

Japan
Statement on the occasion of the
Reconvened sixty-third session of the
Commission on Narcotic Drugs
2 December 2020

Mr Chairman, distinguished guests,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to you, Chair and to all members of the Secretariat for your hard work in making the reconvened meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs possible given the extraordinary circumstances. I would also like to greet fellow participants joining us here today from all corners of the globe.

Ladies and Gentlemen, after much deliberation, we are pleased to have finally concluded our discussions on WHO's recommendation on cannabis and cannabis related substances through our historical vote today. I would be remiss if I did not express our sincere gratitude to WHO, INCB, UNODC, and to all of the distinguished delegates and experts who offered their valuable contributions and time to this discussion.

The scheduling of Cannabis proved to be a unique and complex endeavor, deserving of a thorough assessment of its impact by CND. As a member of the Commission and of the global community, Japan is pleased to have participated in a reflective and constructive process with other States Parties, which has not only led to the results of today's vote but also demonstrated the effectiveness of the Commission.

Japan recognizes that some medicinal products derived from cannabis and cannabis related substances have indicated some therapeutic benefits for the treatment of certain conditions and that more robust and conclusive scientific evidence proving the safety and effectiveness of these products is still needed.

We also acknowledge that the non-medical use of Cannabis might give rise to negative health and social impacts, especially among youth, considering it is particularly liable to abuse and is the most used drug in the world, as indicated in the latest World Drug Report and according to WHO's 2016 publication. For this reason, Japan believes Cannabis should be subject to the strictest control under the International Drug Control Conventions.

It is our firm belief that all controlled substances including Cannabis should only be used for medical and scientific purposes in line with the original intent of the Convention, and we would like to stress the importance of preserving the integrity of the Conventions.

If we are to advance our collective fight against the world drug problem and improve the health, safety and well being of our societies, we must turn our focus to bolstering international cooperation and to implementing our international commitments by turning our words into actions. Only then can we make progress in tackling the current world drug crisis including the illicit cultivation, trafficking and abuse of cannabis.

Japan, will continue to support effective implementation of the international drug control treaties and strengthen countermeasures against illicit drugs by strengthening our relationships with WHO, INCB, UNODC and all respective countries to ensure the health and welfare of all of our societies.

It is only through our collective efforts that we can truly make a difference.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.