

2 December 2020

Pakistan's Statement at 63rd Reconvened session of CND
(2-4 December,2020)

Agenda Item 5

Mr. Chair,

It's a matter of honour to see you steering this process effectively and successfully. Allow me to join all the other delegations in commending you for your prudent and dynamic leadership.

We would also like to express our deep appreciation of UNODC secretariat and INCB for providing constant support and valuable inputs during the expert deliberations on these recommendations. We are also grateful to WHO for its consistent engagement with the process and deliberations in the Commission.

As all of us aware, the Commission is mandated by the three international drug control conventions to make scheduling decisions. The most important factor in making such decisions is to ensure appropriate balance between public health risks and advantages of ensuring access to the drugs for medical and scientific purposes. The Commission deliberated upon each of the recommendations, their effects and impacts, and the rationale behind them. The participation of stakeholders and experts helped the Commission's deliberations and also played an important part in the discussions.

Mr. Chair,

The Commission has always pursued its work based on Vienna spirit of building consensus and avoiding vote. I am confident that today's vote, which was undertaken after prolonged discussions and heated debates, will not undermine Vienna spirit in our future work.

I would like to reiterate that arguments put forth in support of the recommendations to change the international control of cannabis and its related substances were not convincing. WHO's ECDD pointed out some hurdles that allegedly impede scientific research of therapeutic benefits of cannabis. In contrast, as we are fully aware, many countries are already successfully conducting research on therapeutic uses of cannabis with

increasing but well-regulated trade of cannabis raw materials and production of pharmaceutical products from them.

We also cannot ignore the fact that cannabis remains the most abused drug in the world. There exists well established scientific evidence of negative and lasting health effects, especially to pregnant women and adolescents. Cannabis use also results in addiction and its use increases the risk of addiction to other drugs.

Pakistan is of the view that the focus should now be on helping Member States effectively implement the control measures and prevent misuse of cannabis and cannabis related substances. Provision of technical support by UNODC and will play an important role in this regard especially to member states who lack the necessary means for detection, monitoring and enforcement capabilities to efficiently implement the provisions of the convention. It also warrants close collaboration between the Member States.

There is a strong need for clear elaboration of guidelines to ensure coherent application of provisions of the Conventions related to licit production, trade, medical and scientific use of cannabis as well as for the control of emerging high-potency cannabis products. We should also be further streamlining and strengthening the reporting mechanisms on legitimate cultivation, production and trade in cannabis related substances to avoid any discrepancies.

Mr. Chair,

Supported by international partners, Pakistan has a strong political will to work towards “Drug Free World”. Passing of dedicated legislation, establishment of federal ministry, formulation of National anti-narcotics policy, oversight mechanisms at parliamentary and judicial levels, establishment of an inter-agency task force on counter narcotics and implementation of a robust and stringent precursor control regime are some of the measures manifesting our strong resolve against illicit drugs.

In the end, I would like to reiterate that Pakistan remains fully committed to its international obligations under the Conventions and would like to reaffirm that the Government of Pakistan is committed to eradicate the menace of illicit drugs.