

PRESS RELEASE

1. Namibia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Organizations in Vienna, Ambassador Selma Ashipala-Musavyi, Chairs the 52nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)

During the 51st Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), Ambassador Selma Ashipala-Musavyi, Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations Office in Vienna was elected as Chair for the 52nd Session of CND.

The 52nd Session of CND took place 11 to 20 March 2009, in Vienna, Austria. The 52nd Session was preceded by the High-level Segment which took place from 11 to 12 March 2009. The 52nd Session of CND was chaired by Ambassador Selma Ashipala-Musavyi, Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations Offices in Vienna (UNOV). The 52nd Session discussed the following items:

- Promoting international cooperation in addressing the involvement of women and girls in drug trafficking, especially as couriers
- Strengthening the law enforcement capacity of the main transit States neighbouring Afghanistan, based on the principle of shared responsibility
- International support to States in East Africa in their efforts to combat drug trafficking
- Progress made towards strengthening international support for States in West Africa in their efforts to combat drug trafficking
- Exploration of all aspects related to the use of cannabis seeds for illicit purposes
- Promoting best practices and lessons learned for the sustainability and integrity of alternative development programmes
- Proposal concerning quality certification of the performance of drug analysis laboratories
- Use of pharmaceutical technology to counter drug-facilitated sexual assault ("date rape")
- Improving the data collection and analysis system for following up on the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem
- Strengthening measures against the laundering of assets derived from drug trafficking and related offences
- Improving the collection and reporting of data on illicit drugs including through capacity-building
- The need for a balance between demand for and supply of opiates used to meet medical and scientific needs
- Strengthening international cooperation among the States of Latin America and the Caribbean and the States of West Africa in combating drug trafficking
- Follow-up to the Ministerial Conference on Illicit Drug Trafficking, Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism as Challenges for Security and Development in the Caribbean
- Support to the development and implementation of the regional programmes of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- Improving the collection, reporting and analysis of data to monitor the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem

Improving the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

2. Namibia chairs the High-level Segment of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs

The Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia, Dr. Linbertina Amathila, chaired the High-level Segment of the CND. Dr. Amathila led a Namibian delegation to the 52nd Session of CND, which included Hon. Dr. Nickey Iyambo, Minister of Safety and Security, and other senior Government officials.

The 52nd Session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) adopted a Draft Political Declaration and Plan of Action on the future of drug control, at the conclusion of its high-level segment. The High-level segment reviewed progress in drug control since the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on drugs in 1998 (UNGASS), and agreed on further steps to reduce the threat posed by drugs to health and security.

At the opening of the Session, Dr. Amathila, warned that the youth was wasting away as a result of drug abuse, and that sustainable development and the security and stability of many countries were affected by the drug problem. She added that the Political Declaration will be a valuable tool to spur national efforts and strengthen international cooperation.

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The Political Declaration recognizes that countries have a shared responsibility for solving the world drug problem, that a "balanced and comprehensive approach" is called for and that human rights need to be recognized. It stresses health as the basis for international drugs policy, and is a valuable tool to spur national efforts and strengthen international cooperation. It also recognizes the need for support services related to the prevention of drug use, and the treatment, care and rehabilitation of drug users.

Governments also approved an Action Plan proposing 30 remedies to problems in six areas of concern, namely,

- Reducing drug abuse and dependence
- Reducing the illicit supply of drugs
- Control of precursors and of amphetamine-type stimulants
- International cooperation to eradicate the illicit cultivation of crops and to provide alternative development
- Countering money-laundering
- Judicial cooperation

The Action Plan places emphasis, among other things, on scientific evidence to support interventions; mainstreaming drug treatment and rehabilitation into national healthcare systems; and ensuring accessibility to drug demand reduction services. Governments proposed measures to reduce the illicit supply of drugs as well as remedies for abuse and dependence and ways to control precursors and amphetamine-type stimulants. Governments agreed on the need for international cooperation to eradicate the illicit cultivation of drug-related crops and the importance of alternative development opportunities in areas that grow such crops.

Further, the Action Plan addresses new trafficking trends and calls for greater exchange of intelligence, better monitoring of the impact of cyber-technology and effective regulation of online pharmacies. It also supports drug control and alternative development approaches as part of measures to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development.

3. Namibian delegation to the 52nd Session of CND calls for international cooperation in addressing the involvement of women and girls in drug trafficking, especially as couriers

The Namibian delegation to the 52nd Session of CND introduced a particular resolution entitled “**Promoting international cooperation in addressing the involvement of women and girls in drug trafficking, especially as couriers**”, for consideration by the Commission. The resolution recognises that the fight against drugs is a common and shared responsibility requiring an integrated and balanced approach, and calls upon the international community to cooperate in countering the increase in illicit drug trafficking as well as the use of women and girls in these illegal activities.

In recognizing that the fight against drugs is a common and shared responsibility requiring an integrated and balanced approach, and calling upon the international community to cooperate in countering the increase in illicit drug trafficking as well as the use of women and girls in these illegal activities, the Namibia delegation to the 52nd Session of CND introduced a particular resolution entitled “**Promoting international cooperation in addressing the involvement of women and girls in drug trafficking, especially as couriers**”, for consideration by the Commission. The Resolution was discussed and adopted by the Commission (see details of the discussion below).

4. Deputy Prime Minister of Namibia pays a courtesy call on the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Antonio Maria Costa

The Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia, Hon. Dr. Libertina Amathila, paid a courtesy call on the UNODC Executive Director, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, and expressed her gratitude on behalf of the President and the people of Namibia, for the cooperation and assistance rendered to the Ambassador of Namibia during her Chairmanship of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, particularly during the negotiations of the Political Declaration and Action Plan to be adopted at the High-level Segment of the 52nd Session of the CND.

Mr. Costa indicated that the Ambassador has done an extra-ordinary job, and has successfully led negotiations on the Political Declaration and Action Plan, and looked forward to the High-level Segment adopting these two documents, and expressed his willingness to continue to support the Chairperson in her work, as well as to cooperate with Namibia in tackling the drug problem.

5. Permanent Mission of Namibia to UNOV holds a joint side-event on Violence against Women

Namibia, Bolivia, Finland, the Philippines and Thailand organized a side-event on ‘**violence against women**’, on the margins of the 18th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ). The meeting discussed themes within the *Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*, such as legislative reform, practical measures in law enforcement and criminal justice systems, victim support, and prevention and awareness raising.

Namibia was represented by Mr. Victor Shipoh, Director: Gender Equality and International Affairs, Ministry of Gender, as a panellist. Panellists from Canada, the Philippines and Thailand also made presentations during the meeting.

The presentations of panellists depicted initiatives and interventions exerted by their governments, agencies and partners in combating violence against women pursuant to national laws and pertinent human rights conventions. These include the passage of certain laws to prohibit and penalize violence against women and the continuing review and revision of laws and policies which condone VAW and/or discriminate against women, as well as other judicial and policy reforms introduced to eliminate VAW in all areas.

Panellists also provided a comprehensive view of anti-VAW efforts, and discussed some government mechanisms, programs and projects to eliminate VAW, the formulation and implementation of national strategic action plans against domestic violence against women and trafficking in persons, especially of women and girls, and linkages and partnerships of all duty bearers and stakeholders. The application of the *Model Strategies and Practical Measures to Eliminate Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice* is said to have been very useful and helpful in some countries.