

## **LAUNCH OF THE WORLD DRUG REPORT 2020**

### **INTERVENTION OF AMBASSADOR OF CUBA LOIPA SÁNCHEZ**

**Madam Executive Director:**

**Mr. President:**

Cuba congratulates the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for preparing such a detailed and illustrative report, divided into 6 separate booklets, each with a specific topic. We also congratulate you on the timely decision to dedicate one of these booklets to address the implications of COVID-19 on illicit drug use and trafficking worldwide.

We have carefully read each of the 6 booklets and were deeply alarmed by the fact that, in 2018, around 269 million people worldwide had used drugs at least once, corresponding to 5.4 percent of the world population between 15 and 64 years of age and represents almost 1 in 19 people.

The report also specifies that cannabis is by far the most widely used drug worldwide, with approximately 192 million users in 2018. Without a doubt, the problem of drug use is becoming increasingly worrying.

**Mr. President:**

Thanks to the preventive work carried out by the Cuban State, the presence of illicit drugs in the national territory remains very limited and does not constitute a high incidence social problem. In line with our policy of zero tolerance for the production, consumption and trafficking of drugs, the government has the appropriate means to strictly control the production and marketing of internationally

regulated psychoactive substances for medical and scientific purposes.

I will cite some examples that illustrate Cuba's commitment to confront the illicit consumption and trafficking of narcotic drugs:

- Until November 2019, more than 1,490 kg of drugs were confiscated in Cuba and it was possible to arrest 1,392 people thanks to effective action at the border.
- Between January and September 2019, 32 drug trafficking operations were impeded at the air border, in which 81 people were arrested and 19.8 kilograms of drugs were confiscated.
- In the same year, Cuba confiscated more than a ton and a half of drugs in territorial waters.

We will continue to work hard so that our territory cannot be used as a warehouse, transit or destination for illicit drugs and drug trafficking.

**Mr. President:**

International cooperation is essential to face the World Drug Problem, based on the common and shared responsibility of all States, with strict adherence to International Law and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

We support the leadership of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to carry out greater coordination in the United Nations system, with the aim of finding effective solutions to this menace of drugs, the repercussions of which have worsened in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you very much.