings of the Report will support our discussions in the period ahead and enhance our understanding of global illicit drug trends, in particular when formulating action-oriented interventions

There is a lot we need to work on – and it is important that we benefit from each other’s experience, expertise and knowledge. And data collection and analysis is important in this regard.

The world drug report contributes to overcoming the challenges we are facing today and is therefore a very useful tool for all of us. I would therefore like to thank once more the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for providing us with this valuable tool.

I thank you.