

Philippine Statement
64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Her Excellency Dominika Anna Krois of Poland, Chairperson of the 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Her Excellency Gadha Fathi Waly, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,

Distinguished Heads of Delegations,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Philippines continue to uphold the centrality of the international drug control conventions which serve as principal frameworks in addressing the world drug problem. We remain steadfast in strengthening our actions towards implementing our joint commitments to counter the world drug problem.

Guided by the Philippine Anti-Illegal Drugs Strategy or PADS, institutionalized in 2018 by virtue of an Executive Order by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, the Philippines implements a comprehensive and balanced approach to address all the facets of the drug problem.

Within their mandates, all agencies of the government along with non-government organizations and the private sector are working together to do their part in implementing drug supply and demand reduction strategies. The Dangerous Drugs Board, as the lead agency in the implementation of PADS, was able to set the foundation for the implementation of the whole-of-nation approach against illegal drugs.

Successes have been felt in the implementation of this strategy as the drug prevalence went down and public awareness and approval of the government's anti-drug campaign were recorded at high rates. These were the results of a Household Survey on the Patterns and Trends of Drug Abuse in the Philippines conducted in 2019.

Based on the 2019 Drug Survey, around 1.67 million or two out of one hundred Filipino aged 10 to 69 are current users of dangerous drugs. This shows a clear significant decline from the estimates of 4 million in 2016 based on anti-drug operations and intelligence data.

In terms of public awareness, about 65.8% of respondents are aware of the government's campaign against illegal drugs. Of those who are aware, 81.6% approves of the campaign. A high number of respondents also believe that the current drug situation has slightly improved to greatly improved.

The survey also gave an insight to the population most vulnerable to drug abuse and the connection of other risky behaviors such as smoking and alcohol drinking to drug abuse.

These findings help us improve our policies and strategies in the implementation of programs that will make an impact to the most vulnerable sectors in the society.

Even in the midst of the pandemic, we continued to implement programs redesigned for rollout through online platforms reaching more and more of our target sector – the youth. Preventive education, advocacy, and capacity-building programs were held virtually giving an opportunity for those even in the provinces to join and participate. Information, education and communication materials were disseminated through social media and online portals making them always available and accessible.

To ensure that treatment and rehabilitation interventions will continue even during the pandemic, the Dangerous Drugs Board adopted infection prevention and control protocols in drug treatment and rehabilitation facilities.

Earlier this year, we have also supplemented the resources of a number of agencies to help implement their priorities under the Philippine Anti-Illegal Drugs Strategy. Among the programs set to be implemented include the production of advocacy materials, implementation of drug-free workplace policies, and procurement of illegal drug detection machines.

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

Amid all the challenges the world is facing right now, the Philippines remains true to its commitment of protecting its citizens from the scourge of illegal drugs.

The efforts reflect our dedication to the maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty and property and promotion of the general welfare and is guided by our state policy enshrined in the Constitution that protects the dignity of every human being and guarantees full respect for human rights.

Thank you.