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CONTROL COMMISSION**

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Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

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REMARKS OF THE RUSSIAN DELEGATION

AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL COMMISSION

(BOGOTA, DECEMBER 9-11, 2020)

**Remarks of the Russian Delegation
at the 68th Session of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission
(Bogota, December 9-11, 2020)**

Mr. Chair,

Ambassador Namm,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Many Delegations have already noted that this year has become a very challenging one. The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the main issues being discussed almost at all international and regional fora. For my country, 2020 also has been very busy from the point of countering drug trafficking. On the one hand, the limitations of traffic and movement of people and tightening of customs control led to 40% decrease in drug crimes and drastic reduction in hashish on the Russian illegal market. On the other hand, the Russian law enforcement agencies record a swift adaptation of drug dealers to the lockdown and absence of air connection between Russia and many countries abroad. The organization of the whole cycle of illicit drug trade has become electronic and is conducted via Internet using online messengers, electronic payment systems and bank accounts registered on third parties. There appeared hundreds of new online resources offering drugs as tobacco, medicine and other products. Also, we record a rapid growth of synthetic drugs on the illegal market, as the law enforcement agencies have arrested twice more clandestine laboratories and seized 20 times more precursors so far this year compared to 2019.

We consider the pandemic as the issue that requires attention of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs. We invite our partners from the CICAD to join us in an expert discussion on a document which, in our view, should unite the efforts of all States to overcome the consequences of the COVID-19 in the context of addressing and countering the world drug problem. We plan to present this document for approval at the 64th CND session in April 2021.

Notwithstanding the coronavirus, a huge work has been made with regard to the Russian anti-drug policy and a new Counter-Narcotics Strategy for the upcoming

decade has been recently adopted. If compared with the previous one, the priorities have been changed much. The Counter-Narcotics Strategy 2010-2020 stated that the top priority was to fight the activities of organized groups and criminal organizations related to illicit drugs. The new Russian drug control roadmap stresses that the main threats to national security in the area of drug trafficking are the legalization of drugs in violation of corresponding international regulations; the expansion of the global drug market as a result of the legalization of recreational use of cannabis, the emergence of new types of drugs; the conspiracy of drug supply and distribution channels by criminal groups using innovative communication and other new technologies; the use of the newest financial instruments in order to launder the proceeds from drug trafficking, as well as the use of new methods of payment for purchased drugs; the large-scale use of the Internet to promote illegal drug use as well as the spread of drug addiction, HIV infection, viral hepatitis and insufficient efficiency in organizing prevention activities, social rehabilitation of drug addicts and re-socialization of drug users. The strategic goals of the new anti-drug policy are the reduction in the illicit drug trafficking; reducing the consequences of illegal drug use; the forming a conscious negative attitude in the society towards illegal drug use and participation in drug trafficking as well as the improvement of availability of and access to controlled substances for medical use. The Russian Federation will continue to play an active part at the international and regional fora to counter the global drug threat, recognizing the policy-making role of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the authority of the International Narcotics Control Board within their mandates. We will make efforts to prevent the current global drug control regime from being weakened or revised, including with regard to the legalization of drugs, as well as other initiatives that could lead to increased drug trafficking and consumption. Our aim is also to further develop counter-narcotics multilateral and bilateral cooperation, within the framework of training and scientific-practical events, conferences and symposiums.

The Russian Federation commits to accelerate assistance to other States, including under auspices of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in

carrying out anti-drug activities, such as training personnel, improving their qualifications and developing the capacity of government agencies involved in combating drug trafficking. In this regard we continue to provide training on a wide range of issues in the specialized training centers of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs in Managua and Lima, as well as in educational institutions in Russia. This year, despite the coronavirus, we managed to train more than 230 officers in Nicaragua. Next year we are planning to organize trainings for about half thousand of officers from Latin America.

And last but not the least issue my Delegation would like to raise is the voting at the 63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna on the 2nd of December 2020. We consider the result of the procedure when five out of six amendments proposed by WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence were rejected as the confirmation that the majority of countries has not accepted any revision of the current international drug control system. In order to strongly support this approach, the Russian Federation and 28 like-minded states, both CND members and observers, delivered a joint statement at the past session. My country will follow this strict stance in implementing its drug control obligations.

In conclusion, the Russian Delegation would like to wish the Colombian Chairmanship and the Costa-Rican Vice-Chairmanship of CICAD great success in the fight against drugs and coordination of anti-drug activities in the Western Hemisphere in these uneasy times.