



**STATEMENT
BY**

**HONOURABLE MR NHLEKO. H.E. MINISTER OF POLICE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**AT THE THIRTIETH UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SPECIAL SESSION ON THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM**

AGENDA 7: GENERAL DEBATE

19TH TO 21ST APRIL 2016

NEW YORK

Mr President,

My delegation commends you for your leadership and the manner in which you are conducting the proceedings of this Special Session. We pledge our support for the successful conclusion of this meeting.

We equally commend both the Chair of the 59th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and of the UNGASS Board, for their unflinching determination in the preparations for this occasion.

Mr President,

The 30th Session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem is convened at a critical juncture when Member States are grappling with the challenge of how to effectively address and counter the world drug problem. South Africa recalls that it was this august body that laid the foundation for the international fight against the problems posed by drug trafficking and its associated problems with the adoption of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 1961. Our overarching objective since the beginning of the war on drugs has sought to promote the health and welfare of mankind. At the same time, we all undertook to take measures to restrict the use of drugs for medical and scientific purposes.

The adoption of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, which we have gathered to review its implementation today, has provided a balanced and integrated approach for Member States to continue the international fight against the world drug problem. The three international drug control conventions should serve as our basis going forward. On this note South

Africa takes this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to these instruments.

Mr President,

South Africa notes that drug trafficking and drug abuse remains an issue of concern to many countries, especially in developing countries. While progress has been made to address this scourge, we take cognisance that drug trafficking and its associated challenges remains a major threat to security, health, and the socio-economic architectures and development of many countries.

Like other countries, South Africa has implemented an integrated and balanced approach, modelled alongside the three major pillars of the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action, which are demand reduction, supply reduction and international cooperation. In this regard, South Africa adopted law enforcement, health, judicial and social policies and measures to deal with the negative impact of illicit drugs. These policies are aimed at reducing drug addiction and abuse among the youth, rise in the burden of diseases, rise in violence and criminal activities associated with drugs.

Mr President,

Cautious of the challenge at hand, my country adopted the National Drug Master Plan for the period 2013-2017 to help Government realise the “vision of a society free of substance abuse” so that attention can be focused on raising the quality of life of all South Africans.

At the continental level, we continue to make concerted efforts to implement existing regional instruments to counter the world drug problem.

In addition, South Africa welcomes the 25th meeting of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA-Africa) held in Algeria in September 2015, which culminated into the second Russia-Africa Anti-Drug Dialogue which took place in Durban, in March 2016. This Dialogue stressed the need to address the world drug problem by implementing a comprehensive, multidisciplinary and balanced approach to drug supply and demand reduction, and its impact, as well as the rehabilitation and social integration of drug users and implementation of alternative development programmes.

Mr President,

As the target date for the Political Declaration and Plan of Action approaches, South Africa believes that financial and technical assistance should be an integral part of our regional and international cooperation efforts. This will assist us in accomplishing the goals and objectives set forth in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action. My delegation therefore calls for effective and decisive measures to address illicit drug production and trafficking.

This is purely because drug trafficking and its associated challenges undermines national safety and security and threatens to reverse the socio-economic gains we have achieved as a young democracy. It is in this context that South Africa remains confident that we can all achieve a "Society Free of Substance Abuse".

I thank you.