



Statement

by

**H.E. Dr. Nawaf Salam
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to the United Nations**

**at the
General Assembly**

**Thirtieth special session of the General Assembly
on the World Drug Problem**

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Mr. Chairman,

Lebanon welcomes the convening of this Special Session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem and I would like, at the outset to express our appreciation to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs for their essential role, and to the comprehensive and inclusive process leading to this meeting.

This Special Session comes at an important juncture after the adoption last September of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, but also to promote democracy, good governance and the rule of law, while most importantly, leaving no one behind.

The world drug problem continues to pose a serious threat to achieving sustainable development, peace and security worldwide.

Over the years, notable progress has been achieved in countering the world drug problem, mainly with regard to improved understanding of the problem, and the elaboration and implementation of national, regional and international strategies to counter it. Nevertheless, new challenges have emerged, posed by the increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime, including trafficking in humans and in firearms, cybercrime, as well as terrorism, money laundering and financing of terrorism.

All these existing and new challenges, should be taken into account and require an urgent response in our collective efforts to fully implement the 2009 Political Declaration and the accompanying Plan of Action, as well as the 2014 Joint Ministerial Statement, in conformity with the three international drug control conventions and other relevant and applicable rules of international law.

Additional attention should be given to the specific needs of women, children and youth, and an increased role of civil society is essential to achieve healthy lives and well-being for all as pledged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Furthermore, it is important to promote international cooperation to enhance affordable access to controlled drugs for medical purposes, particularly in developing countries, and cooperation at the scientific and academic levels in this regard, while ensuring to prevent diversion into illicit channels.

Mr. Chairman,

Lebanon, based on its commitment to the international drug control conventions and all relevant international human rights law, has adopted since 1998 Law number 673, which sets a comprehensive legal framework in the approach to countering the drug problem. A national council related to the Council of Ministers is in charge of elaborating a national strategy and promoting international cooperation with regard to the world drug problem and relevant judicial cooperation.

Moreover, the law gives drug users, under the supervision of a committee on addiction, the right to choose a state-sponsored treatment program over incarceration, which, if completed, entitles them to have the charges against them dropped.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, needless to remind that armed conflicts and their consequences on youth, as well as the rise of extremism across the globe, especially in our part of the world, are additional challenges that require our collective efforts for a world free of drugs and related crimes.

We look forward for substantive discussions during the roundtables and a positive and fruitful outcome of this Special Session.