

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ARMEN PAPIKYAN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE UN AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIENNA
AT THE 63rd SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS**

Excellencies,
Mr. Chair
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Armenian delegation, I would like to warmly greet the organizers and participants of the 63rd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, I want to express my sincere gratitude to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, World Health Organization and International Narcotic Control Board for effective and mutually beneficial cooperation and for great support shown and expertise provided over the course of years.

We are confident that our shared goal for a society free of drug abuse can only be achieved through increased awareness and strengthening cooperation efforts at both international and regional levels.

Last year, in this very hall the Representatives of the UN family of nations unanimously adopted the “Ministerial declaration on strengthening our actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of our joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem”. Among other important messages the declaration provides a framework for National Plans to Combat Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse of countries worldwide.

Given the gravity and scope of the drug trafficking as well as its interconnection/affiliation with transnational organized crime, it is of practical significance and urgency to further intensify our international and regional collaboration. Accessibility to drugs including newly discovered psychotropic substances and considerable abuse of drugs has reached record-high level. This development may lead to serious health consequences and therefore should not be neglected.

The global drug trafficking problem continues to pose a serious threat to the physical, mental, spiritual, genetic and reproductive security of mankind and particularly to young generation.

IN this regard, I want to express my appreciation to INCB for organizing trainings, which are considered to be an effective leverage for increasing knowledge and enhancing cooperation, expediting the implementation of provisions of three main international drug control conventions as a cornerstone of international drug control system. The further close cooperation with UNODC and other relevant institutions would be highly appreciated.

Today we are combining our efforts against this global threat to stop the transnational organized crime and protect the human rights joining our voices to underline the role of the Committee on Drug Abuse and putting a clear focus on eradication of illicit drug market and tackling international drug-related problems.

We greatly value the support we receive from the respective agencies of the United Nations, mainly the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, WHO and the International Narcotics Control Board which can hardly be exaggerated.

Armenia is committed to the sustainable development goals as a priority tool for carrying out internal reforms based on a reasonable non-discriminatory approach of «leaving no one behind». To provide an integrated, comprehensive, balanced and evidence-based approach addressing drug-related issues is one of the priorities of the Armenian Government.

Dear Colleagues,

In 2018, the law enforcement agencies of Armenia recorded more than 7 times higher rates of confiscation of narcotics, psychotropic substances and precursors compared to previous years. The new and emerging psychotropic substances and cannabis remain the most popular and frequently used drug among them.

Armenia underscores the importance of shared responsibility in reducing global trafficking of new psychoactive substance and is ready to take coordinated actions in the global efforts against drugs. This serves as an additional impetus for the relevant national authorities to develop certain programs aimed at reducing illicit demand and supply of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Illicit traffic of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors are proliferating at an unprecedented rate, posing a significant risk to public health and this is a serious challenge to drug policy. In this respect, a number of important legislative changes has been introduced in Armenia.

Armenia is a member of International Operations on NPS, and the lists of newly discovered psychotropic substances are being updated on a regular basis at national level based on close

collaboration with IO NPS and the data provided by the latter. In 2018, the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, which defines the list of more than 800 names of narcotic drugs, was adopted. A respective Draft Decision of the Government of Armenia is currently underway with the aim to control another 40 new psychoactive substances.

Distinguished Chair,

We are determined, in close cooperation with national human rights institutions and all the relevant stakeholders, to reinforce our efforts at national and regional levels in responding to global drug problem as a challenge and threat to the health, security and wellbeing of mankind.

Finally, I would like to wish every success to the 63rd Session of the Commission and thank everybody for the attention.