



**66<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)**

**Opening Segment - 13 March 2023, 10 am (Vienna time)**

**Remarks by H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva,**

**President of the Economic and Social Council**

**(5 minutes)**

Honorable Ministers,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

I am honored to take part in the opening segment of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of Commission on Narcotics Drugs (CND).

From illicit cultivation and production to trafficking and non-medical drug use, the world drug problem, with all its ramifications, is intertwined with a vast array of social, economic, and environmental issues. These cross-cutting challenges relate not only to SDGs 3 and 16 but are also interlinked with a number of other SDGs. Our efforts to effectively address the world drug problem and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

In the run-up to the mid-point review of the implementation of the



2030 Agenda and the SDG Summit in September 2023, it is therefore of key importance to have a frank and constructive discussion about the world drug problem and our measures to address it – including about the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CND, as the policy-making body of the United Nations dealing with drug related issues, is the primary forum for this important exchange.

### **Excellencies,**

After a thorough review of its functional commissions and expert bodies, the Economic and Social Council has invited these bodies to be guided by the key principle of the 2030 Agenda, Leaving No One Behind, and the commitment to reach the furthest behind first. The Commission has been meeting these commitments in a number of ways, including by improving availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes under the #NoPatientLeftBehind. The Commission has also promoted comprehensive and scientific evidence-based early prevention and drug demand reduction services, including for people impacted by social marginalization.

Coordinated multidisciplinary efforts must ensure that no one affected by the world drug problem is left behind in our efforts to mitigate the drug-related consequences of the pandemic. International cooperation, embracing the principle of common and shared responsibilities, is key to accelerate implementation of all international drug policy commitments and is at the core of effectively addressing all aspects of the world drug problem.



The links between drugs and the environment cannot be forgotten in this undertaking. Long-term comprehensive and sustainable development-oriented and balanced drug control policies and programmes should be considered and designed to meet national, regional and global needs and commitments.

**Excellencies,**

The CND plays an important role in the ECOSOC family and contributes in an integral way to the work of the Council.

The ECOSOC Coordination Segment held last month was an important opportunity to raise awareness of the important work of the CND and how it fits in the broader purview of the work of the Council. I thank Ambassador Ruiz Blanco for participating in this event.

As it has been the case in the past, I appreciate that the Commission has again submitted a substantive contribution to enrich our discussions on “Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels” during the 2023 HLPF.

I thank you and wish you successful deliberations.