

## 2019 EAST ASIA SUMMIT LEADERS' STATEMENT ON COMBATING THE SPREAD OF ILLICIT DRUGS

*Adopted in Bangkok, Thailand on 4 November 2019*

**WE**, the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America, on the occasion of the 14th East Asia Summit (EAS) in Bangkok, Thailand, on 4 November 2019;

**RECOGNISING** that the alarming growth of the illicit global drug trade as well as the persistent, new, and evolving challenges of the world drug problem, including the expanding and diversified range of drugs and drug markets continue to adversely affect the health and welfare of nations and their peoples;

**REAFFIRMING** that the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, and other relevant instruments constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system, and welcoming the efforts made by State Parties to comply with the provisions and ensure the effective implementation of those Conventions, and urging all Member States of the United Nations, that have not yet done so, to consider taking measures to ratify or accede to those instruments;

**REAFFIRMING** our unwavering commitment to ensuring that all aspects of demand reduction and related measures, supply reduction and related measures, and international cooperation are addressed in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the principles of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, all human rights, fundamental freedoms, the inherent dignity of all individuals and the principles of equal rights and mutual respect among States;

**EXPRESSING** concern that illicit crop cultivation and the illicit manufacturing, distribution, and trafficking of drugs remain a serious challenge in addressing and countering the world's drug problem;

**RECOGNISING** the need to strengthen sustainable crop control strategies, that may include, inter alia, alternative developments, eradication and law enforcement measures, for the purpose of preventing and reducing significantly and measurably the illicit cultivation of crops, and the need to intensify joint efforts at the national, regional and international levels in a more comprehensive manner, in accordance with the principle of common and shared responsibility, including by means of appropriate preventative tools and measures, enhanced and better coordinated financial and technical assistance, and action-oriented programmes;

**RECOGNISING** further the need to enhance cooperation in formulating policies and initiating activities to address drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking;

**NOTING** that globalisation and new technologies are contributing to increased illicit crop cultivation, and the production, manufacture, distribution, trafficking, advertising, import and export, and possession and adverse public health and social consequences of abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances and their precursors;

**CONCERNED** that drug traffickers are exploiting the Dark Web, the tools of modern commerce such as online markets and virtual currencies, the international mail system, and express consignment carrier shipments, to sell and distribute such drugs;

**RECOGNISING** the importance of reducing demand and supply of illicit drugs through the adoption and implementation of evidence-based prevention policies and interventions and advocacy for capacity building programmes, education, awareness, and prevention of abuse, as well as by stopping the production of such drugs, whether through cultivation or manufacture, and flow across borders, which highlight the need to enhance national efforts and international cooperation at all levels to address that situation; expanding treatment efforts to save lives and promote recovery, rehabilitation and social integration; promoting as appropriate initiatives and measures aimed at minimising the adverse public health and social consequences of drug abuse; strengthening international cooperation across judicial, law enforcement, and health sectors; and curtailing flows of precursor chemicals that are being used to produce illicit drugs;

**MINDFUL** of the continuing threat from the production and trafficking of illicit drugs faced in the region;

**STRESSING WITH GRAVE CONCERN** the international challenge, particularly to public health and welfare and law enforcement, posed by drugs including synthetic drugs, and their precursors and pre-precursors, and their illicit manufacture, diversion, and trafficking, that is increasingly threatening the region;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the work of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters and its subsidiary mechanisms in the implementation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025, the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle 2017-2019 and noting the Joint ASEAN Statement delivered at the Ministerial Segment of the 62nd Commission Narcotic Drugs (CND) in 2019 and the Joint ASEAN Statement Against Legalisation of Controlled Drugs at the 5th CND Intersessional Meeting in November 2018, that reaffirmed ASEAN's shared commitment to a Drug-Free ASEAN vision and the call for a concerted and sustained action at the national and regional levels to address the world drug problem respectively;

**WELCOMING** also the 2019 CND Ministerial Declaration and noting the 2018 Global Call to Action on the World Drug Problem, launched at the UN General Assembly in which countries committed to develop action plans aimed at addressing the world drug problem;

**DO HEREBY DECIDE TO:**

1. **REAFFIRM** EAS participating countries' shared commitment to effectively address and counter the world drug problem through concerted and sustained actions at the national and international levels, including accelerating the implementation of all existing drug policy commitments;
2. **REAFFIRM** our commitment to counter the world drug problem and address, in a balanced manner, all aspects of demand reduction and related measures, supply reduction and related measures and international cooperation identified in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as well as additional issues elaborated upon and identified in the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, held in 2016, consistent with the 2019 CND Ministerial Declaration, which recognises that those documents are complementary and mutually reinforcing;
3. **UNDERSCORE** the importance of scientific evidence-based information in the development of drug policy;

4. **STRENGTHEN** international cooperation across judicial, law enforcement agencies, and health sectors to prevent, significantly reduce, and work toward the elimination of illicit crop cultivation, the production, manufacture, and distribution of, trafficking in, and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances, and the diversion of their precursor chemicals;
5. **REITERATE** our commitment to promote the health, welfare and well-being of all individuals, families, communities and society as a whole, and facilitating healthy lifestyles through effective, comprehensive, scientific evidence-based demand reduction initiatives at all levels, covering, in accordance with national legislation and the three international drug control conventions, prevention, early intervention, treatment, care, recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration measures, as well as initiatives and measures aimed at minimising the adverse public health and social consequences of drug abuse;
6. **CONSIDER** using the “United Nations ToolKit on Synthetic Drugs” as a self-assessment tool that allows countries to identify and address the specific synthetic drug challenges they are facing;
7. **DEVELOP** and **IMPLEMENT** countermeasures and supportive public health, education and socioeconomic strategies to effectively address and counter the non- medical use and misuse of pharmaceuticals that contain narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, while ensuring their availability for legitimate purposes, and promote national, sub-regional, regional and international cooperation to prevent their diversion, trafficking and abuse, including by engaging with the private sector, particularly the chemical and pharmaceutical industries;
8. **STRENGTHEN** regional border management cooperation to safeguard the region against the threats posed by illicit drug trafficking and transnational criminal organisations;
9. **ENHANCE** national monitoring and evaluation efforts in order to measure the effectiveness and impact of the activities implemented against drug use;
10. **ENCOURAGE** the development of viable economic alternatives, particularly for communities affected by or at risk of the illicit cultivation of drug crops and other illicit drug-related activities in urban and rural areas, including through comprehensive alternative development programmes, and to this end consider development- oriented interventions, while ensuring that both men and women benefit equally from them, including through job opportunities, improved infrastructure and basic public services, which will also contribute to preventing, reducing or eliminating illicit cultivation and other drug-related activities;
11. **STRENGTHEN** cooperation with information and communications technology companies to detect and disrupt online marketing and sales of illicit drugs, and to prevent the use of virtual currencies in those illicit transactions;
12. **DEVELOP** and **STRENGTHEN** bilateral, sub-regional and international mechanisms to share information among competent authorities and promote their cooperation and undertake measures to effectively and in a timely manner identify, trace, freeze, seize and confiscate assets and proceeds of drug-related crime;
13. **ENHANCE** capacity building and drug-related information exchange to address and counter trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and their precursors, including the criminal misuse of new trafficking modalities such as the Dark Web, crypto and virtual currencies, and the international mail systems, including express mail and consignment services;

14. **IMPROVE** the availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, within the framework of national legal systems, while simultaneously preventing their diversion, abuse and trafficking in order to fulfill the aims and objectives of the three UN conventions and national legislation;

15. **REAFFIRM** our determination to address and counter the world drug problem and to actively promote a society free of drug abuse in order to help ensure that all people can live in health, dignity and peace, with security and prosperity, and reaffirm our determination to address public health, safety and social problems resulting from drug abuse;

16. **STRENGTHEN** effective, comprehensive, scientific, evidence-based demand reduction initiatives covering prevention, early intervention, treatment, care, recovery, rehabilitation, and social integration, and facilitating access to treatment and rehabilitation;

17. **CONSIDER** using the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme's (CP/DAP) capacity building initiatives to train and accredit the prevention, treatment, and recovery workforce in evidence-based practices, if applicable to the country's context, to improve knowledge and skills that strengthen the quality of services;

18. **ENHANCE** efforts to respond to the serious challenges posed by increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption, and other forms of organised crime, including trafficking in persons, trafficking in firearms, cybercrime, and money laundering, and in some cases, terrorism as well as the significant challenges faced by law enforcement and judicial authorities in responding to the ever changing means used by transnational criminal organisations to avoid detection and prosecution;

19. **ENHANCE** collaboration between EAS participating countries on the collection, analysis, and sharing of reliable and comparable data.

**ADOPTED** in Bangkok, the Kingdom of Thailand, on the Fourth of November in the Year Two Thousand and Nineteen.