

Country Statement- Sri Lanka

63rd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)

Dr. Laknath Welagedara

Chairman

National Dangerous Drugs Control Board, Sri Lanka

Chairman,

Executive Director of UNODC

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Being thankful for this opportunity, I extend our deepest gratitude to Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), International Narcotic Control Board (INCB), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other member states for sharing great insights on various aspects of the challenges of the world drug problem and directions to way forward.

The Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is highly concerned about the extent of the global, regional drug problem and the extent of the drug problem in member states, emerging threats, and their devastating adverse consequences relating to the health and welfare of people with permanent physical and emotional damage, overdose deaths, drug associated illnesses and strained healthcare systems. Moreover, the drug problem has become a threat to security and stability of regions and countries, threat to the socioeconomic development of countries due to loss of productivity, crime development and overburdened criminal justice systems.

The Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka has recognized that the world drug problem should be addressed in a multilateral setting through effective and increased international cooperation and countering the drug problem effectively demands an integrated, multidisciplinary, mutually reinforcing, balanced, coordinated, scientific evidence -based and comprehensive approach.

The Government of Sri Lanka, giving prime responsibility for drug prevention and control reaffirms its political will and determination to create a secure country free from drug

abuse in implementation of the Government policy frame work of “Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour”. The Government has taken actions giving its due consideration to review the existing national policy considering all international drug conventions, policy documents and resolutions adopted by Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and International Narcotic Control Board (INCB) including Ministerial Declaration 2019 for accelerated actions.

On consideration of the current situation in the country, Cannabis is the most commonly used illicit drug, with a prevalence of 1.9 % of the total population of above 14 years and 0.6 % of total population are heroin users.

Heroin use among male population (above 14 years) is 1.2%. Nonmedical use of prescription is becoming considerably high with 0.15% of total population. Drug law enforcement agencies of Sri Lanka have seized 7071 Kg of Cannabis, 1742 Kg of Heroin, 35 Kg of methamphetamine, 15 Kg Hashish, 10 Kg Cocaine and 5 Kg of other psychotropic substances in the year 2019.

On consideration of the challenges on consequences on health, social, human rights, economic, justice, public security and to ensure vigorous enforcement of the law to reduce the availability of illicit drugs, the Government has taken actions on establishment of an Anti-Narcotic Task Force which is significantly important to effectively address the drug problem in the country and to promote joint investigations and coordinate operations. Further, accelerated actions to overcome critical deficiencies and to address the emerging threats effectively and impactful manner in the area of supply control, prevention of drug abuse, reducing the adverse health consequences, treatment and rehabilitation facilities are ensured through expert panels on preventive education, health, counseling, international affairs, legislation, law enforcement, treatment, rehabilitation and skill development, media, research and audit. Moreover, National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) has taken many initiative actions to improve scientific strategies for drug prevention and control in Sri Lanka in partnership with International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA).

In this context, we would like to express our gratitude to INCB, CND, UNODC as the leading entities for the scientific, technical and financial support extended to the NDDCB, for strengthening drug prevention and control activities.

We expect continued support of INCB, CND, UNODC and all member states for further development programs relating to drug prevention and control in Sri Lanka and thereby to ensure peaceful societies free from drug abuse.

Government of Sri Lanka reaffirms its commitments to effectively address the World Drug Problem working closely with UN family agencies and with member states

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Excellences and all member states, thank you very much for your kind attention.