

The 63rd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

General Statement

By

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Executive Director of the UNODC,

Distinguished Chairman,

Distinguished Delegate,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Introduction

First of all, on behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations to Miss Ghada Fathi Waly on your recent appointment as Executive Director of the UNODC.

And Mister Chair, allow me to congratulate you as the chair of the sixty-third session of the CND and to thank you and the Secretariat for all the hard work you have done on preparing for this session. This year's CND is a tough year for Mister Chair and I assure you Thailand's full support and cooperation.

Thailand reaffirms our support for the CND as the governing body on drug control matters of the United Nations and the UNODC as the leading entities in the United Nations system for countering the world drug problem. We fully commit ourselves to the three international drug control conventions as the cornerstone of the international drug control system. We also reaffirm our strong commitment to political

declarations adopted in 2009, 2014 and 2019. And we reiterate our determination to the implementation of the 2016 UNGASS outcome documents.

Drug Situation and its impacts

Following a profound change in the regional drug market with the surge in methamphetamine production in the Golden Triangle, Thailand has been targeted as the market and transit country for methamphetamine, both methamphetamine tablet or Yaba and crystalline methamphetamine or ICE. Over the last five years, methamphetamine seizures rose 5 times with more than half cheaper price and more purity.

Thailand's approach to address the drug problem

Of course, the impacts of the drug problem in the Golden Triangle are far beyond Thailand's borders. The Royal Thai Government has given priority to address the drug problem and stands ready to cooperate with every country and related international organizations in countering the world drug problem.

We treat the people who use illegal drugs as patients who are in need of assistance in term of sufficient treatment and rehabilitation services and a second chance to reintegrate into the society. The health-based drug policy has been adopted in Thailand since 2017 by applying harm reduction approach as a part of the demand reduction measures. Alternatives to punishment have also been applied by the Court for a minor drug related offence.

Moreover, we do realize that more emphasis on drug prevention must be put in place in drug control policy. The community-based campaign on drug prevention with an aim to expand safety zones in the communities across the country has been highlighted. In parallel, a nationwide raising awareness campaign for young people against drug use has been promoted at every educational level and through the social media.

It is our firm believe that “no chemicals, no drugs.” We focus our efforts to reduce the number of illicit drugs in the Golden Triangle by enhancing law enforcement measures to intercept and suppress

precursor chemicals smuggled into the Golden Triangle and to interdict the drug smuggling within the region and out of the region.

We have not done these alone but with full cooperation and support from our friends in the Mekong Sub-regions. On 15 November 2019, the ministerial consultation meeting of 6 member countries of the Safe Mekong Operation, namely Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand, held in Bangkok agreed to jointly launch the Operation 1511 to intensify cooperation along the borders with the concurrent operations in each member country over the year 2020 to push pressure on the drug producers and drug traffickers in the Mekong Sub-region.

Thailand realizes that it is important to balance the need for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes, with careful consideration for the adverse effects on public health and welfare of the people. We do reaffirm our commitment to the ASEAN's stand against legalization of narcotic drugs for non-medical and scientific use.

Last but not least, alternative development is also one of the major measures of Thailand's drug control policy. Our success in sustainably reducing the illicit opium poppy production by introducing alternative development to the highland people for 50 years reveals the importance of the inclusive and sustainable development-oriented approach in addressing the drug problem.

I would like to invite all distinguished delegate to visit of our exhibition entitled "Thailand's 50 - Year Journey on Alternative Development towards Sustainable Development" at the Rotunda Hall. We stand ready to share our experiences and best practices on alternative development.

Conclusion

To conclude, I would like to reaffirm Thailand's strong commitment to the Spirit of Vienna Consensus to counter the world drug problem and reiterate our full support to the success of this session.

Thank you for your kind attention.