

**Statement by Romania on the occasion of
the 65th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

Vienna, 14-18 March 2022

Agenda item 3: General debate

Mr. Chairman,

We fully subscribe to the statement delivered today on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. We would like to add some additional remarks in national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me start by expressing our full solidarity with Ukraine, its democratically elected institutions and representatives, and with the brave people of Ukraine.

We reiterate our condemnation of the continued unjustified and unprovoked military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, an independent and sovereign state, and we repeat our call on the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally stop this aggression, and withdraw all its military forces and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

We are witnessing a devastating and horrific humanitarian disaster in Ukraine. We strongly call on the Russian Federation to fully respect its obligations under international humanitarian law, to allow safe evacuation of the civilians, as well as safe and unhindered access of humanitarian aid to all in need.

Considering the urgent humanitarian needs of persons fleeing Ukraine as a consequence of the war, the Romanian authorities, together with the civil society and private sector, are providing immediate assistance to all those who are crossing the border in Romania and seeking shelter in our country. Romania has therefore adjusted the legal framework for

providing support and health services for the population seeking refuge. Access to social and health services cover also drug related services (such as opioid substitution treatment, harm reduction measures, guidance, counselling and information provision for refuge drug users) and could address health-related problems among the population seeking refuge, in case a need arises.

Mr. Chairman,

Since our last CND meeting, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have serious impact on drug trafficking activities, with digitally enabled drug markets showing signs of diversification, and with drug production and consumption on the rise in many countries. At the same time prevention, treatment and care services continue to suffer disruptions and challenges.

Following the adoption of the European Union Drugs Strategy and of its Action Plan in December 2020 and last June respectively, Romania is updating its own strategic documents in the field of drugs, for the period 2022 – 2026. The new strategic framework follows a balanced approach to drug policies, translating and adapting the European priorities to the national context and needs.

Enhanced international cooperation plays a crucial role when it comes to efficient global responses to the drugs phenomenon. In order to address the arising trends and challenges posed by the pandemic worldwide, we would like to highlight several important aspects which in our view, should be taken into account in the future:

- ✓ drug policies should fully respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, protect the health, safety and wellbeing of people and of the society as a whole;

- ✓ a firm commitment to accelerate the implementation of all the recommendations contained in the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs (UNGASS) Outcome Document is essential to achieve an effective and sustainable drug policy by 2030;

- ✓ reliable data and statistics in the field of drugs are needed to get a realistic picture of the global phenomenon, to take stock of the progress made and to constantly adapt response measures;

✓ the UN Drug Conventions and other Human Rights instruments remain the cornerstone of the international drug control system and we need to recommit to their effective implementation;

✓ the central role of the International Narcotics Control Board needs to be strengthened in a balanced manner, when it comes to drug policies;

✓ in order to strengthen our cooperation at national, regional and global level it would be useful to further develop innovative approaches to drug prevention, treatment and care services, as well as to exchange good practices, including with civil society representatives.

Distinguished Chair and audience,

This CND session is a good opportunity to share information and exchange views to further contribute to the broader UN priorities of protecting human rights, promoting peace, security and advancing development, but at the same time to achieve concrete results. In this context, I welcome, in particular, the draft resolutions *Promoting comprehensive and scientific evidence-based early prevention* (France, Nigeria, Pakistan, Slovenia) and *Promoting alternative development as a development-oriented drug control strategy, including measures to protect the environment* (Germany, Peru, Thailand).

Thank you!