



**STATEMENT
BY**

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**AT THE 54TH SESSION
OF THE
COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS**

**AGENDA ITEM 6 (A) AND (B): IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLITICAL
DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED AND BALANCED STRATEGY TO COUNTER THE
WORLD DRUG PROBLEM**

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Let me start by expressing our deep condolences to the people of Japan following the earthquake and Tsunami that struck parts of Japan on 11 March 2011.

Madame Chairperson,

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the delegations of Kenya for the African Group and the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The world drug problem continues to be an immediate and existing threat facing people in many parts of the world. It has a negative impact on socio economic development as it affects public health, security and well-being of all humanity. Tackling this problem requires support and more cooperation of the international community. In this regard, South Africa remains committed to the Implementation of the Political Declaration and the Plan of Action.

Madame Chairperson,

As indicated in the 2010 INCB Report, South Africa is rated among the world's largest producers of cannabis and is also becoming a hub for cocaine shipments destined for illicit markets in other countries. South Africa is also used as a transit country as well as a country of destination for heroin shipments destined for the very same illicit markets.

Methamphetamine abuse, in particular amongst the youth, is also a serious concern for our government. To curb the ease of availability of the precursors ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, South Africa has rescheduled these two substances to make them prescription only products.

Madame Chairperson,

We continue to make various concerted efforts to deal with these challenges. South Africa's efforts at fighting drug abuse are also focused on eradication of poverty in our country.

During 2010 the South African Government established an Inter-Ministerial Committee for Combating Substance Abuse. The Committee will guide high-level integrated strategies to prevent substance abuse.

As part of the strategy our Government embarked on a door-to-door campaign aimed at engaging and raising awareness about the dangers of substance and alcohol abuse among the various communities, and identifying their needs in order to combat the scourge of drugs.

Madame Chairperson,

In line with our National Drug Master Plan (NDMP) and in partnership with the UNODC, our Government will continue to work tirelessly to motivate young people against substance abuse through youth programmes such as "Ke Moja – I'm Fine without Drugs Campaign". Our Government has also renewed its commitment to build recreational facilities and sports facilities for the youth in both urban and rural areas, as part of meeting the needs expressed by the communities in urban, rural and informal settlement areas.

In addition, treatment centres are going to be expanded in order to ensure accessibility even in rural areas.

During the past year the South African Police Service held its second national chemical monitoring and precursor control conference. The purpose was to develop strategies for countering the diversion of precursor chemicals for use in the illicit manufacture of drugs and

to acquire international expertise on current international trends and best practises in the dismantling of clandestine drug laboratories.

Our Government also held a national Substance Abuse Summit in March 2011 at which the State President, H.E Mr Jacob Zuma, gave his personal commitment and support to the resolutions emanating from the Summit. These resolutions, 14 in all, cover most if not all the aspects relating to Prevention, Treatment and Reintegration or Aftercare which were dealt with during the round table discussions earlier this week in this session of the Commission. The National Drug Master Plan 2012 – 2015 and the Integrated Programme of Action are currently being developed based on the resolutions mentioned above.

Madame Chairperson,

South Africa notes with concern that women are playing an expanding role in the trafficking of drugs as couriers to and from South Africa. To address this problem the Government is embarking on a more integrated inter agency approach with law enforcement or first contact officials to properly debrief the drug trafficking couriers. This would enable us to understand what role they played or what circumstances would have led them to drug trafficking and mostly to try and address the organisations involved in recruiting them into trafficking drugs. This information can also be shared with foreign law enforcement partners on cases of mutual concern.

Madame Chairperson,

South Africa notes with concern the 2010 INCB report which highlights “an increase in the abuse of almost all types of drugs over the past few years” in Africa. There is thus a pressing need for technical assistance in the region to build sustainable, cost effective monitoring capacity, which would enable implementation of sound estimation studies on the extent of drug abuse. It is also essential to enhance data collection and related capacity building activities to help design, implement and evaluate prevention and treatment services, which are evidence based and adapted to the domestic situations.

South Africa welcomes the role played by the UNODC in the creation of regional programmes. These programmes are important as they assist countries with technical support in their fight against the world drug problem and strengthen partnerships between the UNODC and Member States. In this regard, my delegation hopes that the Regional Programme for Southern Africa would further enhance the ability of our region to fight the scourge of drug abuse. We also hope that consultations as well as implementation of the Programme would be finalised soon.

Madame Chairperson,

My delegation welcomes and commends the achievements made by the UNODC Working Group on improving the financing and governance since its creation in 2009. In this regard, we support the recommendation that the mandate of the Working Group be extended for a further period of two years.

I thank you.