

ROMANIA

Statement on the occasion of the
66th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Vienna, 13-17 of March 2023

Chairperson,

Executive Director,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates and participants,

Let me start by congratulating you, Mr Chairman and the members of Bureau for the election. We would also like to thank the Secretariat for preparing this session.

Romania subscribes to the statement delivered by Sweden on behalf of EU and its Member States. In addition, I would like to make the following remarks in national capacity:

Mr Chair,

Romania welcomes the progress achieved so far in the implementation of the commitments undertaken through the 2019 Ministerial Declaration.

However, as the World Drug Report 2022 mentioned, the situation at global level remains serious and concerning. We continue to face a growing and diversifying illegal drug market that generates hundreds of billions of dollars per year in revenues for organized crime groups; hundreds of thousands of deaths due to drug overdoses, as well as drug market-related violence; millions of people who use drugs without access to sterile injecting equipment contracting HIV or hepatitis infections every year. We need to intensify our efforts to address all these worrying trends.

As part of global efforts, Romania is bringing its contribution, including by active involvement with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, International Narcotics Control Board and World Health Organization.

At domestic level, Romania has developed a national strategy on drugs for the period 2022-2026 that sets up the framework for a coordinated approach for all stakeholders with responsibilities in the field of drug supply and demand reduction. This represents a balanced, evidence-based response to drugs, in line with the UN Drug Control Conventions, the EU Drugs Strategy and with the aim to fully implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

This is complemented by customized responses targeting different segments of population, including the most vulnerable ones, such as young people, who use drugs and their families and people who are injecting drugs.

In achieving the objectives of the national strategy, a national network of 47 centres has been developed across the country. These are currently implementing prevention projects and campaigns tailored to the local needs, in close cooperation with the local authorities. The actions are targeting the increased consumption trends for cannabis and new psychoactive substances, especially among youngsters age between 12 and 15 years. Complementary, treatment and assistance services are constantly developed and adapted to the local trends of drug consumption, including early testing for detecting blood transmitting diseases and support for outreach work, conducted by the NGOs among drug users.

Also, the national authorities are working closely in partnership with the civil society, NGOs and academia. Just few months ago, the Romanian Government approved a national program designed to support and assist projects implemented by NGOs to prevent the drug consumption among youth by involving them in alternative cultural, educational and other activities. In addition, this program is financing initiatives run by NGOs focused on maintaining and diversifying the treatment and assistance programs for people who are using drugs, especially women, as well as outreach activities designed to identify and guide people using mainly injecting drugs to the health and social services.

In parallel, Romania is taking measures against the drug trafficking and consumption at the regional level, as the illicit drugs trade in our region continue to remain a major source of revenue for organized crime which is also exploiting the new technologies, such as the Darkweb and cryptocurrencies.

Taking into account the specific nature of the illicit drug market in Romania and in the region, one of the main priorities of our law enforcement

agencies is to monitor cross-border smuggling of illicit substances and counteract the activities of organised criminal groups. At the same time, Romania has developed bilateral, regional and international cooperation aimed at promoting information-sharing, in particular among judicial and law enforcement authorities, in order to respond to the serious challenges posed by the increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime, including trafficking in persons, trafficking in firearms, cybercrime and money-laundering.

Based on the acquired experience, Romania has mobilized resources and provided technical assistance and capacity-building at all levels to other countries in our region.

Mr. Chairman,

Our regional context is affected by the negative consequences of Russia's unprovoked, unjustifiable and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. I would like to express Romania's full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, and support for its sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The Romanian authorities, together with the civil society and private sector, have developed a coordinated response in order to provide immediate assistance to more than 3.6 million Ukrainian citizens who crossed the border and sought shelter in our country, with the vast majority being women and children. They are offered decent living conditions including access to medicines and free of charge medical assistance and treatments, in a gender-sensitive and age-appropriate manner. All the Ukrainian people who use drugs have unrestricted access to lifesaving health services, free of stigma, recognizing their individual rights for adequate treatment, in due respect of human dignity and basic human rights.

Mr. Chairman,

Romania will remain focused to preserve and advance the progress achieved since the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, by ensuring the broad implementation of the UNGASS 2016 outcome document and the 2019 Ministerial Statement over the coming years. In this context, let me reiterate my delegation full support for a very a successful outcome of this CND session that offers us also a springboard for the midterm review in 2024.

Thank you.

