

**Delegation of Armenia**  
**Statement**  
**66th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs**  
*Vienna, 13 March 2023*

*Agenda item 3: General debate*

Excellences,  
Distinguished delegates,

Armenia thanks the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Secretariat for all their efforts in the lead up to this session.

Armenia attaches high importance to the full and effective implementation of obligations under the three international drug control conventions as well as the commitments outlined in the international drug related policy documents. Armenia looks forward to actively engaging in the mid-term review of drug related policy commitments in 2024 and highly appreciates the efforts of the Chair for the preparation of a consensual resolution on that regard.

Turning to our national efforts, I would like to highlight that in recent years the main trends and challenges are related to increased levels of trafficking, including through major changes and adaptation of the modus operandi of criminals by using modern technology and postal delivery.

For instance, in 2021 almost 500 kilograms of heroin was seized in Armenia which is more than 30-fold higher than the previous year. This was also due to increased cooperation with neighboring countries like Georgia in carrying out controlled deliveries. As a result of one such joint operation in 2021, 368 kg of heroin was seized, and a transnational organized criminal network was identified and dismantled.

Apart from increased attempts of organized criminal groups to use our country and the region as an alternative transit route, the application of modern technology for drug trafficking has also become a challenge. In 2021,

the Police and Investigative Committee of Armenia have disrupted many complex cases of drug trafficking through Internet and social media. In response to increased drug trafficking through international postal delivery, the State Revenue Committee of Armenia has reinforced its control operations over postal deliveries by deploying additional personnel and search dogs for that purpose.

Nevertheless, to effectively cope with these challenges, it is important to continue the capacity building of our law enforcement authorities and provide necessary technical support. In this regard we would like to highlight two important undertakings.

First, Armenia has joined the UNODC-WCO (World Container Organization) Global Container Control Program in 2021. The technical assistance and expertise provided by the UNODC through the CPP has had a positive impact on the capacities of our authorities. Last November, thanks to the CCP, two major seizures of drugs were registered in Armenia, which were destined for European markets. *On the 16th of March the Armenian delegation and the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia will hold a side event dedicated to CCP implementation in our country.*

Another important undertaking has been the signing of the Roadmap of Cooperation between Armenia and UNODC last September. It envisages joint efforts to strengthen our country's institutional resilience against crime throughout the five thematic pillars of the UNODC. A major pillar of this Roadmap is dedicated to further strengthening Armenia's capacities in fighting drug trafficking, which we hope could generate sufficient interest and engagement of our partners.

Mr. Chair,

The access to and availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes is a requirement by the three international drug control conventions and all relevant policy documents.

Any hindrance to the access to such substances might result in life threatening situations, which is exactly what we witness in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) due to the unlawful blockade of the Lachin Corridor, the only lifeline connecting it with Armenia and the rest of the world. The blockade was imposed by Azerbaijan for more than three months, in grave violation of international law and the UN Charter, as well as the Order of the International Court of Justice of 22 February 2023. The unfolding humanitarian crisis as a result of the blockade requires urgent international action to ensure unimpeded access to essential goods, medicine and life-saving medical supplies for the people of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh).

Thank you Mr. Chair