

Honorable delegates, esteemed partners, and distinguished guests,

I am Sedef, representing the Turkish Green Crescent Society, a dedicated NGO working in addiction prevention and recovery since 1920. For over a century, we have been committed to promoting healthy, addiction-free lives through education, rehabilitation, and advocacy.

Today, I want to emphasize the critical link between SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality) in addressing addiction. Addiction is a major public health issue, but its impact is not equal. Women face greater stigma, economic barriers, and limited access to treatment, preventing many from seeking the help they need. We must ensure gender-sensitive healthcare and expand support systems to protect women and families from the cycle of addiction.

However, overcoming addiction is not just about healthcare-it requires economic empowerment (SDG 8). Without decent work opportunities, individuals in recovery are at high risk of relapse. We must invest in inclusive job markets and vocational training programs that provide the means for sustainable rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

At the same time, we must recognize the harmful impact of the illegal drug trade and the tobacco industry on both society and the environment (SDG 14). Illegal drug production fuels violence, destroys ecosystems, and pollutes our oceans and waterways. Meanwhile, the tobacco industry, driven by profit, contributes to millions of preventable deaths while also harming marine life through toxic waste. Stronger regulations and public health policies are essential to reducing these harms.

But we cannot address these challenges alone. SDG 17 reminds us that partnerships are key-between governments, civil society, and the private sector. By working together, we can develop evidence-based solutions, strengthen communities, and create a healthier, more just world.

At the Turkish Green Crescent Society, we stand ready to collaborate. Let's act now to ensure no one is left behind.

Thank you.