

**FINAL 13.3.2023**

**Statement of Finland  
On the occasion of the 65th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (Vienna, 13-17  
March 2023)**

Mister Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finland fully aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union on behalf of its Member States.

Mister Chair,

Regrettably, international cooperation continues to be hurt by Russia's unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine. Finland stands in full solidarity with Ukraine and firmly supports Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, self-determination and territorial integrity.

Mr Chair,

We believe that we need to strengthen our actions in the areas of prevention, treatment and harm reduction, as well as in the capacity building required for their implementation. Experience has taught us that in order to achieve the best results in health, wellbeing and safety, it is essential to pursue multidisciplinary and balanced cooperation between social, health and law enforcement authorities and all other stakeholders - including NGOs, grass root actors and people who use drugs. It is important to protect citizens from the health, social and societal harms associated with drug use and to tackle marginalization and stigmatization.

Finland believes that all drug policies have to be implemented comprehensively while respecting human rights. Health, well-being, safety and security of people and societies are essential. We also align ourselves with the advocates of the abolition of the death penalty as well as with those condemning the use of extrajudicial sanctions of whatever nature.

Mr Chair,

Drug policy is not a competition between the law enforcement and the health and social sectors. Even if the main role of the law enforcement authorities is to reduce the drug supply and tackle drug trafficking, successful and sustainable harm reduction is not possible without their participation. Police and other law enforcement officers are often the first point of contact for drug users and they have, for example, a key role in referring problem drug users to services. At the core of today's drug policy implementation should be the promotion of participatory and inclusive policies that contribute to public health in the diverse realities and challenges that Member States face.

Mr Chair,

Finland recognizes the unique role of UNODC in supporting Member States to deliver a safe society founded on the rule of law. We are happy to announce that Finland, an active supporter of UNODC, is now seeking membership of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs for the term 2024-2027.

Thank you Mr. Chair.