

65<sup>ième</sup> session de la Commission des stupéfiants

14 mars 2022

**Déclaration de la Belgique**  
**sous le point de l'agenda « Débat général »**

Mister Chair, Your Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

Before I start, I would like to congratulate you, Mister Chair, with your appointment as Chair of this important Commission.

Belgium aligns itself with the statement by France on behalf of the EU and its Member States. In my national capacity I would like to give special attention to the following points.

First of all, Belgium strongly condemns the acts of aggression committed by Russia in Ukraine, which are threatening international security and violate our common principles as United Nations.

This context should not prevent those States and all stakeholders that remain faithful to the principles of the UN Charter and to Human Rights, to work together to improve the world drug situation. In particular, let me recall that in emergency situations, such as the one we face today, everything should be done to ensure the protection of civilians, especially children. For this Commission, this also includes our efforts to ensure the availability of medicines and pain treatment. In this regard, we reaffirm our full solidarity with the Ukrainian people that are suffering today.

Secondly, during its 65<sup>th</sup> session, an important accent will be placed on the additional efforts that are needed to scale up the implementation of international drug policy commitments on improving **availability and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes**. Belgium has financed a series of activities within this context. We thank UNODC, INCB and WHO for providing technical support for many years, and we commend all the relevant NGO's for their crucial field work and advocacy in this area.

Thirdly, we are working on an integrated approach: when bringing offenders to trial, attention is given to **treating the underlying problems** linked to drug abuse. This way the legal and the health perspectives are combined to address the demand and supply side of drug abuse. This allows us to tackle both: prevention and treatment of drug use and users and decreasing criminality and corruption.

Evidently, my country also invests strongly in **drug supply reduction**. For example, with a view to combating trafficking by sea and fighting corruption of personnel working in ports, a law of November 2021 introduced the possibility of banning access to ports for persons convicted of drug offences. This concerns in particular dockers and truckers.

To conclude, Mister Chair, I would like to stress the importance of the rights and needs of **the most vulnerable members of our society**. Indeed, in the end, the way we treat our most

vulnerable is the most convincing and clear expression of our values and human rights we all have agreed upon.

I wish the Commission a fruitful debate.

Thank you Mister Chair.