

**Japan's statement in the General Debate of the 63rd session,
the Commission on Narcotic Drugs,
2 March 2020**

(Opening)

*Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Government of Japan, let me first congratulate you, Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly on your appointment as the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. I wish you every success in your new duties. Japan is confident that your extensive experience, leadership and integrity will help strengthen the activities of your Office to fulfil its mandate. You have my Government's full support.

I would also like to congratulate you, Ambassador Khan on assuming the chairmanship of the 63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and commend you and your team for the excellent manner in which you have led discussions to prepare this 63rd Session of the Commission.

Mr. Chair,

The world drug problem remains a serious threat to the health, safety, and security of all of our citizens and our societies. We must work together to tackle this major global problem in a comprehensive, integrated and balanced manner.

Japan is firmly committed to implementing the goals outlined in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019 in cooperation with the international community. In this context, let me briefly touch upon some of our efforts.

(Demand Reduction)

I would like to start with our demand and supply reduction strategy. Japan prioritizes the drug abuse prevention based on scientific evidence and human rights. We have great concerns about recent increasing of cannabis offenders, in particular among youth. So we promote nationwide awareness-raising campaigns and prevention activities focused on youth and families. We also provide drug abusers with treatment and social rehabilitation during imprisonment. These measures, coupled with strict law enforcement activities, help keep the prevalence rates of cannabis and methamphetamine use as low as 1%.

(Supply Reduction)

Mr Chair,

Japan is making every effort to counter the illicit trafficking in the country of synthetic drugs, namely crystalline methamphetamines¹ and NPS (New Psychoactive Substances²), by strengthening its domestic regulation and increasing the number of regulated substances. Today we have around 2400 NPS under control. Nevertheless, the rapidly growing threat of methamphetamine and NPS is almost overwhelming the efforts of global law enforcement agencies. This developing phenomenon requires an immediate and collective robust response.

As such, we support counter-narcotics activities both in and outside of our region. For instance, Japan hosts the annual Asia Pacific Operational Drug Enforcement Conference (ADEC) to facilitate an exchange of views on illicit drugs in the region. Japan has also been implementing counter narcotics training to over 200 police officers from Afghanistan and Central Asian countries since 2012, in cooperation with UNODC and the Russian Federation.

¹ メタンフェタミン：日本，東南アジアにおいておける主要な覚せい剤。

² いわゆる危険ドラッグ

(Japan's contributions)

Mr Chair

Addressing the world drug problem is a common and shared responsibility of the international community. Based on this understanding, Japan supports counter narcotics efforts to strengthening criminal justice responses against transnational organized crimes including illicit financial flows and the financing of terrorism.

Japan is also committed to supporting Alternative Development. In Afghanistan, Japan continues to support Alternative Development projects focusing on infrastructure and social development, while emphasizing the empowerment of women. In Myanmar, Japan has supported the opium survey for many years to assist evidence-based alternative development.

These are just a few examples of our efforts to help curb the World Drug Problem. In addition, the Government of Japan has pledged around 26 million USD to UNODC this year. This contribution will be used to bolster projects in various regions including Afghanistan and its neighboring countries as well as in Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

(WHO recommendations)

Mr Chair,

During the 62nd session of CND, the Commission decided to postpone the voting on the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding cannabis and cannabis related substances. In this context, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the admirable leadership of Ambassador Khan during these months in steering our consultations. His strenuous efforts finally led us to find the common ground.

Given the complexity of the issues with their potential economic, social, legal and administrative implications and possible consequences of these recommendations on our national regulatory systems, we support further deliberations on the 6 recommendations with a view to facilitating a well informed decision based on solid evidence within a given timeline. Japan is ready to continue to actively engage in further consultations.

(Closing)

Mr Chair,

This year's discussions on the WHO recommendations has reaffirmed the importance of maintaining the integrity of the international scheduling system based upon the three Drug Control Conventions. In this sense, let me reiterate Japan's unwavering commitments to implementing the goals set forth in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration.

In closing, I would also like to highly acknowledge the important role of the Commission as the leading entity in the UN system to counter the drug world problem. Japan, as a responsible member of the Commission, will make utmost efforts in order to further contribute to its valuable activities.

Thank you very much. (End)