



Item No. 3

STATEMENT BY REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE (OFFICIAL OPENING) OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

**Delivered by Madam Anne Ng'etich
Principal Administrative Secretary
Ministry of Internal Security & National Administration**

13th March 2023

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Thank you, **Chair** for giving me the floor

It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of the Kenya Delegation at the Sixty-Six Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. This is an important forum as it provides a platform for global action in countering the world drug problem and we are pleased to actively participate in the forum.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Chair of this Session and wish you the very best as you lead us in all deliberations.

My delegation also appreciates the excellent work by the Secretariat in preparation for the Session and we look forward to a successful conclusion.

Chair,
The challenge of illicit drug trafficking and abuse is an ever present threat to the health, security and general wellbeing of the people. Poverty, diseases, declined mental health, accidents, increased crime and premature deaths are among the many ugly consequences of drug abuse. These and

many more are constant impediment to global development and more so, implementation of the 2030 Agenda that focuses on transforming the world. Undeniably, transformation of the world remains a mirage in the light of heightened number of persons using drugs and the diversion of resources to cater for drug-related diseases, crime and other social ills.

Chair,

To address the drug abuse challenge, Kenya has adopted a multi-pronged approach that encompasses both demand and supply reduction. Priority programmes in demand reduction focus on primary prevention in schools, community and the workplace. Evidence-based treatment and rehabilitation, harm reduction, recovery and reintegration services is also a key priority in addressing the plight of persons affected by drug abuse.

For sustained results, demand reduction efforts go hand-in-hand with structured supply reduction measures including effective law enforcement in order to contain the undesirable effects of the drug abuse, illicit drug cultivation and trafficking. The coordination amongst security Agencies and the criminal justice system has facilitated effective surveillance, enforcement, investigations and prosecution of drug related offenses.

Chair,

Despite our efforts and that of other global players, we are concerned over the;

- Continued cultivation and trafficking of illicit drugs pre and post covid-19;
- Rapid increase in the number of new psychoactive substances with opioid effects;
- Non-conformity to the three international conventions on drug control especially in legalization of controlled substances for recreational purposes;
- The inadequate access to care, treatment and rehabilitation services for affected persons; and,
- Non conformity to human rights provision as drug users are incarcerated rather than supported to reform and be reintegrated back to the society.

You will note **Chair** that these concerns are of great magnitude and require global intervention. The need for enhanced multilateral efforts and

increased international cooperation for a unified global response can therefore not be overemphasized.

Further, the concerns are particularly challenging to developing countries where resources to address resultant effects are limited. We therefore call on the international community for increased technical and financial assistance in order to build national capacities in countering the world drug problem.

Chair,

As I close, allow me to reiterate the importance of the 1961, 1971 and 1988 conventions on drug control and subsequent policy documents including the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action and the UNGASS Outcome Document of 2016. Overall, the objective of these policy documents is to eliminate the availability and use of illicit narcotic drugs while ensuring access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

It is therefore our submission that the decision by some states to relax measures on access to controlled substances for non-medical and scientific use is not only a non-conformity to the agreed upon global strategy but an impediment to the much needed international cooperation and collaboration. The move has sent mixed signals on the global fight against drugs and more so, negatively impacted the public's perception on the 'harmfulness' of narcotics and other controlled substances.

On our part, Kenya commits to ensuring conformity to the drug control conventions and eliminate the non-medical and scientific use of controlled substances alongside availing essential medicines for pain management and palliative care.

Chair,

As reported in the 65th Session, Kenya had offered to host the 30th Meeting of the Heads of National Law Enforcement Agencies for enhanced international cooperation. We take pride in having successfully hosted the meeting in November 2022 and therefore facilitated insightful discussions on regional challenges and successes.

Once again, my delegation is pleased to be part of this session's deliberations and we are open to learn from the experiences of others. We are also keen on establishing strategic partnerships with various institutions and agencies to further strengthen efforts in addressing the world drug problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this meeting.