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New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30th MEETING

**Chairman:** Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile)

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AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING  
(continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 108: INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING  
(continued) (A/45/3, Chap. V, Sect. D, A/45/301, A/45/303, A/45/329, A/45/495,  
A/45/535, A/45/536, A/45/542, A/45/652 and Add.1; A/C.3/45/4 and E/1990/39/Add.1)

1. Mr. TIN (Myanmar) said that the Political Declaration and Global Plan of Action (S-17/2) adopted by the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the Declaration issued by the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, held in London, had given added impetus to efforts to combat drug abuse. The international community must strive to strengthen the United Nations role and tackle the problem of drug abuse and trafficking in all its dimensions simultaneously. Measures to curb illicit production of and trafficking in drugs and measures to prevent illicit demand must be intensified concurrently. Action was the joint responsibility of producer, transit and consumer countries.
2. In Myanmar the campaign against the threat posed by narcotic drugs had begun as soon as the country regained independence in 1948. The Government had allocated significant amounts of its limited resources to the campaign, as a national priority, and was conducting large-scale military operations to destroy poppy cultivation, prohibit drug traffickers and demolish their refineries in the remote frontier areas. Hundreds of soldiers had given their lives in the struggle. Drug trafficking in Myanmar was invariably linked with the problem of insurgency, and it was essential for international measures to be taken to prevent drug traffickers from using their ill-gotten money to procure guns.
3. His Government believed that the war against narcotic drugs must be multi-faceted and multi-sectoral, and that its strategy must embrace the entire range of drug abuse control activities, including law enforcement, crop substitution, livestock-breeding, medical treatment, social and vocational rehabilitation, education and mass-media information.
4. In Myanmar, a comprehensive programme for developing the remote frontier areas had been launched with a view to eliminating the need to cultivate the opium poppy or "hell-flower". In May 1989 the Government had established the Work Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races, under which a rural development programme had been started with the aim of accelerating the economic and social development of the remote border areas. The Government was convinced that the successful implementation of the programme would ultimately bring about the eradication of the opium poppy in the frontier areas, where it was cultivated as a cash crop by impoverished villagers as the only means of earning their livelihood.
5. The first step would be to establish key villages where roads, housing, electric power, clean water supply, schools and medical centres would be developed. In the initial phase, the Government would provide the basic needs of the villagers, such as food, clothing and housing, and arable land would be developed for the planting of alternative cash crops. Ultimately, local people

(Mr. Tin, Myanmar)

from the surrounding areas, living on less-developed land, would be given incentives to move to established key villages where living conditions were better. The programme placed special emphasis on building the all-important economic and social infrastructure of the remote frontier areas which had been totally neglected before the country had regained independence. The programme was already having a perceptible impact in nearly 50 townships where the opium poppy was cultivated.

6. Myanmar was fully aware of the worldwide dimensions of the drug problem and the need for regional co-operation. Specially trained task forces were being formed to co-ordinate drug control activities with their counterparts in neighbouring countries. Close co-operation had already been established with countries sharing common borders east of the Thanewin River and consultations were under way with China and the Lao People's Democratic Republic with a view to closer and more comprehensive co-operation.

7. Mr. BISTA (Nepal) said that drug abuse and illicit trafficking had reached epidemic proportions and the narco-terrorist and anti-social elements that organized and financed those activities not only threatened to destroy the entire economic and governmental apparatus in many developing countries but were undermining the prospects for international peace and security. Since those criminals recognized no boundaries, no country, acting alone, could hope to curb the threat. Efforts were needed at all levels, national, regional and international.

8. At the global level, the United Nations was the most appropriate instrument to deal with the problem because of its universal character and its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 were the major international treaty instruments that provided the framework for co-operation in formulating national and international drug control laws. By adopting the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control (CMO) in 1987, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in 1988 and the Global Programme in 1990, the international community had demonstrated its resolve to eradicate the scourge of drug abuse. The emerging international climate resulting from the relaxation of super-Power rivalry offered an opportunity for strengthening global action.

9. His delegation was pleased to learn that the United Nations Convention had now secured the required number of ratifications and would become binding international law on 11 November 1990. Its provisions on freezing, seizure and confiscation of property derived from drug trafficking, extradition of drug traffickers and co-operation among States were some of the significant elements of the narcotics control mechanism. His delegation believed that, given the political will, the Convention could prove a potent weapon.

(Mr. Bista, Nepal)

10. His delegation welcomed the decision by the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) to hold regular organizing meetings of Heads of Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), since such meetings would offer an excellent opportunity for regional co-operation and could also play an important role in training and technical assistance for Member States lacking the necessary expertise. The seven countries of the South-Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) were intensifying their efforts in devising strategies for combating the problem.

11. Although Nepal was fortunate in that the drug problem was not yet serious, the Government had already adopted a number of stringent drug control measures in response to the appeal by the United Nations and with a view to preventing the spread of the problem. The Narcotic Drugs Act of 1976, the principal body of law, had been revised in 1986 and 1987 to include measures recommended by United Nations organs for implementation by Member States. Cultivation, production, distribution and trafficking were now illegal, and the Act also provides for confiscation of the proceeds of drug trafficking and punishment of traffickers. Its implementation at all levels was co-ordinated and monitored by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Government had also adopted a number of curative measures to rehabilitate victims and reintegrate them in society.

12. Believing that awareness programmes were an essential part of effective drug abuse prevention strategy, the Government was using the mass media to inform people, particularly young people, of the adverse consequences of drugs for individual health, the family and the social structure. Non-governmental organizations were working in partnership with local people to educate, treat and rehabilitate the victims of drug abuse. Experience had shown, however, that without the support of the international community, efforts would be seriously handicapped by financial limitations and lack of technical expertise.

13. The drug problem was a collective responsibility and could not be solved merely by apportioning blame to the drug-producing or the drug-consuming countries. Eradication called for a two-pronged approach aimed at reducing demand and restricting supply within the framework of the Vienna Convention of 1988 and the Global Programme of Action adopted by the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly. Farmers in the developing countries must be encouraged to switch from illicit crop cultivation to other cash crops which must be given easy access to the markets of the developed countries, while the developed countries must intensify their efforts to reduce demand. His delegation welcomed the initiative of the United Kingdom in convening a World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat with a view to devising strategies.

14. His delegation was keenly interested in the work of the United Nations drug abuse control structures but believed that they would be more effective if they were amalgamated into a single unified anti-drug unit. It therefore supported the recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in document A/45/652.

15. Mr. HART (Australia) said that, as the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna had pointed out in her statement, the role of the United Nations in illicit drug control was not new, and in some areas the Organization had taken over League of Nations mandates. There had, however, been a noticeable quickening of activity in recent years, culminating in the forthcoming entry into force of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

16. Although the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking had demonstrated a growing recognition of the dangers of drug production, consumption and trafficking, and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline adopted by the Conference remained a basic document for concerted international action, the Conference had proved to be only a starting point in translating that recognition into an effective international response. It was not until 1989 that it had been internationally reaffirmed at the highest political levels that a renewed political commitment and significant additional resources were needed if there was to be any prospect of making headway against the threat posed by illicit drugs. There had been a great deal of international activity since then, as well as political co-operation at other levels and Australia particularly welcomed the recent decision of the Japanese Government to host a major conference on South-East Asian and Pacific drug issues in the first quarter of 1991.

17. The year 1990 had been an important one for the United Nations in developing its role in international drug control and no one, least of all his delegation, doubted its vital contribution to achievements so far. At the same time, no one should doubt that much more remained to be done. The effective execution of all United Nations mandates would call for increased resources and a concerted, coherent effort throughout the United Nations system. That would require full-time high-level leadership. The United Nations must also be able to interact with and influence other drug control programmes and policies, and that would require liaison at a very senior level.

18. The battle against drug abuse had not yet been lost - it had barely begun. It was up to the international community to prove in the coming years that production, trafficking and consumption of illicit drugs could be controlled. While bilateral and multilateral action were certainly important, the United Nations should have a central role in international drug control efforts. To respond to the increased importance of drug control activities, the Organization needed to be not only financially stronger but also more adaptable to the demands of the situation. It was in that connection that Australia welcomed documents A/45/652 and A/45/652/Add.1, which dealt with the work of the Group of Experts appointed to advise and assist the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control. However, like Mexico, his delegation would have wished for earlier circulation of the latter document.

19. The new United Nations structure for drug abuse control had to provide a higher status for drug control activities within the United Nations system; high-level, full-time leadership for the Vienna secretariat unit; a single programme for all United Nations Secretariat drug control activities; and a clear line of authority from the programme head to the Secretary-General. In short,

(Mr. Hart, Australia)

to respond fully and vigorously to the challenge of combating drug abuse in the 1990s, the United Nations must be prepared to undertake a complete restructuring of its existing units in Vienna.

20. Mr. PULZ (Czechoslovakia) said that the problem of drug abuse and the illicit production and trafficking of drugs represented a serious global threat and called for a new comprehensive international approach. In that connection, the Global Programme of Action against illicit narcotic drugs, adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session in February 1990, provided the practical framework within which the United Nations could spearhead such an effort.

21. The Secretary-General's reports on the work of the United Nations system in combating the drug problem deserved the Committee's full attention. The conclusions contained in the report on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control (A/45/652) were of particular importance. His delegation was in favour of consolidating the three existing secretariats into one unit, the head of which would be directly accountable to the Secretary-General. Such a change should be implemented without delay. Noteworthy also was the Secretary-General's report on the recent meetings of the Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs, contained in document A/45/535. The recommendations in paragraph 13 of the report provided useful guidelines for United Nations efforts in that field.

22. While primarily a transit point, his country was taking an active part in all phases of the international campaign against drug abuse, with special emphasis on controlling the production of illicit drug precursors and limiting drug distribution. In an effort to step up its drug control activities, his country was also reorganizing its anti-narcotics police units, reinforcing and expanding its contacts with the relevant agencies in other countries and reviewing its drug control legislation. In June 1990, it had established a governmental commission on narcotic drugs, which served to co-ordinate the various domestic efforts in that sphere and to monitor the implementation of the multilateral and bilateral drug control treaties.

23. His country was in the process of revising the sections of its Penal Code which related to illicit drugs and had set in motion the legal procedures for ratification of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and for accession to the Protocol to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.

24. His Government was increasing its multilateral and bilateral co-operation activities through, inter alia, renewed participation in Interpol consultations with other European countries. It also endorsed the establishment of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), European Region. His country was keenly interested in participating in the activities of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) and was considering the possibility of making a financial contribution to the Fund.

25. Mrs. ARYSTANBEKOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stressed the need to strengthen joint efforts to combat drug abuse and stop illicit drug trafficking in a world where drug addiction was on the rise, new countries were being involved in illicit trafficking and the economic, political and moral foundations of society were increasingly threatened. In that connection, her delegation welcomed the fact that 27 States had already ratified the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

26. The United Nations must become a centre for co-ordinating measures by the international community to combat drug abuse. In order to do so, the Organization's structure for drug abuse control must be streamlined for greater efficiency. Accordingly, her delegation supported the recommendation by the Group of Experts concerning the amalgamation of the three existing secretariat units into a single executive structure and the establishment of a United Nations programme to combat narcotic drugs. That would increase mobility, eliminate duplication of effort and make more rational use of existing resources.

27. The new structure must co-ordinate its activities with the United Nations Office at Vienna, particularly with regard to measures to combat organized crime in the field of drug trafficking. United Nations activities to combat drug abuse must be adequately funded, allocations of budgetary funds must be monitored, all possible savings must be made and resources must be redeployed where required.

28. Further consideration should be given to the economic and social consequences of illicit traffic in drugs. She stressed the need for an in-depth study of the social causes of drug addiction and for preventive measures to forestall dangerous new trends in that area.

29. Considering that regional co-operation was particularly important in combating drug abuse, her delegation welcomed the decision to convene a European meeting of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA). Illegal drug production in the "Golden Crescent", which was adjacent to the southern borders of the Soviet Union, was growing at a dangerous rate, particularly in Afghanistan. The Afghan Government was making a serious effort to halt illicit trafficking and the Soviet Union was co-operating in that regard on a bilateral basis. Nevertheless, it was clear that the Government was unable to solve the problem. The initiatives aimed at establishing close co-operation between the countries of the region on a subregional basis should be given very serious consideration. The Soviet Union's bilateral co-operation in that field with a large number of States was continuing to grow and was acquiring an increasingly solid legal basis. Her delegation favoured the elaboration of effective instruments for combating drug abuse and would support a collective decision by the Committee aimed at strengthening international co-operation in the field.

30. Mr. BURCUOGLU (Turkey) said that he wished to avail himself of the opportunity to speak to reaffirm his delegation's full support for the Government and people of Colombia in their struggle against the drug menace.

(Mr. Burcuoglu, Turkey)

31. The seventeenth special session of the General Assembly had been highly productive. In particular, the adoption by consensus of the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action had demonstrated the firm resolve of the international community to combat the scourge of drugs. As one of the first countries to call attention to the links between illicit drug traffic, contraband weapons, and international terrorism, Turkey welcomed the fact that that linkage had been acknowledged in the documents adopted at the session.

32. In addition to the guidelines for action provided by the seventeenth special session, the recent World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat had underscored the need that equal importance should be accorded to reducing both the demand for and the supply of illicit drugs.

33. He was also gratified by the entry into force in November 1990 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Turkey, which was a signatory to the Convention, currently applied several of its provisions and was taking steps towards ratification.

34. His country had achieved remarkable results in the fight against the illicit production and use of drugs. However, with its geographical situation on what was known as the Balkan route, Turkey faced the challenge of expanding illicit transit activities. In order to strengthen its ability to seek out and combat drug-related crime, Turkey had entered into bilateral co-operation agreements with several countries and with United Nations specialized agencies, including two recent agreements between Turkey and UNFDAC.

35. With international drug trafficking having reached alarming proportions, the United Nations had to have adequate resources to wage a successful campaign. It was therefore vital to allocate an increased share of the regular budget and more generous voluntary contributions to the United Nations agencies dealing with drug control.

36. The Group of Experts to advise and assist the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control had submitted a valuable report of the highest quality. The Secretary-General had endorsed the work of the Group, in particular, their recommendation that a single secretariat unit should be established at Vienna to oversee all drug control activities.

37. Mr. NAVARRETE (Chile) said that the problem of the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of drugs was one of the most serious challenges facing mankind. Because the problem affected the entire world, no country was justified in refusing to participate in the search for realistic and appropriate solutions.

38. The Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, combined with the widespread adherence to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, provided a general framework in which to develop the necessary strategies to achieve the objectives of drug control.

(Mr. Navarrete, Chile)

39. Chile welcomed the work carried out by the Group of Experts and endorsed the principal recommendations contained in their report (A/45/652/Add.1). That report, which dealt with the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control, merited serious consideration.

40. While its drug problem had not reached the serious dimensions of some other countries, Chile was nevertheless concerned by the growing international network of drug traffickers. There had recently been evidence of drug transit activities and money laundering within his country. In response, the Chilean democratic régime, which had come into office in March 1990, was implementing a set of policies including stringent customs control, security checks, prevention of drug abuse and demand reduction. Unfortunately, the existing legislation still had gaps which needed to be filled as rapidly as possible. His Government was therefore making every effort to modernize the aspects of its legal system which dealt with drug control. It gave high priority to imposing severe penalties on those individuals who manufactured, processed or in any other manner produced drugs or psychotropic substances creating drug dependency and representing potential public health hazards. Such a policy was in response to the urgent need to control the growing threat of illicit drug activities.

41. His country's drug laws must be made to conform to international norms, particularly those relating to the control of chemical substances used to produce narcotic drugs. Chile's laws were also being changed to prevent money laundering and make the police more effective, and measures to prevent the growing of illicit crops and to prevent and punish trafficking were being strengthened.

42. Preventing drug abuse was an integral part of the country's efforts to protect the health of the population. Marijuana was one of the most extensively abused drugs because of easy access and low price. Marijuana crops were grown illegally in the southern part of the country. Stimulants in general and amphetamine derivatives were also widely abused, and in the northern part of the country there was an extensive illegal traffic in cocaine and its derivatives. The Government had therefore established a national drug control council to advise the President in matters involving the prevention and control of drug abuse as well as the rehabilitation and social reintegration of addicts. Extensive efforts to educate the population were being carried out through conferences, seminars and the like.

43. Chile, which had recently signed bilateral agreements to control drug abuse with a number of Latin American countries, stressed the need for a global policy taking into account all aspects of the problem, including alternative crops, economic assistance, access to international credit sources and availability of personnel to eradicate production centres. The time had come to halt the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs, while at the same time safeguarding the sovereignty and self-determination of peoples. His country was prepared to do its utmost to achieve that objective.

44. Mrs. BENNAGHMOUCH (Morocco) said that the international community had rightly assigned a high priority to combating the growing scourge of drug abuse. The developing countries, which produced the narcotic drug plants, required greater international technical and economic support to prevent their own drug control efforts from jeopardizing the development strategies they had formulated to improve the standard of living of their people. Crop substitution could succeed only with guaranteed markets for new crops and for the raw materials that provided those countries with their major source of income. The demand for drugs must also be reduced, and action to combat drug abuse was the shared responsibility of consumer and producer countries.

45. In order for the United Nations to intensify its drug control efforts, urgent measures would have to be taken to remedy the 33 to 35 million dollar biennial deficit that was currently undermining its drug activities. The lack of co-ordination among the various United Nations bodies dealing with drug control must also be corrected as soon as possible.

46. Morocco had formulated a national strategy that included measures to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking, to educate the public about the dangers of drug abuse and to treat and rehabilitate addicts. It also appreciated the help it had received in those efforts from the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and from the European Economic Community.

47. Mr. KHOSHROO (Iran) said that the sevenfold increase in the production and consumption of drugs in the past 10 years created a crisis that called for concerted action by the international community at all levels. Iran was in a region through which much illicit drug traffic passed and it had undertaken a major effort to stop it through the enactment and vigorous implementation of laws against the cultivation, production, import and export, distribution, consumption and stockpiling of narcotics, severe punishment of traffickers, improved border controls, the establishment of centres for the rehabilitation and treatment of addicts, the use of the mass media to educate the public about addiction and the compilation of statistical data about addicts and traffickers.

48. The drug problem was international in scope and could only be dealt with through international and regional co-operation. Iran had therefore been an active participant in international and regional efforts to combat drugs and had signed a number of bilateral agreements for regional co-operation.

49. Mrs. ZABOLAI CSEKME (Observer, International Labour Organisation) said that the ILO was fully aware of the magnitude of the problem of drug abuse and was prepared to co-operate with all the relevant bodies and agencies of the United Nations system in dealing with it. Demand reduction and rehabilitation were essential but could not be achieved without full employment, the development of human resources and better living and working conditions, and the ILO, by implementing its basic mandate, helped create an environment that discouraged drug consumption. Initiatives at the workplace were extremely effective in preventing and reducing substance abuse problems, and the ability to obtain or hold a job was essential in the rehabilitation and reintegration of addicts. Work also conferred the dignity and sense of responsibility that were conducive to a drug-free and

(Mr. Zabolai Csakme, Observer, ILO)

productive life. The ILO had accordingly adopted a resolution stressing the role of Governments, employers and workers' organizations in reducing demand through programmes at the workplace and community levels and calling for ILO action in the areas of rehabilitation, substance abuse at the workplace and the integration of youth, as well as increased interagency collaboration.

50. The ILO also placed special emphasis on information and education at the workplace and helped recovering addicts to readjust through vocational rehabilitation. Its efforts to reduce demand included the dissemination of a multi-media kit providing information about substance abuse at the workplace, the range of available responses, the implementation of programmes and the availability of resources. It had also implemented numerous national and regional rehabilitation projects. The ILO worked closely with employers' and workers' organizations, which were becoming increasingly important partners in rehabilitation programmes, and it was prepared to co-operate with the international community in all efforts to remove the root causes of drug abuse and provide for the rehabilitation and reintegration of recovering addicts.

51. Mr. EMBLAD (World Health Organization) said that WHO had recently set up a special programme to reduce the impact of substance abuse on society and stop its spread world wide. The programme sought to diminish the demand for addictive substances, develop effective approaches for the treatment of substance dependence, help control the supply of licit psychoactive substances, and ensure that health components were included in all national drug policies. WHO has decided to take that step because substance abuse was seriously affecting the health and welfare of more people than ever before, including babies, children and pregnant women. There were communities in Europe, North and South America, and Asia, where drugs and drug-related diseases had become one of the four leading causes of death among young men and women. There was also evidence that they might be a prime factor in the increasing rates of sexually transmitted diseases, complications in pregnancy and child neglect.

52. WHO intended to mobilize the increased numbers of health and social workers available for combating drug and alcohol abuse. At the same time, it was important to strengthen existing health and social services in order to meet the growing need to provide care to the individuals and families affected. The World Health Organization planned to set up a major research and intervention programme to understand better and control the dynamics of substance abuse. It would increase its activities in the area of treatment and rehabilitation and play a more active role in the control of licit psychoactive substances. Working through national primary health care systems, WHO hoped to carry out primary prevention activities and ensure that adequate resources were set aside in all national drug programmes for that purpose. Without the active involvement of the international and national health sectors to reverse the current trend, the health of children, young people and future generations would be further threatened by the widespread abuse of drugs and alcohol.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.