

Country Statement of Sri Lanka at the 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
(CND)
12th -16th April 2021
By Chairman/ National Dangerous Drug Control Board, Sri Lanka

Madam Chair, Excellencies and distinguished delegates

Sri Lanka congratulates Her Excellency Dominika Krois, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Republic of Poland on her election as the Chair of the 64th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and other elected members of the Bureau.

Sri Lanka Delegation extends its fullest support and cooperation to the Chair to effectively carryout the proceedings throughout the meeting.

Madam Chair,

The Government of Sri Lanka highly appreciates the CND, INCB, and the UNODC for the generous support and technical guidance in the implementation of national efforts to effectively counter the drug problem in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka as a state party to the three major international Drug Control Conventions namely Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, has committed itself to establish a drug free society as well as to strengthen international drug control system in conformity with its international commitments.

Madam Chair,

His Excellency Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the President of Sri Lanka in his manifestation of “Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour”, identified the importance of “A Country Free from Drugs “. Finance and human resources have been mobilized to effectively address the drug issue placing high emphasis on prevention and control of drug abuse aspects through implementation of people-centric and comprehensive scientific evidence-based awareness programmes on social re-integration and rehabilitation of drug addicted people especially the youth.

Sri Lanka amended the National Policy on prevention and control of drug abuse in accordance with applicable international laws introducing a **National Plan of Action** covering various aspects namely logistics, health, tourism, religious affairs, youth and sports integrating **institutionalized drug policies** developed on the principle of scientific evidence-based approach to address the drug problem in a broader multilateral setting.

Madam Chair,

Sri Lanka places greater emphasis on international cooperation and technical assistance on developing integrated and well-coordinated mechanisms to counter the drug problem as it transcends national boundaries and often linked with Trans National Organized Crimes.

The Government of Sri Lanka continues to monitor and assess the emerging trends and complexity of the drug market and determined to review and amend the domestic laws and legislations to control the drug abuse as deem appropriate.

The law enforcement agencies of Sri Lanka have seized 1250 kg of Heroin, 7207 kg of Cannabis and 91 kg of high addictive stimulant Methamphetamine in 2020.

Madam Chair,

Sri Lanka in collaboration with the UNODC established a specialized **Voluntary Drug Rehabilitation Centre** designed to ensure prevention and evidence-based treatment, rehabilitation, aftercare and social reintegration services based on **bio-psycho-social approach**.

Sri Lanka values therapeutic approaches for drug addicted over punitive measures and swift action is underway to incorporate effective and efficient medical services for treatment and rehabilitation programmes at the residential, prison and community levels in consultation with the relevant government stakeholders.

A toll free telephone counselling help line 1927 was launched to provide uninterrupted services on vital information on management of substance dependent individuals and to provide basic counselling especially in the face of challenges posed by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Madam Chair,

Sri Lanka launched vocational training and soft skill development programmes for discharged SUD persons and established volunteer task force for effective implementation of drug prevention initiatives at community level and launched national level prevention campaigns based on six (6) categories namely school, media, work place, environment, family and youth.

A national level training series on drug prevention, treatment and rehabilitation for of law enforcement officials, government officials and educationists are in progress to educate front runners of the social establishment.

Sri Lanka identified 6 Million of its Social Media Users as an ideal platform for dissemination of up-to-date and evidence based statistics on prevention of drug abuse and health consequences among youth and the general public.

Madam Chair,

Sri Lanka firmly believes that engagement, empowerment and inclusive participation of the society especially the most vulnerable groups for drug addiction are essential to successfully combat the drug problem.

Sri Lanka reiterates its international commitment to strengthen the International Drug Control System and treaty based obligations and urge international community and national governments to act together to create a world free of drugs.

I thank you