

STATEMENT of the REPUBLIC of TURKEY
63rd CND
2-6 March 2020

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Excellency, for your Chairmanship. I assure you Turkey's full support and cooperation.

Taking this opportunity, I would also like to express our appreciation to the UNODC Secretariat for the preparation of this important session.

Mr. President,

This problem with its multifaceted nature could only be tackled through a multisectoral approach and strong international cooperation.

Turkey is fully committed to the three international drug conventions, which are the cornerstones of the international drug control system. Their full and universal implementation is crucial for the effectiveness of the system. We all bear the responsibility of implementing the Conventions.

The CND as the primary policy making body and the UNODC as the leading entity for international drug policies should continue to steer

our endeavors. The INCB and the World Health Organization within their treaty mandated functions will continue to play very important roles as well. Our collective work will benefit from the contributions of all relevant UN entities.

Mr. President,

Criminal organizations make billions of Dollars through illegal manufacturing or trafficking of drugs, along with other forms of transnational crime. Naturally many terrorist organizations also get involved in these activities to fund their heinous activities. This is a serious threat and we should effectively cooperate to counter it.

PKK/PYD/YPG terrorist organization is directly involved in drug trafficking through its widespread connections in Europe and uses the benefits to finance its activities. In many recent operations conducted against PKK cells in Turkey, large amounts of illegal drugs have also been seized along with weapons and other material.

Mr. President,

Turkish Government adopted its Counter Drug Strategy and Plan of Action for the years 2018-2023 and also established a High Council for Combatting Drug Dependency, under the auspices of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey.

The Strategy is based on a balanced and comprehensive approach. The Action Plan comprises measures that target both demand and supply reduction within a coordinated national framework.

In the prevention area, effective and successful government-civil society partnerships are developed. The Turkish Green Crescent Society and other NGO's have assumed important roles in this field. They are willing to cooperate with similar NGOs of other partner countries.

Under the coordination of the Ministry of Health, tangible progress has been achieved in the provision of better public services in the treatment and rehabilitation fields as well as availability of the controlled substances.

Ministry of Health, Turkish Medicines and Medical Devices Agency introduced the new Colored Prescription System in order to prevent the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances without limiting their medical use in a more effective way.

We are also increasing the national capacity of data collection on substance dependence trends to correctly and adequately address the challenges.

On the other side, we continue fighting against the traffickers and street level sellers of illicit drugs.

Turkey allocates huge national resources to counter drugs and precursors trafficking. The Turkish National Police, Gendarmerie, Coast Guard and Customs authorities continue to successfully seize a significant portion of illicit drugs trafficking through our territory. Within 2019, more than 20 tons of heroin, 90,5 tons of marijuana, 1,6 tons of cocaine, 1042 kilograms of methamphetamine, 710 kilograms of cannabinoid, 803 liters of acetic anhydride, 11 millions of captagon and 8,6 millions of ecstasy tablets have been seized. New technological equipment and surveillance systems are also developed and employed by the relevant authorities to combat more effectively against the illegal drug related activities.

Cooperation of the law enforcement authorities with their regional counterparts also plays an essential role in successful operations against transnational drug trafficking networks. We fully support the further strengthening of the regional cooperation in this field.

Turkey is seriously concerned about the increasing use of new psychoactive substances, especially among the youth. Tackling this emerging threat is one of the priority areas in our national efforts. We believe that misuse of internet for drug related crimes is also a growing threat that we should jointly work on.

On the other hand, Turkey, as one of the legal and reliable opiate raw material supplier for medical and scientific purposes, not only takes all necessary measures to increase the quality of the crops, but also applies strict controls that prevent any diversion.

Mr. President,

Turkey adheres to the principle of shared responsibility and has been trying to contribute in a positive manner to the international efforts towards strengthening the collective responses to drug related challenges. In this vein, we have been offering assistance to many countries in their capacity building efforts.

Training programs conducted by the Turkish International Academy Against Drugs and Organized Crime in various fields has so far constituted a major pillar of our assistance programs. In 2018 a new institution focusing mainly on counter-narcotic training was also established within the Turkish National Police. The Counter Narcotics Training Academy has been hosting many training programs for hundreds of participants from different countries. Also, Turkish National Academy for Combatting Organized Crimes and Drugs is continuing its cooperation with its counterparts in various countries.

Mr. President,

To conclude, I would like to reaffirm my country's strong commitment to our common efforts. I also reiterate our support to the success of this session under your able chairmanship.

Thank you.