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Intervention by Colombia

AMBASSADOR GUILLERMO FERNANDEZ DE SOTO
Launching World Drug Report 2021

New York, June 25th, 2021

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the floor in this celebration of the International Day to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

I also welcome the presentation of the World Drug Report 2021.

I begin by reiterating the unwavering commitment of Colombia in the fight against the World Drug Problem.

This phenomenon constitutes one of the main threats to security, institutional integrity, sustainable economic development, and social progress.

The challenges posed by the World Drug Problem affect us all in different ways, and we need to work together to find a solution.

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For this reason, my country has advocated for the application of the principle of common and shared responsibility, which responds to a combination of political will, comprehensive action, and international cooperation to confront this scourge.

Colombia promotes the revitalization and expansion of the principle of Common and Shared Responsibility, because at present there are new patterns in the supply, production, intermediation and consumption of drugs.

Today, it is clear that the division between producing, transit and consuming countries is diffuse.

Success in the fight on this matter implies, for example, coordinated action against the new psychoactive substances, the effective control of chemical precursors, and the prevention and effective punishment of money laundering.

As it was mentioned in the preparatory meeting of the Anti-Drug Working Group held early this week with the United States, one of our main

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partners in these efforts, we should address them with a comprehensive approach that also includes programs to increase the presence of the State; transit to licit economic opportunities; improvement of security; and disrupt the supply chain, among others.

Above all, and according to INCB, this criminal activity cannot be attacked in isolation, without addressing other global issues such as social justice, economic development, corruption, organized crime, and human rights.

Hence, the application of the principle of common and shared responsibility on the part of the international community is vital in operational matters.

But it is also fundamental in relation to supporting the development processes of legal rural economies.

Mr. President,

We need cooperation and development.

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The Colombian Anti-drug policy -Ruta Futuro- has become an accelerator of development for the transformation of the territory. We seek to build regional economies capable of putting people aside from activities related to drug trafficking.

Thanks to the implementation of Ruta Futuro, for the third consecutive year, we have kept the dynamics of reduction of coca crops.

For Colombia, the illicit crops are strongly linked to the financing of terrorist organizations, which is why their eradication is an imperative of public interest.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, Colombia has achieved record levels of cocaine seizures and manual eradication in 2020 and is on track to achieve similarly significant results in 2021.

Colombia uses different instruments for the eradication of illicit crops. Until April 2021, the implementation of the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops has reported a total of 44,185 hectares of illicit crops that were voluntarily substituted.

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In addition, aerial spraying activities will be carried out after compliance with demanding environmental and public health standards by competent authorities, within the legitimate exercise of our territorial sovereignty, and by virtue of the international commitments assumed by Colombia to combat drug trafficking.

I would like to finish by highlighting that for the Government of Colombia, the priority of foreign policy on illicit drugs and related crimes is the achievement of international success against the World Drug Problem.

This will happen through the revitalization of the principle of common and shared responsibility that demands for long-term solutions and a comprehensive policy response.

Thank you.