

**Opening Remarks for the General Debate of the
63rd Session of the
United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

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INTRO / PREAMBLE

Monsieur le président, messieurs et mesdames les ministres et chefs de délégation, distingués délégués et représentants de la société civile,

Je vous remercie de me donner l'occasion de parler de certaines des priorités, des activités récentes et des réalisations du Canada.

La crise des opioïdes continue de toucher les Canadiens. De plus, le Canada fait maintenant face à une augmentation des méfaits associés à la consommation de méthamphétamine dans certaines régions du pays. Le gouvernement du Canada est déterminé à continuer de travailler avec tous les ordres de gouvernement et avec ses partenaires internationaux pour contrer l'émergence des drogues synthétiques et améliorer la santé et le bien-être, la sûreté et la sécurité à l'échelle régionale et mondiale, tout en reconnaissant que nos approches doivent être fondées

sur des données probantes et respecter les droits fondamentaux des personnes qui consomment des drogues.

CANADA'S APPROACH TO DRUG POLICY // L'APPROCHE DU CANADA EN MATIÈRE DE POLITIQUE SUR LES DROGUES

La réduction des méfaits demeure un aspect important de l'intervention canadienne, qui comprend les centres de consommation supervisée et les centres de prévention des surdoses. À ce jour, le Canada compte 40 centres de consommation supervisée. J'aimerais souligner qu'il y a eu plus de 1,6 million de visites, que les effets de plus de 14 000 surdoses ont été contrés sans qu'il y ait un seul décès et que plus de 57 000 personnes ont été dérivées vers les services de soins de santé et les services sociaux. En 2019, nous avons ouvert le premier site de prévention des surdoses au Canada dans une prison fédérale.

En ce qui concerne le traitement, nous reconnaissons qu'il existe de nombreuses voies vers le rétablissement. Le gouvernement du Canada travail pour faciliter l'accès au traitement fondé sur des données probantes. Récemment, nous avons approuvé l'hydromorphe comme traitement pour les personnes qui ont un trouble de consommation d'opioïdes.

Canada also maintains a focus on enforcement and supply reduction measures. As called for in the UNGASS outcome document, it is critical that these measures be taken in conformity with national and international human rights obligations, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that any judicial and law enforcement measures are proportionate to the gravity of the offense. We remain gravely concerned about the ongoing violations and abuses committed globally in the name of the world drug problem, including application of the death penalty and extrajudicial killings.

As Members are aware, Canada continues to implement our strict regulatory framework for cannabis, as a domestic public health approach. We do not advocate for this approach as a solution for other States. This framework is comprised of four elements: strict access controls with an emphasis on preventing youth access, regulatory requirements and standards for the legal cannabis industry, extensive public education on the risks associated with cannabis use, and a comprehensive monitoring and surveillance program. It has now been nearly a year and a half since Canada put in place a new cannabis control framework. We committed to share data and I will highlight a few early observations:

- First, the illegal market has already lost 30% of its market share, and we have seen no corresponding increase in the overall size of the market. This represents nearly \$2 billion in sales that did not go to criminal organizations.
- Second, initial data suggests that rates of cannabis use have not changed among youth and young adults. Finally, we

have seen no increase in the illegal movement of cannabis across international borders.

These early observations represent only a small portion of the data that will be available over the next few years through significant sustained investments. We will continue to collect data and evaluate the impact of Canada's new regulatory framework and will ensure that any future decisions are well informed by this data. We remain committed to being fully open and transparent in our approach and in sharing outcome data with other CND members.

STIGMA

Mister Chair, I would like to emphasize that Canada is continuing to make efforts to reflect a broader range of voices in the design of all of our domestic drug policies, including civil society organizations, and people who use drugs.

For the third consecutive year, Canada is pleased to have members of civil society, including people with lived and living experience with substance use, on our delegation.

Canada would like to thank all Member States who reported to the UNODC on their initiatives to reduce stigma.

Under this theme, I invite all participants to attend our March 4th side event: “Working towards equitable access to treatment of problematic substance use for Indigenous peoples”.

Mr. Chair I would also like to take this opportunity to draw the Commission’s attention to Canada’s strong partnership with the UNODC to achieve the aims of the international drug conventions. Our partnership includes efforts to address illegal trafficking of opioids, their precursors and other synthetic drugs, through projects such as Smart Lab and AIRCOP. We also contribute to the Container Control Program which facilitates seizures of illegal

drugs and interception of cash couriers. Since 2015 Canada has delivered considerable technical assistance and equipment via the UNODC, with disbursements totaling approximately \$54 million. We acknowledge UNODC's support in integrating gender equality in these efforts. We look forward to continuing our strong and positive relationship in the years to come.

MOVING FORWARD

Moving Forward, Canada's efforts will continue to align with the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, specifically the 2016 UNGASS outcome document and take a common approach across the UN, while meeting the commitments made under the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action.

CONCLUSION

En conclusion, nous nous réjouissons à l'idée de poursuivre notre travail avec la Commission et nos partenaires internationaux afin de faire progresser les objectifs du cadre international de contrôle

des drogues, à savoir promouvoir la santé et le bien-être de nos citoyens.

Je vous souhaite à toutes et à tous une session productive.

Merci/ THANK YOU