

**Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

**Sixty-fifth session, 14-18 march 2022**

*“Building back better from the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”*

**Deputy Minister of Interior of the Republic of Albania,**

**Mr. Besfort Lamallari**

Distinguished Chair,  
Honorable Commission’s Delegates

Before I begin, let me stress that the Republic of Albania, also as a UN Security Council Member, has condemned and reiterates its deep concern at the fact that the values of peaceful coexistence among peoples, human rights and democracy have been severely violated by the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. We stand in full solidarity with Ukraine.

Excellencies,

It is a pleasure to address the Commission today, given its global authority and unique role within the UN system, in addressing the world drug problem.

The theme being addressed this year reflects the CND’s vital responsibility as the governing body and its commitment to living up to that role. Just before the global outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Commission adopted the ministerial declaration reiterating that *“efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing”*.

Two years after, such efforts have become more arduous, with additional challenges, adverse circumstances and impediments demanding innovative and resilient approaches to pursuing effectively our shared goals.

Considering the integrated nature of the Goals and the interlinkages between them and efforts to address drug related issues, the Government of Albania has pursued a comprehensive and concerted approach, by promoting interventions in the field of prevention, early intervention, social reintegration, alternative development and social reuse of confiscated assets deriving from drug-related illicit activities.

We value the work done the UNODC across the globe, under a variety of programs contributing to different SDG targets, and we take stock of such evidence-based best practices when designing and implementing our development programs contributing to prevention and mitigation of drug problems.

Our ongoing initiatives place appropriate emphasis on individuals, families, and communities, with a particular focus on women and youth.

We are pleased to have joined forces with the Global Partnership on Drug Policies and Development, to promote economic growth of farmers and families living in areas affected by or at risk of cannabis illicit cultivation, by supporting them in using better available natural resources, improve their agricultural techniques, as well as empower women to become entrepreneurs. The younger ones living in targeted remote areas are now borrowing books from converted mobile libraries, that is, cars confiscated from drug traffickers. We stand ready to and will support further similar programs countrywide.

Other programs include partnerships with the European Commission, the UK Home Office, and the UNDP, promoting well-being for all, increased gender equality, economic growth and safer and more resilient communities.

To conclude, let me stress that the major reforms staunchly supported by the Government of Albania, including reforming of the judicial system and strengthening law enforcement agencies guarantee sustained progress towards a safe, peaceful, just and inclusive society, free of drug abuse and harms.

Thank you - Faleminderit