



63rd. Session Commission on Narcotic Drugs

2^o intersessional meeting

October 8th, 2020

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Uruguay, Ambassador Juan Carlos Ojeda

Mr. Chair,

First of all, let me acknowledge the great work done by you in leading all this process of trying to advance on a subject on which there are obviously different views and approaches.

Mr. Chair,

In January 2019, we were informed about the WHO recommendations on cannabis and its related substances. From that time on, it began a process of dialogue and consultation with the participation of all the States and the competent organizations such as WHO, INCB and UNODC.

From the beginning, we expressed our opinion that we should proceed to vote on all the recommendations, since we trusted in the work done by the WHO.

Uruguay supports multilateralism and cooperation as fundamental tools to address the global nature of the world drug problem.

That is why, Uruguay finally supported the proposal to postpone the voting in order to give more time to some countries to consider the recommendations and clarify the possible implications and consequences of, as well as the reasoning for, these recommendations.

That happened twice.

In March 2019 and March 2020.

We went along during 2020, through a set of topical meetings about the recommendations and their possible implications.

It has been a long process in which each country had the opportunity to make questions, to state their position and to listen to what others had to say.

Uruguay is convinced that this experience of carrying out joint reflection for the consideration of the drug issue was a very positive approach. For Uruguay is very important to take into account drug policies from a **multidimensional** perspective, that is people-centered, with a focus on Human Rights, Public Health and Gender, based on scientific evidence and the broadest social participation.

There should be a delicate balance **between** the control of drugs to avoid deviation **and** their access for those that have health problems. Even more, there should be a balance between prevention, treatment and rehabilitation and the necessary efforts to combat organized crime and its links, not only with drug trafficking, but also with other criminal related activities.

After almost two years of discussions, clarifications and explanations, Uruguay considers that the time has come to proceed to the vote next December. We cannot delay this process anymore.

The scientific evidence that we have all asked is reflected in the recommendations issued by an independent, multilateral, and scientific body like the WHO.

Thank you very much.