



**Statement during the 65th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Delivered by H.E. Ambassador Manizha Bakhtari, Permanent Representative of the
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations
Vienna, 14-18 March 2022**

Mr. Chair, [H.E. Ambassador Ghislain D'HOOP, Permanent Representative of Belgium]

At the outset, I wish to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Ghislain D'HOOP on his election as Chair of the 65th session of the Commission, as well as to the other elected members of the Bureau. I also wish to extend my full support to Executive Director H.E. Madame Ghada Fathi Waly and I look forward to working with you and the Secretariat to strengthen our collective efforts to effectively address and counter the drug problem in Afghanistan.

The latest findings and trends on the drug situation in Afghanistan clearly outline the Taliban's involvement in illegal narcotics trade. With the Taliban takeover of the country, the acres of land for opium cultivation under their direct control have increased. The Taliban have taken full control of the illegal drug trade business in the country.

The drug-related threats stemming from the situation in Afghanistan have spillover effects in the region and worldwide. I wish to reiterate that addressing and countering the world drug problem is a common and shared responsibility that should be undertaken in a multilateral setting through effective regional and international cooperation. We therefore call on the International Community to strengthen joint counter-narcotic efforts and support to the people of Afghanistan in curbing illicit drug cultivation, production and demand.

Mr. Chair,

Apart from drug-related threats, Afghanistan is also facing a dire humanitarian crisis along with significant human rights violations, particularly of women and girls. We remain very concerned about the ongoing systematic violations and abuses of the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, including threats to their safety and barriers to their rights to education, work, full public participation in civic and economic life and freedom of movement.

Afghan women's full and equal participation in the social, economic, and political spheres of our society is essential in overcoming the current humanitarian crisis and achieving long-lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan and worldwide.

I urge the international community to protect the fundamental human rights of all citizens of Afghanistan, and particularly of women and girls. My people deserve a government that protects their rights regardless of their gender or ethnicity.

I thank you Mr. Chair for your attention.