



**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**MS. MICHELLE THOMAS**

**CROWN COUNSEL/LEGAL OFFICER**

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

**on**

*Agenda Item 3 – General Debate - Theme: “Accelerating the recovery from the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels”.*

**during**

**the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission Narcotic Drugs**

**Vienna, Austria**

**13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. Chair,

Jamaica congratulates you on your election as Chair of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission and assures elected members of the Bureau of its full support.

Jamaica further extends appreciation to Ambassador Ghislain D'Hoop, for his effective Chairmanship of the 65<sup>th</sup> Session and thanks the Secretariat for its invaluable contribution.

Mr. Chair,

Undoubtedly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains the centre piece of countries' road map for sustainable development. In that context, crosscutting issues such as the rule of law, the fight against drugs and crime, as well as health-oriented responses to drug use - are critical enablers for development.

Yet, the international community continues to face mounting challenges, including the triple crises of climate change, food insecurity and the continuing impacts of the COVID19 pandemic. Organizations like the World Bank and the UNDP have assessed significant pandemic interruptions in the pathways towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including international community's efforts to counter the world drug problem.

We are concerned about the reports of increases in international drug trafficking, particularly during the pandemic. As a transit state, Jamaica faces multidimensional challenges, including criminality. Jamaica reiterates its pledge to prevent and eliminate the illicit use, trafficking in and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

This must be undertaken using a balanced approach, which ensures access to and availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes. The availability of internationally controlled drugs for medical and scientific purposes, including for pain relief, remains low to non-existent in many countries. As such, Jamaica has enhanced our national efforts to ensure their availability and accessibility for medical and scientific purposes, while simultaneously preventing their diversion, abuse, and trafficking through the implementation of legislation, funding for scientific and medical research, public education campaign, specialized drug training and counselling.

To support efforts to achieve SDG 3.5, Jamaica established robust measures to address the use of harmful substances, including methylenedioxymethamphetamine or MDMA among our young people. Plans are in train for a National Drug Prevalence Survey as part of efforts to assess new and emergent psychoactive substances, particularly used by youths, to inform strategies to address these issues.

Chair,

We are not alone in this struggle. For our part, Jamaica reaffirms its commitment to the three international drug Conventions which are the foundation of the International Drug Control legal framework, and vital to addressing and countering the world drug problem. We commit to accelerating our efforts to implement the drug policy commitments of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration<sup>1</sup> and 2016 Outcome document of the 30<sup>th</sup> special session of the General Assembly (UNGASS)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/2019/Ministerial\\_Declaration.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/2019/Ministerial_Declaration.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unodc.org/documents/postungass2016/outcome/V1603301-E.pdf>

We stress that international cooperation remains indispensable to ensure that our collective achievements in implementing the 2030 Agenda are not further hampered. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs remains a vital forum to increase the momentum, and the important role of the UNODC and its support to national efforts to achieve the SDGs cannot be overemphasized. We commend the active engagement by Commission members, the UNODC, and other key partners such as INTERPOL over the years as we seek to take transformative actions for accelerated progress on the SDGs in this regard.

I thank you.