



Australian Country Statement
65th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Vienna, 14-18 March 2022

Chair, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Representatives,

- Australia condemns the Russian Federation, in the strongest terms, for its act of aggression in invading Ukraine. It is a flagrant breach of international law, including the UN Charter's prohibition on the use of force.
- Australia calls on Russia to cease its invasion and withdraw its military forces from Ukraine.
- Australia reiterates our full support for Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity – the bedrock principles of a rules-based world order.

Chair

- The unprecedented global health crisis presented by COVID-19 continues to put great pressure on our collective efforts to address the world drug problem.
- COVID-19 has impacted all three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and 2020 saw the global average Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) index score decrease for the first time since the adoption of the SDGs in 2015.
- ECOSOC's main theme for 2022 "Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" is a timely reminder that efforts to achieve the SDGs and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing.
- Australia is honoured to have been re-elected as a member of the CND and will continue to bring an Indo-Pacific perspective to the CND by collaborating closely with our regional partners.
- Consistent with targets under SDG 3.8 and the primary objectives of the international conventions, Australia continues to advocate for greater access to controlled medicines for those in need, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Furthermore, Australia encourages the international community to continue to utilise CND to improve the sharing of evidence-based policies and lessons learned to promote best practice. We also recognise the important role played by civil society, the scientific community and academia, and encourage their continued involvement to address the world drug problem.
- Consistent with our National Drug Strategy, Australia will continue to advocate for a balanced and evidence-based approach between law enforcement and health to reduce the harm and impacts of illicit drugs on individuals, families and communities. We will also continue to

advocate for gender equality and for the rights of women and girls in the global response to the world drug problem.

- In closing, Australia reaffirms its support to the international drug control conventions and implementation of commitments under the 2019 Ministerial Declaration and looks forward to a productive CND session.
- Thank you.