

**Japan (Agenda item 3)**  
**Statement by Ambassador Hikihara**  
**at the 66th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs**  
**13 March 2023**

*Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Ruiz Blanco, on your election as the CND Chair. I am convinced that your able guidance will lead this session to success. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the other members of the Bureau and thank the Secretariat for their efforts in making this session a success.

Japan condemns in the strongest terms the reckless and unacceptable continued aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation. This poses serious impacts on drug trafficking inside and around Ukraine, jeopardizes the Ukrainian health system including drug abuse prevention and treatment, and makes Ukrainian people more vulnerable to drug use disorders. We strongly urge Russia to cease its aggression immediately and completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces from Ukraine.

*Mr. Chair,*

We have gathered here to address serious drug related challenges

that threaten our citizens. Today, we have seen an explosion in clandestine markets, the expansion of synthetic drugs, including methamphetamine, new psychoactive substances (NPS) as well as the diversion of non-scheduled precursor chemicals, gaps in the availability of drug treatments, and prevalence of cannabis use among young people.

We call for a comprehensive approach to these challenges, including reducing the supply of illicit drugs as well as strengthening drug use prevention and evidence based treatment.

*Mr. Chair,*

Japan stresses the importance of engaging with civil society and multi-stakeholders. Allow me to highlight the contributions of an active NGO in Japan, Japan's Drug Abuse Prevention Centre (DAPC). DAPC has donated to UNODC's projects for 30 years, helping local NGOs in low and middle-income countries implement drug use prevention and youth empowerment activities. These efforts, led largely by youth, give us hope for a better future.

We recognize that efforts to strengthen drug prevention contribute to the implementation of the SDGs, in particular Goal 3, on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.

In this context, it is our pleasure to invite you to a high-level side event tomorrow morning commemorating 30 years of DAPC's activities with the

participation of the Executive Director of UNODC and President of INCB.

*Mr. Chair,*

Japan is committed to continuing its international cooperation in countering world drug problems. We continue to offer support for Afghanistan and its neighboring countries through the work of UNODC on prevention and treatment, strengthened border control, and alternative development. We hope these efforts will ensure that all people in the region can live in health, security and dignity.

We recall the importance of seeking common ground to tackle all aspects of the world drug problem. In this regard, the 2024 Midterm Review represents a good opportunity to assess our achievements as well as our shortfalls and to find a common way forward.

We highly appreciate UNODC's valuable work and its expertise in research and analysis, in developing norms and standards, and in the technical assistance provided in the field where in need. Japan will continue to make all efforts to combat the world drug problem, together with UNODC and other members of the international community.

Thank you.