

UNGASS 2016  
30<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly on World Drug Problem  
Statement by H.E. Mr. Arun Jaitley, Minister of Finance, Government of India  
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Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to join all of you here today on this historic Special Session of the UN General Assembly as we gather to deliberate upon the World Drug Problem that continues to pose challenges across the world.

We are meeting in this format seven years after the 2009 Political Declaration. We are also meeting only months after we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to build peaceful, prosperous and secure societies.

The Drug Problem impacts our ability to attain the objectives of our collective 2030 Agenda. It is a problem with global dimensions and requires collaboration across borders.

The three Conventions adopted by the international community have served us well in limiting and managing the drug problem. The Conventions provide sufficient flexibilities to Member States to fine tune their domestic laws so as to be commensurate with the realities and challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We strongly believe in the centrality of the three international drug control conventions in addressing and countering the world drug problem. We firmly believe that the Conventions provide ample scope to incorporate the '*human face*' of the drug problem.

Terrorism constitutes one of the most dangerous threats to civilized societies today. Terrorism knows no borders and terrorists continue to strike cities and innocent civilians across continents.

The growing nexus of Drug trafficking and terrorist networks endangers peace, security and stability across regions. We have to continue and toughen our collective fight against these evils.

India is firmly committed to the three United Nation Conventions on drug matters. As supplier of licit opiate raw material to the world and traditional licit opium cultivator for centuries, India is fully conscious of its own responsibility to eradicate any illicit cultivation, reduce demand and put in preventive and enforcement measures.

National efforts, however intense and sincere, cannot adequately deal with the drug problem. Bilateral, regional and international cooperation is essential in this area. One such area which needs extensive international cooperation is the coordinated action against emergence and abuse of New Psychoactive Substances.

India recognizes the global importance of licit trade in precursor chemicals and the need to effectively control the illicit trafficking of precursors for use in manufacture of drugs.

Several steps are being undertaken for strengthening of supply and demand reduction activities as well as treatment and after-care facilities through a public health approach. India is committed to ensure the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion, abuse and trafficking and ensure availability of drugs for palliative care, pain relief and opioid substitution therapy for cancer patients and drug abuse victims and has in May, 2015 notified uniform and simplified rules relating to '*Essential Narcotic Drugs*' to remove regulatory barriers.

Money Laundering and illicit financial flows and proceeds of crime generated from drug trafficking and other transnational organized crime remain a major challenge. The criminal networks and drug syndicates can only be effectively busted by disrupting their financial flows. I am happy to share that India and UNODC hosted the "Networking the Networks" meeting in November, 2015 in New Delhi to enable fast inter-regional cooperation in this context.

To further augment the regional cooperation to combat crimes related to drug and money laundering in the region, India in coordination with UNODC, is in advanced stages of setting up of a regional coordination centre for South Asia named SARICC (South Asia Regional Intelligence and Coordination Centre) with India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives as founding members.

The task ahead, especially in the next three years, is arduous indeed. I am confident that this session and its outcome will give a new impetus to the national, bilateral,

regional and international action towards realizing a world free of drug abuse in our lifetime and achieve the “sustainable future we want”.

Thank you.

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