

**Message by H.E. Ambassador Khaled Abdel-Rahman Shamaa,
Chairperson of the 57th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at
the forty-sixth special session of the General Assembly of the
Organization of American States on the World Drug Problem in the
Americas, Guatemala City, 19 September 2014**

I thank the Organization of American States for having invited me to attend this meeting, in my capacity as Chairperson of the 57th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Unfortunately I am not able to attend in person.

The meeting is very timely. It is an important moment for Member States to devote their attention to this issue, that is of very high priority to the region, as well as globally.

As you know, at its 57th session, in March 2014, the Commission conducted a mid-term review of progress made by Member States in the implementation of the 2009 “Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem”.

The mid-term review resulted in a Joint Ministerial Statement, which was the result of a long and inclusive negotiation process (we had 26 facilitators coming from countries having different national policies, representing different regional positions, different schools of thought) and, hence, enjoys global ownership.

The Joint Ministerial Statement identified achievements made, challenges and priorities for action in demand reduction; supply reduction and international cooperation. In this document Member States recognized that *“many challenges of the world drug problem have persisted and new ones have emerged in some parts of the world”*. They underscored *“the need to take these new trends into account in the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action”*. They further took note of the *“ongoing discussions in some regions on how to address the world drug problem, in light of the current situation and policies”*. And they emphasized *“the importance of a broad, transparent and inclusive discussion and scientific evidence-based discussion among Member States with inputs from other relevant stakeholders, on the most effective ways to counter the world drug problem consistent with the three international drug control conventions and other relevant international instruments, in order to further implement*

the commitments and targets set out in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action”.

The Statement is a starting point as we start to prepare for the 2016 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS).

It clearly reiterated the key message that addressing the world drug problem is our joint responsibility. We therefore need to join forces.

In its preparations for 2016, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs relies on the input of a broad range of stakeholders, including ‘*organs, entities and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, multilateral development banks, other relevant international organizations, including the International Narcotics Control Board, and regional organizations as well as civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations*’

To facilitate this, a website has been created (www.ungass2016.org) to reach out to contributors all over the world. The website is meant to enable global dialogue in an inclusive and transparent manner and to function as a resource tool for the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in its UNGASS preparations.

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs needs the input from your Hemisphere. It has benefited from receiving the *2013 Organization of American States’ analytical report on the drug problem in the Americas*, as a resource tool in preparing for the 2014 High Level Review and is also looking forward to be informed and briefed about the outcome of this General Assembly of the Organization of American States.

Jointly, we can turn UNGASS 2016 in an event that “makes a difference”.

We have a lot of experience on the ground, expertise and evidence about “what works at what does not” gained at the national and regional level.... Let’s bring all the tools together and use the resources we have at our disposal the best we can... we owe it to our most precious good, our youth!

On behalf of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, I wish you fruitful deliberations!