

Annex B:

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**SPEECH FOR ALAN CAMPBELL AT HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE UN
COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS: DRAFT 1: 2ND MARCH 2009**

Madam Chair:

The United Kingdom associates itself fully with the statement made by the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union. I will highlight points that we think are important future priorities, and make some remarks about how these are reflected in the draft political declaration. But I shall first comment on the impact of the 1998 Special Session.

2. Key aims of the 1998 declaration - to eliminate or reduce drug production and trafficking significantly by 2008 - have not been achieved. But the challenges that faced us then – and that face us now - are complex. So in order to ensure that we do not lose our way, and can tackle them effectively, we must have aims that are clear and simple. Eliminating or substantially reducing drug trafficking and misuse has to be our ultimate aim. And the emphasis that the 1998 declarations placed on the importance of demand reduction has been useful.

3. But the world has moved on. New problems have emerged. So have new solutions. We as policy makers must move forward too.

4. The United Kingdom Government believes that there is a particular need to make progress in the following areas.

5. We must confront the enormity of the problem we face. Drug misuse is a problem for individuals and communities. But the phenomenon also threatens the political and economic security of nations. We must treat it with the seriousness it needs.

6. If we are to direct policy effectively, and if the United Nations is to carry

out its regulatory work accurately, we must improve data collection and analysis standards. This is fundamental.

7. We must improve cooperation between States in supply reduction. We must develop better ways of systematically collecting, sharing and using intelligence so that we can attack not just the individual traffickers, but also the network behind them. If we don't, we seize the drugs but miss the traffickers.

8. We must improve our ability to control the flow of precursor chemicals.

9. We must develop and use evidence of what works – in reducing supply as well as in reducing demand. To do that, we must develop robust ways to measure and analyse our successes and failures.

10. We must work with people and not against them. The evidence is clear that eradication of plant based drug crops will only have long-term effect if people have access to legal livelihoods. But, by the same token, people who have access to legal livelihoods have no excuse for growing drug crops.

11. Finally, the UN drugs bodies must play their part in wider UN goals. We cannot pretend that the drugs problem is isolated from other social problems that the UN has to confront. We must ensure that UN drugs strategy actively supports the UN Millennium Goals, the work of UNAIDS, the World Health Organisation's Access to Controlled Medications Programme. I applaud the International Narcotic Control Board's plea in its report this year that Governments make proper use of the WHO Programme. The Board, and the UNODC, must work alongside the rest of the UN to make sure that such exhortations are acted upon.

12. Madam Chairperson, I said I would remark on how these aims are reflected in the draft Political Declaration. I will be frank. In the United Kingdom's view, the Declaration contains a number of indications that the issues that have emerged since 1998 need to be tackled, and that the lessons learned need to be built upon. But it does so only obliquely. We would like to have seen a bolder Document. I could cite a number of examples, but will cite one. Paragraph 20 refers to the link between drug misuse and HIV/AIDS. A

key technique in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS is that known as *harm reduction* – used in the sense of the provision of clean injecting equipment to persons who are addicted to injecting drugs. Yet those words appear nowhere in the paragraph or anywhere else in the document. This is obviously at variance from other United Nations communications on the subject of HIV/AIDS – including those relating to the UN Millennium Goals that are mentioned in this Declaration itself. It sends confusing and damaging messages to Governments and agencies seeking to grapple with this disastrous epidemic. We hope that our reservation on this point will be entered into the minutes of this meeting.

13. Madam Chairperson, we must ensure that future UN drugs activity addresses the full range of harms that illicit drugs cause to the health of individuals and to the safety and security of society. We are prepared to support the draft Declaration despite the reservations we have about it, in the hope that it will be used vigorously and creatively to develop effective responses to drug misuse in the 21st century.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.