

Egypt Statement on the results of the WHO/ECDD recommendations on cannabis
Reconvened 63rd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
2nd of December 2020

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies and dear Colleagues

At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation to the chair Ambassador Khan for his wise leadership that guided the work of the CND over the past year especially that the chair encountered enormous challenges during this critical period. Our gratitude also goes to the Secretariat who worked in such exceptional circumstances to convene this session.

Egypt aligns itself with the statement delivered by Russia on behalf of LMG. Egypt has strong confidence in the international regime for drug control, based on our cognizance of the transboundary nature of the world drug problem that has a devastating impact on communities. Egypt attaches great importance to the three international drug control conventions and their full and effective implementation as the main pillar to counter global drug problem.

Mr. Chairman,

We have carefully examined the WHO's recommendations on cannabis and its related substances during the past two years, and actively participated in the three topical meetings organized to give the member states in the CND a broad explanatory oversight on the recommendations to reach a common understanding between Member states. However, it is our conviction that after all these discussions, cannabis and its related substances might be harmful to health, and might have substantial negative economic, social and security repercussions on our communities.

The results of the voting reflect, beyond any doubt, that recommendation 5.1 is so divisive. It was one vote which decided the difference between what is acceptable and what is not. Egypt is deeply concerned that the outcome of today's voting may be interpreted that these substances are no longer harmful to health which consequently defies the purpose of the scheduling regime. Moreover, it might act as a catalyst for more illicit production and trafficking of cannabis and cannabis related substances.

Having said that, in order to protect the health and welfare of our people especially our youth and in line with our commitment to prevent and combat drug abuse and addiction, Egypt reserves its right to continue to take the necessary control measures on cannabis and cannabis related substances in accordance with Article 39 of the 1961 convention.

To conclude, Egypt respects the primary and leading role of the CND in ensuring the world drug control regime, and underscores the shared responsibility of the Member States to maintain the effectiveness of this control regime.

I Thank You.