



*Chairperson of the Commission on
Narcotic Drugs at its fifty-ninth session*

19 April 2016

Special Session of the General Assembly on the World Drug Problem

Statement at the opening of the session

H.E. Ambassador Vladimir Galuska

**Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic
to the United Nations (Vienna) and
Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its fifty-ninth session**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to address the General Assembly at its 30th special session, dedicated to the world drug problem. As the chair of the 59th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, I had the opportunity to witness the intensive efforts and commitment by all – Member States, UN entities, regional organizations and civil society, during the preparatory process in Vienna. This special session is a culmination of all these efforts and I look forward to our discussions here.

In 2009, Member States adopted the Political Declaration and Plan of Action and set a series of important goals for 2019. This special session comes as one of the milestones in this 10-year period.

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs is the United Nations organ with prime responsibility for drug control matters. I am pleased to say that the debates held over the last years have enriched its work to an unprecedented degree. Vienna became a forum to discuss the world drug problem in any and all of its multiple dimensions. These included prevention and treatment

of drug use disorders, human rights, crime and violence, availability of drugs for medical purposes, value of science, research, evidence and data, new psychoactive substances, alternative development and socio-economic issues, international cooperation and provision of adequate resources.

Owing to the preparatory process for this special session, the CND has been focusing its intensified discussions on sharing information on how to effectively implement programmes and policies on the ground taking into account the very different nature the world drug problem presents in different parts of the world.

The discussions between Member States have been enriched by the wide participation of other relevant stakeholders from around the world. During the last Commission on Narcotic Drugs, just last month, I watched more than 1,800 participants from governments, United Nations entities and specialized organizations, intergovernmental and regional organizations, civil society, scientific community, academia, and the youth sharing information on the various challenges posed by the world drug problem.

Seventy-four side events were held on topics ranging from flexibility of the three international drug control conventions to legislative responses to new psychoactive substances, to addressing tuberculosis and HIV and AIDS as a public health priority, and from alternative livelihoods to the use of the Darknet for drug trafficking.

The Commission in Vienna continues to act in the spirit of consensus. It is through consensus that the Commission is contributing to substantive dialogues among governments and to fostering international cooperation in effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem, despite differences in national legislative approaches and policies, and despite the various challenges faced by people around the world.

I welcome the constructive engagement of Member States during negotiations, which recently resulted not only in the outcome document but also in the adoption of important and innovative resolutions on, inter alia, proportionate sentencing for drug-related offences, networking within scientific community, mainstreaming gender perspective into drug policies, promoting standards for the treatment of drug use disorders and on the continuous need to target new psychoactive substances and amphetamine-type stimulants.

Recently, the Commission also enhanced its work following an increased number of recommendations received from the World Health Organization on the scheduling of substances pursuant to the international drug control

conventions. To this end, I very much welcome the productive cooperation between the Commission, the World Health Organization and the International Narcotics Control Board.

The multiple dimensions of the world drug problem and enhanced cooperation among the various stakeholders are also reflected in the outcome document, adopted by the Commission and transmitted for adoption at this special session. The document contains numerous calls for Member States to share with the Commission information, lessons learnt, experiences and best practices.

In the outcome document, Member States commit themselves to take the necessary steps to implement the operational recommendations, in close partnership with the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations and civil society, and to share with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs timely information on progress made in the implementation of these recommendations. The Commission stands ready to provide support to Member States in their implementation of the recommendations, in follow-up to this special session, and leading up to 2019 and beyond, by continuing to work in an inclusive and comprehensive manner with all stakeholders with whom the Commission has been engaged during the preparatory process.

To conclude, I would like to thank all Member States for their endless efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem. I also thank the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for providing substantive and organizational support to the Commission. Lastly, I thank all stakeholders who have been contributing and enriching the discussions held at the Commission for their willingness and perseverance in sharing lessons learnt, experiences and views to assist Member States in having the necessary information in order to implement a truly comprehensive, integrated and balanced approach to the complex and multi-faceted world drug problem.

Thank you.