

Statement by H.E. Lieutenant General Than Hlaing

at the 64th CND Meeting on Drugs

Distinguished Delegates,

First and foremost, allow me to express my pleasure to have this opportunity to brief you on the drug control measures taken by Myanmar during this 64th CND Meeting.

It is widely known that Myanmar is one of the countries in South East Asia and Asia-Pacific region that has suffered most from the growing threat of drugs. Regarding this, since regaining her independence in 1948, consecutive governments have relentlessly carried out preventive measures as a priority in its national agenda.

Myanmar as a signatory country to the UN Conventions on drugs control has been fulfilling all its due obligations. In line with the conventions, Myanmar had also promulgated the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law in 1993, Rules in 1995, and subsequently the Precursor Supervisory Rules in 2004 respectively. To be in line with the UN Conventions, international standard and norms and policies and to obtain more opportunity for treatment services, the amendment on 1993 Illicit Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law was officially enacted and announced on February 14th 2018. In order to fully implement the amended new drug law, the related Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Rule has also amended and will be implementing officially on the process of the amended law.

Distinguished Delegates,

Law enforcement agencies led by the military and police have conducted special operations to dismantle clandestine labs and drug gangs on a yearly basis. In this regard, Myanmar was able to destruct illicit drugs and precursor worth 839.8 million US \$ in 2020, a significant triple increase compared to 2019 seizures.

Likewise, I am happy to report the annual cultivation of poppy and opium production have declined significantly over the past years. The results are from the joint opium survey with UNODC which we have been cooperating closely over the years.

We have been able to destroy 5007.67 acre during 2019-2020, and 11448.06 acre during 2020-2021 opium cultivation season respectively which has doubled than the previous season. Opium poppy farmers are not put in jail in accordance to the law, but have been provided with alternative sustainable livelihoods programs with cooperation with UNODC, ONCB of Thailand and NNCC of China.

With a view to upgrade the livelihoods of the opium farmers, Myanmar had signed an MoU with Malango Company from France to export coffee seeds from alternative development areas in the country, and plans to export 600 tons of coffee seeds to European countries are underway as well. We have successfully exported 100 tons of coffee seeds in 2020.

Distinguished Delegates,

As the stability of the state is somehow related to the growing threat of illicit drugs, the government is persistently collaborating with ethnic-armed groups in signing the National Conciliation Agreement to maintain peace in the country.

However, even though we are witnessing the decline of poppy cultivation and opium production in recent years, the increase of ATS production has become a main threat to the country. We believe that the only way to stop the growing threat of ATS production is to take full control and close cooperation to prevent the diversion and illicit trafficking of precursor chemicals from neighboring countries. I would also like to reiterate that Myanmar as a developing agro based country does not have the capacity to produce any type of precursors.

Distinguished Delegates,

On another front, in accordance and in line with the UNGASS goals, Myanmar has drafted a new National Drug Control Policy since 20th February of 2018. Moreover, 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law were also amended on 14th February of 2018 to be in line with international standard and norms opening up more opportunities for drug treatment and rehabilitation. In order to solve the mounting threat of drugs, financial and technical support from the international community is highly essential, thus we hope that our international counterparts will assist us to this end.

Distinguished Delegates,

Before concluding my speech, I would like to reiterate that the cooperation mechanism among every country is one of the crucial factors to solve the growing threat of drugs in our region. Only in this way, we would be able to prevent drug chemists from entering Myanmar and stop drug production in addition to precursor control in respective countries.

In conclusion, I earnestly urge and look forward to a better understanding and strive for close cooperation among member states since no country is void of the global drug threat to our mankind.

I thank you for your kind attention,

Thank you.