

STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA AT
THE 66TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS,
13 – 17 MARCH 2023, VIENNA

Mr Chair,
Distinguished delegates,

Permit me, first, to congratulate you, Ambassador Miguel Camilo Ruíz Blanco [*Phonetic pronunciation: Migel Kamilo Rooiz Blanco*] of Colombia, on your election as the Chair of the 66th Session of CND; and other elected members of the Bureau.

Ghana remains grateful and reaffirms its resolute support, cooperation and commitment to the cause of the Commission, which is our shared and common responsibility in addressing and countering the global narcotic drugs problem.

Ghana has historically addressed the narcotic drugs problem by adopting evidence-based strategies centered on health , development, human rights, and global best practices .

We have taken pragmatic steps to provide alternatives to incarceration for people who use drugs, as well as steps to provide life-saving harm reduction services for people who use drugs, which are entirely in line with our obligations under the three international drug control conventions and other UN resolutions and commitments to address drug use and possession, including the UNGASS Outcome Document, agreed to by the international community in 2016 and also will help curb the transmission of bloodborne viruses (such as HIV and hepatitis B and C), overdose deaths and drug dependence.

Against this backdrop, Ghana is currently discussing the implementation of new harm reduction services for people who use drugs.

These steps are consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 3: Health and well-being for all, which will not be achieved if we continue to leave people who use drugs behind when they may need health services.

Our criminal justice system will be less congested, thereby allowing law enforcement agencies to focus on operating minds or those at the helm of the drugs trade.

The narcotic drugs issue is a shared responsibility and, in that spirit, in December 2022, Ghana organised a National Dialogue where critical stateholders – including government, UN partners and civil society – were brought together to identify critical

areas and opportunities to craft policies that can help address some of the challenges based on recommendations from the two-day discussion.

The meeting was an opportunity to re-assess the impact of drugs and drug policies and reflect on our journey in the evolution of drug control mechanisms adopted as a country, areas where we need reforms, assessing emerging initiatives across Africa to adopt an evidence-based approach to the drug situation and strategies that will work for us as a people .

Thank You for your attention