

Country Statement - Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
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Welcome & Official Opening Remarks

Good Morning !

Ayubowan ! Distinguished greeting from Sri Lanka; may you be blessed with a long life creating good vibration and aura of happiness and grace.

Firstly, I extend my deepest gratitude to CND, INCB, UNODC for the opportunity and support extended to Sri Lanka in numerous ways to combat against trafficking and abuse problem.

The Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is highly concerned about the extent of the global and regional drug problem and the extent of the drug problem in member states, emerging threats, and their devastating adverse consequences with special reference to the health and welfare of people which cause permanent physical and emotional damage, overdose deaths, drug associated illnesses and strained healthcare systems.

We see how health and welfare of the people in the country are being threatened, pregnant women drug abuse problem and new-borns affected which has become a strain on health-care system, worry & psychological distress, domestic violence which affects and become strain on family relationships and loss of social life.

Drug abuse problem is becoming a Narco-terrorism and significant increase in drug related organized crime, human trafficking (Use of women and children) has affected and become a severe threat to security & stability of the country.

Drug trafficking organizations have blend their operations in the legitimate commerce through very strong and powerful networks irrespective of the nationalities, cultural moves, countries', regional, territorial and religious boundaries.

Therefore, we all must unite together having strong networks irrespective of the nationalities, cultural moves, countries', regional, territorial and religious boundaries and **break this destructive cycle uniting in order to protect the right of people to lead a healthy way of life and to promote sustainable economic growth and greater security and stability in countries.**

The Government of Sri Lanka, under the leadership of His Excellency the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, giving prime responsibility for drug prevention and control, reaffirms its political will and determination to create “a secure country free from drug abuse” in accordance to the policy frame work of the Government “Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour”.

The Government is of the view that the drug problem should be addressed in a multilateral setting through effective and increased international cooperation and establishing an integrated, multidisciplinary, mutually reinforcing, balanced, coordinated, scientific evidence-based, comprehensive approach.

It is with great pride I would like to state that initiative actions have been taken to review of the national policy, establishment of National Action Plan and make amendments to national legislations, committing to the goals and the objectives of the international drug control treaties and the policy documents. Further actions have been taken to shift from punitive to therapeutic approaches while promoting effective and efficient medical services for treatment and rehabilitation programme in residential, prison settings and in community based treatment programmes with the partnership of the local governments and through community empowerment programmes.

I would like to emphasize that in order to address the emerging threats effectively and impactfully there is a need to re-examine the current policy framework and identify critical deficiencies in order to protect health of the people including the rights of youth, children, women and communities prioritizing humanistic approaches and specially focusing, intensifying and accelerating innovative approaches for the prevention of drug use before individuals get into the problem.

Committing to the goals and the objectives of the international drug control treaties and the policy documents, the Government has recognized the need for empowering all sectors of the community for combatting against the drug problem..

In conclusion, I wish you all every success in achieving ultimate objectives with respective combating drug trafficking and abuse problem in all countries

Thank you very much for your kind attention.