

**DRAFT STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA AT THE 65<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF  
THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS, 14 MARCH 2022, VIENNA, TO BE  
DELIVERED BY HON. SETH KWAME ACHEAMPONG, EASTERN REGIONAL  
MINISTER**

Mr. Chair, on behalf of the Republic of Ghana and my own behalf, permit me to congratulate you, Your Excellency Ambassador Ghislain D’Hoop of Belgium on your appointment as the Chair of the 56<sup>th</sup> session of CND and other elected members of the bureau. Ghana renews its esteemed assurances and pledges her cooperation to you and the bureau as you diligently steer the affairs of this session. Mr. Chair, permit me to seize this opportunity to thank members for their magnanimous support on the election of Ghana to CND 2022-2025. Ghana remains grateful and reaffirms its unflinching support and cooperation to the cause of the commission in addressing and contouring the world drug situation.

Mr Chair, Ghana believes that addressing the challenges is a shared responsibility and we must share ideas as member countries. Ghana is still committed to smart law enforcement and criminal justice. Our new drug law is a product of a close relationship between government and civil society. The law in its fourth looking state treats drug use as a public health issue rather than a criminal justice concern.

Mr Chair, the law has put in place alternatives to incarceration for people who use drugs and propose evidence based treatment and prevention programs. Ghana has taken cognisance of the increasing exploitation of the West African sub region as a transit port for illicit drug trafficking and money laundering. The region is experiencing the rising of non-medical use of medicinal and pharmaceutical opioids. There is a solid need to intensify efforts to adopt appropriate evidence based strategies to address the situation. Reducing supply and law enforcement are both vital and diverting and controlling chemical precursors and reducing violence associated with drugs. We still face challenges through the trafficking of small quantities and related violence.

International cooperation based on trust and confidence is indispensable for these challenges. We must improve the quality of information and we need to examine the array of national drug policy systems and analyze data to gauge the efficacy of these systems.

Mr Chair, as the calls for rescheduling of some substance are continuously being considered, and as increasing international cooperation is fostered in reducing the supply of illicit drugs through various interventions, let us be reminded of the need to intensify harm reduction based strategies in addressing the drug problem. Drawing inspiration from the 2021 World celebration theme, ”Share Facts on Drugs, Save Lives”. Let us continue to empower people with facts on drugs to help them make informed decisions and right choices to save lives.

Mr Chair, on that note, thank you for the opportunity.