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Statement of Finland
On the occasion of the 63rd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (Vienna, 2-6 March 2020)

Mister Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finland fully aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union on behalf of its Member States.

Mister Chair,

Last year, in the Ministerial Declaration, we committed to promote and improve the collection, analysis and sharing of quality and comparable data. To implement this task, UNODC organised constructive consultations that led to the revision of the Annual Report Questionnaire. We are happy to see that our commitment to improve the ARQ is going forward. We would like to thank the UNODC for the work conducted to improve the quality of the ARQ. Even if drug policy challenges differ from region to region, we all need reliable data to back our policy decisions.

Mister Chair,

We believe that we need to strengthen our actions in the areas of prevention, harm reduction, and treatment, as well as in the capacity building required for their implementation. Experience has taught us that in order to achieve the best results in health, wellbeing and safety, it is essential to pursue multidisciplinary and balanced cooperation between social, health and law enforcement authorities and all other stakeholders - including NGOs, grass root actors and people who use drugs. It is important to protect citizens from the health, social and societal harms associated with drug use and to tackle marginalization and stigmatization.

Finland believes that all drug policies have to be implemented comprehensively while respecting human rights. Health, well-being, safety and security of people and societies are essential. We also align ourselves with the advocates of the abolition of the death penalty as well as with those condemning the use of extrajudicial sanctions of whatever nature.

Mister Chair,

Drug markets are dynamic and continuously changing. Illicit trade on the Darknet markets is one manifestation of the increasingly complex nature of transnational organised crime. In just a few clicks, almost any type of drug is accessible to buyers with basic technological understanding. This development poses a significant threat to the health and security of citizens and communities.

On the other hand, we should not leave the internet just for the criminals. Internet also creates an important environment for the demand and harm reduction interventions. Internet-based interventions have the potential to extend the reach and geographical coverage of treatment programmes to people who may not otherwise be able to access specialised drug services.

Mister Chair,

Finally, drug policy is not a competition between the law enforcement and the health and social sectors. Even if the main role of the law enforcement authorities is to reduce the drug supply and tackle drug trafficking, successful and sustainable harm reduction is not possible without their participation. Police and other law enforcement officers are often the first point of contact for drug users and they have, for example, a key role in referring problem drug users to services. At the core of today's drug policy implementation should be the promotion of participatory and inclusive policies that contribute to public health in the diverse realities and challenges that Member States face.

Thank you.