

Statement by Ambassador HAM Sangwook
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea
at the 66th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Vienna, 13–17 March 2023

Mr. Chair,

Let me first join other delegations in congratulating you on assuming the chairmanship for the 66th Session of the CND. I have every confidence that our deliberations will bear fruitful results under your excellent leadership. I also thank the Secretariat for preparing this meaningful meeting.

Mr. Chair,

Despite our efforts to countering the spread of illicit use of drugs with UNODC, cannabis legalization in part of the world appears to have accelerated daily use. Associated increases in people with psychiatric disorders, suicides and hospitalization have been reported. And the number of the manufacturing and seizure of many illicit drugs are hitting record highs.

The Republic of Korea would like to use this opportunity to share some of our achievements to implement the recommendations set forth in the various conventions and resolutions of the UNODC.

Mr. Chair,

Recently, INCB expressed concern over the trend to legalize non-medical use of cannabis and pointed out that many countries don't have adequate access to controlled substances for medical purposes.

In this regards, the Republic of Korea is taking measures to enhance the

Medical Shopping Prevention Information Network in order to allow doctors to check a patient's dosage history. This measure is expected to deter the increase of people who are dependent on addictive medical drugs and visit numerous medical institutions for non-medical purpose injection.

Mr. Chair,

The UNODC World Drug Report 2022 shows that young people are using more drugs, with use levels today in many countries higher than with previous generations. In some countries, people under 35 represent the majority of people being treated for drug use disorders.

Consequently, the Republic of Korea is developing tailored education programs for teenagers with an emphasis on providing participatory preventive education. ~~It~~ To be more specific, the Korean Government provides diverse methods of preventive education using Metaverse or VR technology in order to provide a more participatory experience.

Mr. Chair,

According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2022, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, illicit drug trafficking is expanding geographically to new markets including the Republic of Korea.

In response to the steep rise in drug trafficking, in February 2023, the Republic of Korea established the Special Investigation Team on Drug Crimes in collaboration with the Prosecution Service, Korea Customs Service, Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, municipalities, and the Korea Internet & Security Agency. The Special Investigation Team will focus on large-scale drug smuggling, illicit trafficking of medical drugs, drug trafficking using internet sources such as the

Dark Web and will conduct robust joint investigations in wide-ranging areas.

Mr. Chair,

The Republic of Korea assures to strengthen our contribution to countering the increasingly evolving illegal drugs and substances. The Republic of Korea is also determined, in partnership with the UNODC, to play a constructive role in facilitating regional and international cooperation in combating the world drug problem.

I thank you, Mr. Chair. /END/