

**National Statement by H.E. Mr. Kenji YAMADA,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan,
Ministerial segment of the 62nd Commission on Narcotic Drugs
14-15 March 2019**

(Introduction)

Mr. Chair,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Ambassador Mirghani Bakhet of Sudan, Chair of the 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotics Drugs, for his leadership as Chair. Let me also commend Ambassador Vivian Okeke of Nigeria, Facilitator for the consultations on the Ministerial Declaration, as well as the Secretariat for their dedicated efforts to successfully organize this Ministerial segment.

(World Drug Problem)

Mr. Chair,

The world drug problem remains a serious threat to public health and social security. The international community has a long history of tackling this problem together. Counter terrorism is a top priority for Japan as we will host major international events such as the G20 Osaka Summit this year and the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic games in 2020. We see combatting transnational organized crimes, including illicit drug trafficking, as a crucial measure to counter terrorism, by preventing terrorist financing. It is

necessary to accelerate the full implementation of the commitments made over the past decade. In this context, I would like to express Japan's appreciation for the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration in this segment.

Today, the world drug problem is becoming more complicated, and the threat has aggravated. While firmly maintaining the existing framework, the international community should make further multi-faceted and multi-layered efforts against new and evolving challenges of the world drug problem. In addition, I would like to stress that international cooperation is also indispensable for reinforcing a balanced approach to reduce both supply and demand of drugs.

(Three international conventions on drugs)

Mr. Chair,

Japan reaffirms that three international drug control conventions constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system. In this respect, Japan expresses grave concerns about the widespread cannabis abuse and legalization of recreational use of cannabis in some parts of the world. Japan requests the INCB (International Narcotics Control Board) to demonstrate strong leadership as an independent monitoring body of the implementation of these conventions.

(Japan's effort and contribution)

Mr. Chair,

The Government of Japan developed "*The Fifth Five Years National Strategy for Drug Abuse Prevention*" last year. This strategy focuses on promoting the balanced approach

and enhancing international cooperation.
Japan will implement it steadily.

Under the principle of common and shared responsibility, Japan is committed to continue playing a responsible role in the international community. The Government of Japan contributed in total 25.4 million USD to the UNODC this month in order to enhance international efforts in areas such as law enforcement, border control as well as treatment and rehabilitation of drug users. Japan has continually supported capacity building projects for law enforcement officers of Afghanistan and Central Asia, in close cooperation with the Russian Federation and the UNODC, including by dispatching Japanese experts to the training. Other important areas of Japan's cooperation include the development of alternative crops and illicit crop monitoring in Afghanistan and Myanmar, where people are suffering from persistent opium cultivation.

(Closing)

Mr. Chair,

Let me reiterate Japan's commitment to the work of the CND as the policymaking body of the United Nations for drug control. Japan will continue its support for the efforts of the UNODC as the leading entity of the UN system for addressing and countering the world drug problem. The task of the CND and the UNODC is overwhelming. We therefore need to seek how they can appropriately address drug issues, considering the need for efficient management and coordination with member states and other relevant entities as well as respecting dialogue to better understand different

positions of member states.

Our efforts against drug problem will also contribute to the achievement of SDGs. We are going to host the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in April 2020 in Kyoto, where all forms of crime prevention, including those for drug-related crimes, will be actively discussed. Japan reaffirms its commitment to continue to tackle the world drug problem in further cooperation with the international community.

Thank you.

(End)