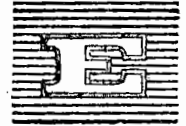


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COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

Ninth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 11 May 1954, at 2.55 p.m.

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and E/CN.7/264)

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. ANSLINGER	(United States of America)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY	India
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. SHARMAN)	Canada
	Mr. FARMILO)	
	Mr. LIANG	China
	Mr. ISMAIL	Egypt
	Mr. PANOPOULOS	Greece
	Mr. ESFANDIARY	Iran
	Mr. RABASA	Mexico
	Mr. LAZARTE	Peru
	Mr. FORYS	Poland
	Mr. OZKOL	Turkey
	Mrs. VASILYEVA	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. WALKER	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. GOLDSTAIN	United States of America
	Mr. NIKOLIC	Yugoslavia
<u>Also present:</u>	Mr. MAY	Permanent Central Opium Board

Representatives of non-governmental organizations:

Category B and Register:

	Mr. LONGARZO	International Conference of Catholic Charities
	Mr. PENCE	World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. YATES	Director, Division of Narcotic Drugs
	Mr. FULTON	Division of Narcotic Drugs
	Mr. PASTUHOY	Secretary of the Commission

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (E/2372, E/2372/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1; E/CN.7/278 and Corr.1; E/CN.7/279)(continued)

Report of the Committee of Chemical Experts on the United Nations Programme for Determining the Origin of Raw Opium by Chemical and Physical Means (E/CN.7/278 and Corr.1)(continued)

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to continue its consideration of the report of the Committee of Chemical Experts (E/CN.7/278 and Corr.1). The situation in respect of each country in which opium was produced either licitly or illicitly was set out in the report. It appeared that many countries had submitted samples of opium for the Committee's research programme. He suggested that the Commission might nevertheless recommend that the Economic and Social Council should adopt a resolution covering various aspects of the problem, including a request that Governments of countries where opium was produced either licitly or illicitly should furnish samples of such opium.

It was so decided.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India), in reply to a question from the CHAIRMAN, said that, as far as he was aware, opium was not produced in Nepal. With regard to samples of opium produced in India, the Indian Government was prepared to provide additional samples if required.

Mr. FULTON (Secretariat) said that the Secretariat had samples of recognized types of opium produced in India. He understood, however, that different varieties of poppy were cultivated in that country. The Secretariat hoped that India would provide samples of the opium derived from those varieties.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) said that he would transmit the request to his Government.

Mr. RABASA (Mexico) pointed out that there was no licit production of opium in Mexico. Hence, any samples of opium provided by the Mexican Government would represent opium seized from the illicit traffic. Since much of the opium seized was smuggled into the country, the samples would not necessarily represent opium illicitly cultivated in Mexico.

The CHAIRMAN observed that the Committee of Chemical Experts had been unable to reach agreement on the important question whether the methods of determining the origin of opium were sufficiently advanced to enable their practical application in the international field. The Commission might wish to recommend a suitable course of action.

Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia) felt that while considerable progress had been made it would be premature to conclude that the methods of determining the origin of opium were sufficiently advanced for them to be applied in the international field. The Commission should therefore merely recommend that further research be undertaken.

Mr. OZKOL (Turkey) agreed. Further research should be undertaken with a view to eliminating the existing sources of disagreement concerning the origin of opium. He hoped that the scientists concerned would in time devise an effective method.

Mr. PANPOULOS (Greece) suggested that samples of opium should be carefully analyzed by the scientists, each using the same method of analysis. Samples should be submitted to them without informing them of their origin.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) felt that the Commission was not in a position to reach any conclusions as to whether the methods of determining the origin of opium could be applied in the international field. He agreed that research work should be continued.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) said that experts in the United Kingdom agreed with the position taken by the Indian representative on the Committee that techniques and methods were not yet ready for practical application in the international field for determining the origin of opium. It seemed surprising that the two other representatives on the Committee should have taken the opposite view on the basis of the few samples received and despite the fact that no samples had been submitted from some important opium-producing areas of the world.

The United Kingdom delegation, while not underestimating the work done by the Secretariat and the experts from various countries, felt that sufficient progress had not been achieved to warrant the conclusion that the time had come for the methods to be tested on a practical basis.

The CHAIRMAN felt that the Commission was unanimously of the view that the methods of determining the origin of opium should not yet be applied in the international field but that research work should be continued and intensified. However, in view of the possibility of further progress in the near future the Commission might wish to reappraise the situation at its next session.

Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia) agreed that the Commission should review the situation at its tenth session.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) said that while he was sceptical as to the possibility of new developments arising by the following year, he was agreeable to the subject being brought up at the next session.

Scientific Research on Narcotics and the United Nations Narcotics Laboratory  
(E/CN.7/279)

Mr. YATES (Secretariat) recalled that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 477 (XV), had invited the Commission to transmit to it not later than its eighteenth session its recommendations "regarding the future of the United Nations narcotics laboratory, taking into account the whole of

the scientific work undertaken by the Secretariat in this field." The present position was that the Secretariat's limited resources for chemical research were devoted to research work into the origin of opium. The Secretary-General's note (E/CN.7/279), in view of the terms of the Council resolution, listed several other projects which had come within the purview of the Commission in that field.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of the United States, observed that the World Health Organization had expressed its interest in the morphine assay and had expressed the wish that that work could be developed. The question had confused scientists for many years and no solution had yet been found despite the various methods tested. The resources at the United Nations laboratory's disposal would not permit it to undertake full-scale research into the morphine assay.

Mr. FULTON (Secretariat) said that the work on the morphine assay had been incidental to the research into the origin of opium. He agreed that at present the resources available did not permit the laboratory to undertake broader research in that field.

Mr. FARMILO (Canada) agreed that the work on the morphine assay could not be intensified in view of the limited facilities and resources available.

The CHAIRMAN asked the drafting committee to state in the draft resolution that the Commission was in favour of research on the morphine assay only in so far as such research was incidental to the work being done on methods of determining the origin of opium.

Speaking as the United States representative, he did not consider that there was any need for the United Nations laboratory to develop methods for the analysis of adulterated narcotics and for the identification of synthetic drugs seized, to which paragraph 10 referred. Any chemist could determine whether a consignment seized consisted of a synthetic drug or a natural alkaloid. It

might, however, be possible for the laboratory to assist countries to improve the methods used there. Existing methods for assaying the cocaine in the coca leaf were virtually perfect; the process involved was of a commercial nature and need not concern the United Nations laboratory. Identification tests for cannabis, however, were far from perfect; a microscopic test of the plant was requisite in support of criminal proceedings. The only known biological test was the test on dogs, and the active principle of cannabis had not been determined. A good practical method for the identification of cannabis was needed for use in the field.

Mr. FULTON (Secretariat) said that when document E/CN.7/279 spoke of using the laboratory "to identify synthetic narcotic drugs" it was referring to the development of tests for the practical identification of such drugs. While most synthetic drugs had not yet found their way into the illicit traffic they were now so numerous that as a rule the chemist had no effective method for the identification of a particular synthetic drug which might be seized. He agreed as to the importance of research on cannabis, but the work on opium precluded the laboratory from undertaking it at that stage.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) said that to the best of his recollection the Commission had first of all decided that the laboratory should concentrate on research in connexion with the illicit traffic in narcotics, and had later decided to limit that work initially to research on opium. No decision had been taken with regard to synthetic drugs or cannabis.

Mr. YATES (Secretariat) confirmed the Indian representative's remarks. The Commission had further decided that the laboratory should concentrate on the determination of origin rather than the assay, of opium. The other subjects mentioned in paragraph 10 had been mentioned in view of the terms of the Council's resolution. With regard to paragraph 11, it had been thought that some Governments might be in a position to contribute work.

The CHAIRMAN asked the Rapporteur to note in the Commission's report that Governments could make a further valuable contribution by supplying information on hitherto unreported research such as that recently carried out on tetrahydrocannabinol and the work done in India on the active principle and identification of cannabis.

Mr. PANOPOULOS (Greece) proposed that the samples of drugs supplied by the Secretariat to scientists engaged in narcotics experiments should include samples of cannabis.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) was unable to state whether India had hitherto unreported information to impart concerning narcotics experiments already carried out there, and whether it was in a position to contribute independent research in the immediate future.

United Nations Narcotics Laboratory (E/2372 and Add.1)

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) observed that the difference between the estimated cost of establishing the laboratory in New York and that of establishing it in Geneva was so great that, had it been the only factor involved, the Commission could have had no hesitation in deciding for Geneva. He asked the Secretariat what other factors had to be considered.

Mr. YATES (Secretariat) explained that the estimates for New York set forth in paragraph 14 of document E/2372, had been submitted to the Council at its fifteenth session before Geneva had been considered as a possible location. They were high because local fire insurance regulations required that a laboratory in a building used for other purposes must be situated on the top floor and installation in the top floor of the Secretariat building which was uncompleted would call for extensive engineering work. The Geneva estimate, set forth in paragraph 6 of document E/2372/Add.1, was lower because finished accommodation which could be adapted to the needs of a laboratory was available in the Palais des Nations.



The location of the laboratory in a different city from the Division of Narcotic Drugs would give rise to administrative problems, since the Secretariat chemists also took part in much other work of the Division. The Secretary-General's statement to the Council of 30 March 1954 (E/L.578) to which he referred gave an account of the problems involved and the progress made in the Secretariat re-organization at present in hand. The units of the Economic and Social Affairs Departments to which the Secretary-General had referred as being under consideration for transfer to Geneva included the Division of Narcotic Drugs.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of the United States, said that the Division was welcome to continue using the laboratory facilities already placed at its disposal by the United States authorities until a decision as to the location of its own laboratory had been reached. He proposed that the Commission should postpone its decision until the location of the Division had been settled.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) felt that there might be advantages if the Division and the laboratory were some distance apart. Experience in India had shown that excessive proximity of technical to administrative establishments led to duplication of effort. Laboratory equipment and materials might be less expensive at Geneva than at New York; hence, in view of the disparity in the cost of installation and the number of countries interested in the laboratory's operations, Geneva might be the better choice for the laboratory.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of the United States, said that the cost of equipment had been estimated as the same at Geneva and at New York. He disagreed with the Indian representative as to the desirability of separating the Division from the laboratory, since the technical staff were at intervals employed on other work.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) agreed with the United States representative on the basis of his own experience. However, a decision to install the laboratory in the Secretariat building would be difficult to justify to the public in view of the high cost as compared with that of installation in Geneva. Thought should be given to the possibility of finding an alternative site for the laboratory at New York.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as representative of the United States, said that a laboratory in the Secretariat building would constitute an unjustified danger to the building, and that an alternative site outside the United Nations area might be sought.

Mr. YATES (Secretariat), in reply to a question from the CHAIRMAN, said that the estimates given in document E/2372 did not include insurance. As regards the possibility of installing a laboratory outside the United Nations area, there were a number of additional factors to be taken into account, including the question of twenty-four hour security arrangements, the legal status of international property and international activities outside the international enclave, and the administrative inconveniences of separation.

Mr. PANOPOULOS (Greece), while recognizing the difficulty of reaching a decision on the subject, thought that there would be many advantages in establishing a laboratory in Greece: proximity to opium producing countries and consequent rapid availability of samples, suitable premises easy to find at Athens, a healthy climate and a very low cost of living. The laboratory should, wherever it might be, enjoy some measure of independence and its research subjects should include morphine and cannabis as well as opium, but unless five chemists at least were employed, it would be best to carry on as at present, without any additional expenditure.

The CHAIRMAN felt sure that the Greek representative's invitation would receive careful consideration.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) asked what alternative locations had so far been envisaged.

Mr. YATES (Secretariat) replied that, apart from a preliminary estimate, which had been found inaccurate and withdrawn, for a laboratory in New York, the only estimates on the subject were those in E/2372 and Add.1.

He also expressed the thanks of the Secretariat for using United States laboratory facilities over several years which had enabled most useful work to be carried out.

Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia) thought that the whole question should be left in abeyance until the final location of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, on which it hinged, had been settled.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Commission would await the report of the Drafting Committee containing resolutions for the Council before proceeding with the subject.

#### REVIEW OF PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES (E/CN.7/L.49)

Mr. YATES (Secretariat) said that the document referred to the extensive series of instructions given by the Council on the matter. As far as the Narcotics Commission was concerned, however, the task was to some extent simplified in so far as the Commission's functions derived directly from provisions in the Conventions. As regards the draft single convention and the Code and Commentary, a previous discussion in the Commission appeared to have indicated that the latter should take precedence over the former among "Ad Hoc Projects". The list annexed to the paper represented the position existing before the present session started; the Commission could of course decide to change these priorities.

The CHAIRMAN thought that the code and commentary should take precedence over the draft single convention for the 1955 session.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) hoped that a decision to that effect would not mean that the draft single convention would receive no attention.

The CHAIRMAN stated that the draft single convention would remain under "First Priority", although occupying second place there.

It was so decided.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) suggested that "The Question of Heroin", on page 3 of the document, should be struck out, the matter having already been dealt with.

It was so decided.

Mr. OZKOL (Turkey) urged that "The question of Poppy Straw" should follow "The Problem of Cannabis" on the list.

It was so decided.

Mr. OZKOL (Turkey) requested that the alternative texts being prepared by the Secretariat for the section on synthetic drugs in the single convention should be sent to Governments at least three months in advance. A useful discussion on the matter could not otherwise be held, since representatives would not have the necessary instructions.

Mr. YATES (Secretariat) said that the Secretariat had every hope of being able to comply with the Turkish representative's request.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) pointed out that, in addition to the section on synthetic drugs, certain other sections would have to be redrafted in the light of the Opium Protocol Conference. It was to be hoped that they would also be prepared in time for consideration by Governments.

Mr. YATES (Secretariat) replied that the Secretariat would do all it could, but that the Commission had decided that no general redraft should be made until the relevant decisions had been taken; in particular, he referred to the examination of the Protocol to be undertaken by the Permanent Central Opium Board and the Supervisory Body. Before then, the task would be most difficult.

Mr. NIKOLIC (Yugoslavia) said that the Secretariat should not take the Protocol, which represented an intermediary stage, into account, since the Commission might decide on more stringent measures in connexion with poppy straw for the single convention.

Mr. WALKER (United Kingdom) said that, owing to the decisions of principle outstanding, it had been decided not to have a redraft in the present state of the Secretariat's instructions.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (India) said that he had referred to sections on which no decisions had been taken, and which would admit of some adjustment in the light of the Protocol. Some decisions taken on points where there seemed to be general agreement at the Conference might be incorporated for consideration.

The CHAIRMAN said that he understood the position to be as described by United Kingdom representative, and that it was too late to reopen the discussion.

In reply to a question by Mr. SHARMAN (Canada), Mr. YATES (Secretariat) said that the "List of Preparations" had been discussed in 1953 by the Commission, which had decided that the Secretariat should not proceed with the work; it had been included under "Low Priority (postponed)" in the light of Council resolution 505 (XVI).

Mr. SHARMAN (Canada), supported by the CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of the United States of America, proposed that "List of Preparations" should be removed from the priority list.

The proposal was adopted by 11 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

LIST OF NARCOTIC DRUGS UNDER INTERNATIONAL CONTROL (E/CN.7/247 and E/CN.7/264)

The Commission took note of document E/CN.7/247 and of paragraphs 37, 38 and 39 of document E/CN.7/264.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.