



# MYANMAR

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**National Statement by**  
**His Excellency Dr. Myint Htwe**  
**Union Minister for Health**  
**Republic of the Union of Myanmar**  
**United Nations General Assembly Special Session**  
**On the World Drug Problem,**

**New York**

**21 April 2016**

**National Statement of H.E. Dr. Myint Htwe, Union Minister for Health,  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar at United Nations Special Session of the  
General Assembly on the World Drug Problem,  
21 April 2016**

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, Myanmar is in full alignment with the ASEAN statement made earlier in this UNGASS on the World Drug Problem.

All of us sitting in the hall are equally concerned about the threat posed by the use, trafficking and production of illicit drugs. It greatly burdens our health, justice and law enforcement systems and more importantly it is slowly breaking down the social fabric of the communities.

Myanmar is fully and deeply committed to fight against the narcotic drug problem in collaboration with all entities involved in the domain of preventing, containing and managing this problem.

Each and every country needs to tackle this problem as its prime national duty because it could result in untoward implications, which could have disastrous and sometimes irreversible negative impact on its workforce.

It is also threatening the health and national security of the affected countries. We must, therefore, view this problem in a holistic and comprehensive manner from different perspectives.

The strategies and interventions currently being applied must be critically reviewed and assessed from realistic and unbiased point of view in terms of its effectiveness and efficiency as well as short term and long term impact it could exert on the population. The reason being that epidemiological situations at the time of formulating the strategies and identifying the interventions may be quite different from the current scenario. The context and environment in which it operates are also changing rapidly and are always in a state of flux.

These situations call for coordinated and well synchronized response to prevent and contain the use of narcotic drugs, especially among neighboring countries. In this context, real time exchange of valid and reliable information is crucial if we are to be successful in managing the narcotic drug problem.

We need to view the narcotic drug problem as a public health issue. Therefore, attacking the drug problem must be considered along the line of principles and approaches of public health. The conduct of "implementation research" on the strategies and interventions being deployed would prove to be very beneficial. The interventions must also be fielded in a balanced manner as

these are interrelated, intertwined, reinforcing and supporting each other. We also need to create a sense of ownership of programs by all those who are actually involved in the fight against narcotic drug problem.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The successful completion of UNGASS Outcome Document is really a milestone in our fight against narcotic drug problem along our path to achieve a drug free society.

The availability of precursor chemicals for producing psychotropic substances had posed a serious problem for many countries. We should earnestly look for the source of these precursor chemicals and action be taken decisively.

Drug use, as alluded earlier, is clearly a public health issue and provision of realistic and socially acceptable preventive, curative and rehabilitative services to drug users in Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Centers across the country must be given a priority. Effective counseling and education should be made to those people admitted to these centers based on the respective country's specific customs, culture and findings of various qualitative research studies made on attitude towards drug use.

We also need to review and study the services being rendered in these centers by way of conducting "implementation research" so that our services are effective and efficient. Drug use surveys are one of the avenues by which effective and country specific strategies and interventions can be formulated. We should also streamline, fine-tune and modify the services and strategies according to changing epidemiological situations.

A review of existing drug related legal framework and laws may be made as required and appropriate and as per the changing international scenario.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the dire consequences of illicit drug use could be included in the life skills curriculum in all the schools to raise awareness among the students. This could result in long term dividends.

In conclusion, it is to be emphasized that "it is worth considering to review the existing strategies and interventions to suit the changing local epidemiological situations in the field of control of drug problem. Continuous review and monitoring of our work must be made in collaboration with UNODC, associated organizations and agencies with full involvement of community based entities".

Thank you for your kind attention.

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