

Let me first express me and my Government's condolences to the people and to the Government of Japan.

Madam Chairperson,

Sweden fully associates itself with the statement made on the behalf of the European Union.

I would like to reaffirm Sweden's full commitment to the political declaration and the Plan of Action adopted at the CND in 2009. Sweden remains a strong supporter of UNODC's activities in addressing the world drug problem and as a guardian of the international drug control conventions. We welcome the ongoing reform process and the continued development of the integrated program approach. We also welcome recent efforts to strengthen the governance of UNODC.

From Swedish point of view, it is of utmost importance to uphold a restrictive, mutually reinforcing and balanced approach between drug demand and drug supply reduction, in full compliance with the international drug control conventions of course. We need to work effectively in the international community to build a political consensus and to uphold a broad public support for this.

In such an approach, supply reduction and demand reduction through prevention as well as treatment and rehabilitation are equally important. The ultimate aim is to get drug abusers off drugs and reintegrated into society. The Swedish policies in this regard have proven to be effective.

Sweden is of the firm belief that there is no contradiction between the international drug control conventions and the respect for fundamental freedoms, as they are expressed in the United Nations human rights conventions.

One of the most important obligations for society is to protect children and young people from harm to their physical and psychological development. This includes of course illicit drugs. It is our children who are most vulnerable to the effects of drug abuse. This is why I

want to remind us all that we have legally binding obligations under the international law to promote and protect the children and their rights, and to give them as good living conditions as possible. Good living conditions do not include illicit drugs. Therefore we have to do our best to ensure that children are not becoming victims of illicit drugs. They are not involved in production or trafficking of drugs or be allowed to use drugs themselves. I am sure that we are all committed to this work.

I want to refer to the discussion about the rights of the child that was held here last year, and the resolution adopted to protect children and young people from drug abuse. According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is a duty to protect children from drugs. Article 33 of the Convention requires ratifying States to take all appropriate measures to protect children from drug abuse, and States are obliged to prevent the use of children in the production or trafficking of such drugs.

The measures to be taken by the States include of course legislation and administrative, social and educational measures. The emphasis of Article 33 is on protection and prevention. Therefore the States are obliged to make arrangements and develop structures in order to raise awareness in the general population, and especially among children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most ratified human rights treaty. Virtually every country in the world has committed itself to a code of obligations towards children. Protection against drugs is therefore unquestionably a human rights issue. And this puts children's right to be protected from drug abuse at the cutting-edge of the struggle for human rights. Protecting children from drug abuse, from production and from trafficking of drugs is not an option for State-Parties to this Convention, it is an obligation.

It is a tremendous responsibility for governments to live up to these commitments. Preventing drug abuse before it begins is the cost effective and common sense way to build safe and healthy communities. Science has made great progress in recent years by studying a broader range of population and topics. Many interventions are being tested in real-world settings with very good results.

FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY