

Statement by Bangladesh
under agenda item 3 (General Debate)
at the 63rd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND),
delivered by
Mr. Rahat Bin Zaman,
Deputy Chief of Mission,
Embassy & Permanent Mission of Bangladesh

Distinguished Chair - Excellency Mansoor Ahmad Khan,

Executive Director of UNODC - Excellency Ghada Waly,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, I warmly congratulate the Chair and members of the Bureau on their election. At the same time, I commend the Secretariat for the important preparatory work and efficient arrangements made for the current session.

Mr. Chair,

We fully align with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the Asia-Pacific Group. In my national capacity, I would like to add the following:

As a State Party, Bangladesh reaffirms its full commitment to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, which constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system.

Bangladesh is also fully committed to the implementation of the 2009 Political Declaration and its Plan of Action, the Joint Ministerial Statement adopted at the High Level Review in 2014, the UNGASS 2016 outcome document, and the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, which has become an important guiding reference for effective implementation and follow-up of all our commitments to address and counter the world drug problem as a common and shared responsibility.

Mr. Chair,

Addressing the drug problem is high on the agenda of the present government of Bangladesh under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, which was reflected in the 'Election Manifesto' of her political party. The Government has therefore adopted a zero tolerance policy against illicit drugs. Inclusive awareness campaign has been undertaken to sensitize about the harmful effects of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances with the help of different ministries, departments and institutions, including educational institutions, in Bangladesh.

Nationally, Bangladesh has aligned its long-term policies and programmes with its commitment to the Agenda 2030 and SDGs. In this context, we are also working towards long-term comprehensive and balanced drug control policies and programmes, taking a multidimensional and multi-layered approach for supply, demand and harm reduction.

Our Department of Narcotics Control has been working with 12 ministries, including the Ministry of Education, to provide preventive drug education to adolescents and youth nationwide as the trend of drug abuse is higher in youth and adolescents. Among other initiatives, Anti-drug committee has been formed in 33,117 educational institutions. While we have 4 treatment and rehabilitation centers operated by the government and 297 centres by NGOs, we plan to set up such centres in all sixty-four administrative districts of the country.

Mr. Chair,

We are also working closely with UNODC in this regard. We are implementing an encouraging project on FamilyUnited, to reach the families to prevent negative social outcomes, including drug abuse for the youth and adolescents. We are also discussing a future project to reach the more vulnerable families for better preventive results, as the prevalence of drug abuse is higher among the vulnerable groups.

Mr. Chair,

To tackle the emerging challenges of the world drug problem, we need to be innovative and effectively review our national provisions as well. We have updated our legal provisions and adopted a new Narcotics Control Act in 2018, including, inter alia, the Money Laundering (ML) prevention issues,

measures against any primer of new narcotics drugs including New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), and revision of penal provisions.

Mr. Chair,

We are highly concerned about emerging global challenges. Following global trends, use of synthetic drugs like amphetamine based stimulants or ATS, and new psychotropic substances are on the rise in the country. Bangladesh is not a source of production for narcotic drugs, and still a serious victim of illicit drug trafficking and critical socio-economic consequences. As such, we cannot over-emphasize the need for effective and increased cooperation at international, regional, sub-regional and bilateral levels to address the world drug problem. We would request the Commission to guide and support the source countries in eliminating the supply of illicit drugs. At the same time, we would urge all states, through this Commission, to ensure sufficient and sustainable resources for the UNODC to increase its capacity-building initiatives, programmes and activities particularly for developing countries.

Mr. Chair,

I would like to conclude by reiterating my delegation's full support and cooperation to you, and the bureau, to make this important Session successful.

I thank you.

