



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 43rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ZADOR (Hungary)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 106: INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST TRAFFIC IN DRUGS: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/646, 260, 544, 777 and 778)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/40/3, 771-773; A/C.3/40/8; E/CN.71/1986/2)

(a) REPORT OF THE COUNCIL (continued)

(b) REPORTS OF SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

1. Mr. BERTAUX (World Health Organization (WHO)) said that WHO gave high priority to the problem of drug dependence and took action in accordance with the International conventions on narcotics and psychotropic substances.

2. The Secretary-General's report on international co-operation in drug abuse control (A/40/771) gave a summary of WHO policies, objectives and activities at all levels. The aim of the WHO Global Programme on Drug Dependence was to determine the problems of Member States, to formulate policies for combating them and to develop techniques for implementing those policies. WHO collaborated closely with the relevant United Nations bodies - the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, and with non-governmental organizations and WHO-designated research and training centres.

3. At the country level, programmes financed by UNFDAC had been implemented in various countries, covering staff training, epidemiological studies, the introduction and evaluation of programmes of treatment, collaboration with national authorities and the integration of preventive measures into the system of primary health care. At the global, interregional and regional levels there were other activities such as the development of new techniques and the organization of seminars and training courses.

4. In order to meet its obligations under international conventions, WHO evaluated the therapeutic value and effects on public health of the use of specific psychoactive drugs. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs had adopted WHO's recommendation that a number of drugs should be scheduled or rescheduled under the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961. WHO was also drawing up directives for the monitoring of narcotics and psychotropic substances under international drug control treaties, and had conducted a wide-ranging study in 13 countries.

5. WHO would participate in the proposed United Nations Conference on Drug-Abuse Control, to be held in 1987. The Conference would have before it the report of a prior conference, to be held in London in March 1986 under the sponsorship of WHO and the United Kingdom Government. WHO was preparing a set of working documents on relevant topics and would submit the results of current projects.

6. Mr. KORHONEN (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, reviewed the functions of the United Nations bodies concerned with drug abuse control and said that they should give more assistance to the specialized agencies which, in turn, should attach higher priority to drug issues. The drug abuse situation had worsened in the last year, and there was increasing evidence of links between international drug trafficking and other organized crime.
7. As a complement to United Nations drug abuse control, Member States had the obligation to provide medically essential drugs and combat drug abuse territory, while participating in international co-operation at all levels. The United Nations Conference on Drug-Abuse Control should adopt a multi-disciplinary programme of action for mobilizing the full potential of the United Nations system and reinforcing action at the national, regional and international levels. It was to be hoped that the Conference would take advantage of individual countries' experience and avoid irrelevant political issues.
8. His delegation had noted the Secretary-General's report on the comments and proposals received from Governments concerning a draft Convention on illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (E/CN.7/1986/2), which would be considered at the ninth special session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in February 1986. Existing international conventions ensured that drug traffickers would not escape prosecution on purely technical grounds, and he called upon more States to implement their provisions.
9. Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas) said that illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse had reached crisis proportions, and the international community must act decisively to combat them. Full implementation of existing drug control instruments would do much to improve the situation, but further measures were needed, and his delegation supported the proposed Convention on illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and the ministerial-level United Nations Conference on Drug-Abuse Control. The new Convention must avoid duplication, incorporate the experience gained from existing instruments and make provision for future action. Illicit drug trafficking was a transnational problem, and the Convention should be drafted to make it acceptable to as many States as possible.
10. He supported the objectives of the proposed Conference on Drug-Abuse Control and considered that the existing national co-ordinating mechanisms would be the best channels for co-ordinating national planning for the Conference. The Conference's multi-disciplinary approach would help to strike the right balance between control of illicit activities and rehabilitation of drug addicts, but the Conference should take care to focus on formulating co-operation strategies and not spend time on describing national policy.
11. The interregional meeting of the heads of national law enforcement agencies, scheduled to meet in Vienna from 28 July to 1 August 1986, should consider the efficiency of law enforcement techniques, the effectiveness of national and international provisions and the harmonization of State legislations and submit recommendations for consideration by the Conference on Drug Abuse Control. Experts in other relevant disciplinary areas might also meet to draw up recommendations in the same way.

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

12. UNFDAC had done much useful work in advising developing countries on law enforcement, alternative crops, etc., and deserved continuing international support. International activities planned for the next few years would increase the workload of all United Nations drug control bodies which should be relieved of financial and other constraints in their work. Member States should encourage the specialized agencies to give high priority to drug abuse control.
13. The recent meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government had considered problems connected with the confiscation of the proceeds of drug trafficking and the control of criminal offences extending across national borders. The Caribbean countries formed part of the illicit drug route between the drug-producing countries of South America and the North American consumer markets, and were thus the centre of large-scale drug trafficking. His country was committed to increasing surveillance at seaports and airports to prevent the transshipment of illicit drugs and supported United Nations action for purpose. Its co-operation with the United States had resulted in the seizure of large shipments of illicit drugs. However, that action had been taken at the expense of essential social and economic development programmes: in the last 10 years, the Bahamas had been obliged to increase its expenditure on law enforcement from \$9.9 million to \$41.0 million.
14. Mr. SUCRE-FIGARELLA (Venezuela) said that each day his Government was becoming more aware of its responsibility to end drug trafficking. The draft Convention against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Related Activities was a first step in the direction of concerted international action, but but its adoption was a complex and arduous process. On the basis of the contributions of Governments, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at its forthcoming session, would be able to decide on the form and substance of the Convention.
15. However, the process of codification showed that a review was necessary every 10 years. The effectiveness of international instruments in that sector was accumulative. The existing instruments complemented each other and should not be viewed in isolation. Growing awareness of the qualitative and quantitative escalation of the drug problem would prompt countries to accede to and ratify existing instruments, in particular the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1972 Protocol amending it and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances.
16. There were many aspects of drug trafficking to be taken into consideration, such as the crime itself, the monopolies controlling the traffic, the profits, complacent societies, the poor victims, the pitiful growers, the lack of guidance, and political corruption. In addition to drug control legislation, it was necessary to help farmers to grow alternative crops because economic incentive was one of the main reasons for growing harmful substances.
17. Given the vast range of crucial factors affected by the cultivation, traffic, demand and consumption of narcotics and psychotropic substances, it was difficult to grade them in terms of importance since they were interdependent. Nevertheless, it was becoming clearer that some factors were more harmful than others. So far, and despite the great efforts made, the qualitative and quantitative advance of drug trafficking was beyond the capacity of States to counter it.

(Mr. Sucre-Figarella, Venezuela)

18. Venezuela was making a great effort at the national level by carrying out educational and prevention programmes, using all the communication media in campaigns directed at all levels of the society. It was intensifying rehabilitation programmes and investing specialized human resources in the search for formulas that would produce the best results. It was revising bilateral treaties on drug-related issues such as extradition. The nations of the world had to unite in order to stop the new traffickers in death. In that connection, the call of the Secretary-General for a United Nations conference on drug abuse control was most appropriate and timely. While drug trafficking was not a new problem, world conditions, the nature of the crime and its social proportions and global spread had changed. All countries must therefore recognize the need to provide the sectors of the United Nations established to combat drug abuse with the means for carrying out their tasks. During 1985, Venezuela had increased its contribution to UNFDAC, whose activities were becoming more vital each day.

19. The international community had immense possibilities in the fight against drug trafficking: criminals must be told that they would be prosecuted; and programmes to aid innocent victims must be drawn up. The greatest level of international co-operation was necessary and he formally proposed that an annual crusade should be organized against drug trafficking.

20. To that end, countries should first concentrate on analysing their own structures, such as existing laws, educational procedures, social and economic conditions, available resources and the real magnitude of the drug problem. Secondly, they should examine existing international institutions, their operations, their mandates and their shortcomings and virtues. Thirdly, they should decide how to co-ordinate all efforts in order to create an efficient system that would provide societies with the guarantees required for preventing, combating, and punishing drug trafficking, bearing in mind that most of the victims were young people.

21. Mrs. GUO (China) expressed appreciation for the work done by the United Nations bodies concerned with drug control in fighting drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The situation gave rise to serious concern, and urgent action must be taken as soon as possible. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs had already begun to prepare a draft Convention on illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances which, it was to be hoped, would soon be completed.

22. Control measures at the national level were the key to eradicating drug abuse and illicit trafficking and the basis for all international co-operation. The experience of other countries could be most useful in that respect.

23. By the 1950s, drug abuse and illicit trafficking had been completely eradicated in her country by means of strict governmental control and effective legislation. In recent years, China had been used as a transshipment point by a small number of drug traffickers and had therefore participated in international co-operation, had acceded to the international drug control conventions and would shortly become a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Her Government had decided to make a contribution of \$US 20,000 to UNFDAC.

24. Mr. NAGLER (United Kingdom) said that his Government had made the fight against drug trafficking and misuse a major priority issue. There was no single explanation for the increase in drug misuse over the past few years in the United Kingdom and throughout the world and his Government's approach had therefore been to develop a strategy for attacking drug misuse by simultaneous action on five fronts by: improving measures to prevent drug misuse, particularly among young people, and to provide for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts; strengthening measures to deter people from taking drugs in the first place; improving the effectiveness of police and customs action against drug offenders; tightening controls on prescribed drugs which might be misused; and co-operating at the international level. That strategy acknowledged the responsibility of the United Kingdom to tackle its domestic problems as a contribution to combating international trafficking.

25. United Kingdom courts had the power to sentence drug traffickers to life imprisonment and there would soon be legislation before Parliament for confiscating the proceeds of drug trafficking. The United Kingdom also regarded the international aspects of its policy as an essential and integral part of its overall strategy and was firmly committed to the international effort. At the regional level, it was a member of the co-operation group against drug trafficking and drug abuse of the Council of Europe.

26. The starting-point in the fight against drug trafficking must be the recognition that many producer countries faced enormous problems in combating the traffic, as had been brought home to him in October 1985 when he had visited Pakistan and had become aware of the enormous problems faced by the Pakistan Government in the North West Frontier Province. What was required was a sustained, coherent and unified approach by a number of nations acting together. It was there that the role of the United Nations was so vital because it could act as a conduit through which the international effort could be channelled to the areas where it was most needed.

27. UNFDAC had shown, by its work in Pakistan and elsewhere that it was possible to develop a unified and properly structured programme of assistance. It was a small fund in comparison with other United Nations funds and needed greater support. While in Pakistan, the responsible United Kingdom Minister had announced a further donation of £2.4 million to the Fund's rural development project in the North West Frontier Province, which was in addition to the £1 million already pledged. The United Kingdom had also announced that it would make available £1 million to assist in eliminating illicit cocaine production in South America.

28. He commended the system of raising finance which UNFDAC had adopted by designing master plans for particular areas and inviting nations to support particular elements. However, his delegation appreciated the need for UNFDAC to respond to individual requests for assistance and would therefore continue to make an annual unallocated contribution to it.

29. In the past, there had been some lack of co-ordination between the permanent drug control bodies and some duplication of effort. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs should retain the primary role of encouraging effective, ongoing

(Mr. Nagler, United Kingdom)

co-ordination and planning for future priorities, but it must be provided with the necessary backstopping. The United Kingdom had been pressing in the Commission for more budgetary information to be made available so that the Commission could give better informed advice.

30. His delegation was pleased to note that, in their respective reports, the Secretary-General, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination all agreed with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs that United Nations drug bodies should give greater emphasis to work on supply and demand reduction. One particularly valuable recommendation of JIU that was that the United Nations effort on drugs control should be system-wide.

31. His Government fully supported the proposal for a new Convention against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Related Activities, but noted that, as of August 1985, only 35 countries had responded to the request for comments and suggestions as to what the Convention might contain. If the Convention was to be effective, it must be capable of ratification by as many countries as possible and, unless more nations responded to the Secretary-General's request, it might prove difficult for the Commission to make meaningful recommendations.

32. He welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal for a world ministerial conference on drug abuse control in 1987 but efforts must be made to ensure that the resources for the conference were not diverted from existing United Nations drugs programmes.

33. Mr. VILLAGRA DELGADO (Argentina) said that the enormous sums obtained through drug trafficking had resulted in an expansion of organized crime, and the organization and power of drug traffickers was in some cases threatening national political institutions. To combat drug trafficking and abuse, concerted and generous action by all the international community was needed. One problem involved in curtailing illicit cultivation was that the crops were nearly always grown in countries with few resources, which could not devote large sums to drug control and, in most cases, could not even compete with the enormous amounts spent by drug traffickers on protecting the crops. It was in that area that technical and financial assistance from more powerful countries - in many cases, the main centres of consumption - was essential. One possible solution would be a balanced programme of substitution which would provide the farmers, most of whom were themselves victims of drug trafficking, with viable alternative ways of earning a living. The transit States, which in most cases also suffered from a shortage of resources, should also receive assistance.

34. One encouraging factor in the fight against drug trafficking was the international community's growing response to the need to take concrete and speedy action. Argentina, together with other Latin American nations, had promoted the adoption in 1984 of the Quito Declaration against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and had requested the convening of a conference. The Secretary-General and the international community had supported the initiative, and the proposed agenda (A/C.3/40/8) showed the variety and complexity of the topics to be discussed.

(Mr. Villagra Delgado, Argentina)

35. Another Latin American initiative was the preparation of a draft Convention against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances which would include aspects not covered by existing instruments. His delegation therefore urged the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to accelerate its work in that connection. It also fully supported declaring an all-out war against illicit drug traffic and would participate actively in all efforts to that end.

36. Mrs. ITO (Japan) said that the abuse of narcotic drugs imperilled the economic and social development of nations and was a danger to international security. Japan hoped that Member States would take note of the report on the drug problem prepared by a group of experts on the basis of discussions held at the Bonn summit meeting.

37. Japan's Headquarters for Drug Abuse Control had called, in its 1985 strategy, for efforts in three areas: education to increase awareness of the dangers of drug abuse; tightening of controls on drug traffic and use; and improvement in treatment and rehabilitation techniques. Overall control of the production, transport and consumption of drugs was necessary in order to eradicate illicit traffic and, to that end, close co-operation among the countries where such activities took place was essential. Furthermore, the measures taken should be specific to the individual regions or subregions concerned, and she commended the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on its work in that area.

38. Consistent with its support for the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, Japan had held seminars on the control of drug-related offences which had contributed to the knowledge of experts in that field and through personal contacts had fostered co-operation among the countries concerned. In that regard, mention should be made of the important role played by UNFDAC, to which Japan had contributed every year since 1973; it would contribute \$400,000 in 1985.

39. She welcomed the initiative taken by Latin American countries in the work on the draft Convention on illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. It was essential both to avoid duplication of existing instruments, and to ensure universality and encourage all States to accede to the new Convention. Considerable research should, therefore be conducted on existing legislation in Member States before the final draft of the Convention was drawn up.

40. She supported in principle the proposed ministerial-level United Nations Conference on Drug-Abuse Control, but thorough preparation would be needed, involving the expertise of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The Conference should take into consideration the need to reduce the demand for drugs, with the emphasis on education, treatment, rehabilitation and, if necessary, punishment.

41. She noted with satisfaction the international and regional activities undertaken by United Nations bodies, as described in the Secretary-General's report (A/40/771). The Narcotics Laboratory Section of the Division of Narcotic Drugs had made a particular contribution towards improving and standardizing drug analysis methods.

42. Mr. GÖTÜRK (Turkey) outlined significant points in the 1984 report of the International Narcotics Control Board (E/INCB/1984/1) which drew attention to the unprecedented increase in drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking.
43. The current situation had led many countries to make heroic efforts to fight drug trafficking and abuse, but national measures were bound to be frustrated unless coupled with effective international co-operation. An effort should be made to identify where failures had occurred. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, and its 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances were providing the necessary foundations for international co-operation and the overall balance thereby established should be preserved. At the same time, Turkey fully supported the ongoing work on the formulation of a draft Convention against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, designed to supplement existing instruments.
44. The Secretary-General's report (A/CN.7/1986/2) was commendably systematic and analytical. Governments which had not yet expressed their views should do so in good time. The task of preparing a complementary instrument to combat drug trafficking required a comprehensive approach and, in that context, he drew attention to decision 5 (XXXI) of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs which took note of the increasingly clear links between drug trafficking, the illegal traffic in firearms, subversion, international terrorism and other organized criminal activities. The decision also stated that Governments and reporting authorities should be requested to address the issue of identifying those links in the relevant part of the annual reports' questionnaire on the working of the international treaties on the subject, and when reporting on individual drug seizures. He therefore appealed to Member States to make use of the procedure for the purpose of compiling evidence.
45. Turkey attached importance to formulating, in the draft Convention, more effective provisions on issues such as forfeiture of assets of illicit drug traffickers, extradition, smuggling on the high seas, control of precursors and essential chemicals used in the manufacture of drugs and psychotropic substances, co-operation at borders and training and technical assistance. In that context, he noted with satisfaction the Plan of Action adopted by the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Milan in 1985.
46. Turkey also endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to convene a United Nations conference on drug-abuse control in 1987, the success of which would largely depend on careful and effective preparation. It therefore supported the idea of inviting the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to act as the preparatory body.
47. Since the resumption of poppy cultivation in Turkey in 1974, a new system had been introduced which provided a control mechanism covering all phases of cultivation: the entire poppy straw yield was purchased by the Government and processed at a factory in Turkey in order to obtain concentrated poppy straw exclusively for medical and scientific purposes. Those control measures had resulted in complete elimination of illicit cultivation and of the diversion of products for illegal use. Regrettably, however, a lasting balance between the

(Mr. Götürk, Turkey)

demand for and supply of licit opiates had not yet been established at the international level. In recent years, production in a number of non-traditional producer countries had far exceeded domestic needs; as a result, excess stocks still existed in two traditional producer countries, Turkey and India. He hoped that, in future, the Governments concerned would co-operate and that the interests of the international community would take precedence over short-term commercial considerations.

48. Mr. MOSELEY (Barbados) said that Barbados fully shared the concern recently expressed, at a meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government, at the rising incidence of drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking, especially in the Caribbean region. The negative repercussions were already evident in Barbados, which depended heavily on the tourist industry for its economic well-being. His delegation welcomed recommendation 4 (g) of the Milan Plan of Action which called for the launching of a major effort to control and eventually eradicate the destructive phenomena of illicit drug traffic and abuse and of organized crime, both of which disrupted and destabilized societies. The major thrusts of that effort would be in the areas of education, training, information exchanges and more effective law enforcement. The indigenous population of Barbados could too easily become a way-station or depot for the transport of narcotic drugs from the sources of production to consumer markets.

49. Barbados had recently stepped up its efforts to control the traffic and abuse of illicit drugs in its territory by a legislative amendment providing for increased fines and jail sentences, and was seeking to raise national awareness of the problem and its dangers through an anti-drug campaign.

50. At a recent meeting the Caribbean Community had recognized the regional dimension of the drug problem and had agreed to collate information on a wide range of areas with a view to establishing a regional approach. Co-operation at that level was crucial, because the sophistication of those involved in drug trafficking often outstripped the modest control capacity of the law enforcement and customs agencies of Governments with limited financial resources.

51. Barbados welcomed the work done by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in compiling elements for a new draft Convention against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and fully endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to convene a United Nations conference on drug abuse control in 1987. It also welcomed the suggestion to hold a forum of non-governmental organizations to supplement the formal conference.

52. The political will to devote urgent attention to the problem existed in individual States. What was needed, as a supplement to national efforts, was regional and international co-operation to eradicate the scourge of illicit drug trafficking and abuse.

53. Mr. WEIBGEN (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that a world-wide strategy and renewed efforts by the international community, as well as more resources, were needed to combat drug abuse and prevent its

(Mr. Weibgen, FAO)

spread. The core of that effort should be crop diversification and substitution. In response to requests from Governments, FAO provided ad hoc technical advice on problems related to drug abuse control and to crop diversification and substitution. It also gave indirect support through projects in other fields relating to research and training in industrial crops, with a view to raising the income levels of farmers and thus reducing the incentive to cultivate narcotic crops. Since narcotic crops were usually produced in marginal areas where the poorest farmers lived, FAO's priority action programme for integrated rural development could be considered an indirect involvement in drug-abuse control in drug-producing countries.

54. FAO had hosted an ad hoc inter-agency meeting in September 1985 whose main substantive topic had been drug crop substitution. A background paper prepared for the meeting had analysed the technical aspects and the social and economic implications of crop substitution. Clearly the inherently complex problem could not be solved by an agricultural technique alone; it involved many factors such as law enforcement, infrastructural development, credit and markets, and therefore could be tackled effectively only on a multi-disciplinary basis with the full support of local authorities.

55. FAO was pleased to note that the Secretary-General had suggested crop substitution and other methods of reducing illicit supply as one of the six key areas on which the proposed conference on drug abuse control should focus its discussions. If the General Assembly decided to convene the Conference, FAO was prepared to play a lead agency role. The conference should be action-oriented and encourage Governments and financing institutions to devote more resources to the fight against illicit drugs and to step up efforts to eradicate illicit cultivation by increasing the number of field projects with the full support of recipient Governments.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.