

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIXTH MEETING

held on Wednesday, 20 February 1974, at 9.40 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. KIRCA

Turkey

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Castro y Castro (Mexico), second Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

ILLICIT TRAFFIC (agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.7/563 and Corr.1, E/CN.7/564 and Corr.1 and 2)

Dr. BABAIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in his country there had been no cases of illicit production of either narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances. The authorized production of medicaments containing narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances was carried out at specially guarded pharmaceutical factories controlled by the Ministry of Health.

The production of cannabis, heroin and LSD was completely prohibited throughout the territory of the USSR. Cultivation of the opium poppy was permitted only in one particular area for the purpose of producing the opium needed for medical purposes. The area in question, as well as the roads leading into it, were guarded by special troops during the harvest period.

Authorization by the competent division of the Ministry of Health and by the narcotics control body was required for the production of narcotic drugs; every undertaking wishing to produce medicaments containing narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances, and every institution wishing to use any such drug or substance had to submit a request, specifying the quantity needed. The request had to be supported by evidence showing the need for the drugs or substances and justifying the quantities specified.

One important feature of the USSR control system was that the authority responsible for authorizing the introduction of a new drug was a neutral control body which was not in any way involved in production, trade or consumption.

Physicians who prescribed medicaments containing a narcotic drug or a psychotropic substance were required to use special prescription forms bearing serial numbers and dispensing pharmacies had to keep such prescriptions on file. Heavy penalties were imposed for the illegal production, possession, trade in or consumption of substances under control.

The USSR legislation on the subject was periodically reviewed, in order to keep pace with international developments and to conform with international control systems. All imports and exports of narcotic drugs were subject to a licensing system. The list of authorized preparations was kept under constant review and whenever a new preparation appeared, the obsolescent preparation was struck off the list. Any preparation found to be habit-forming was immediately placed under control.

The USSR annual report on the illicit traffic mentioned a few cases of thefts of narcotic drugs from pharmacies. In all cases, those responsible, as well as those involved in the sale of the stolen drugs, had been severely punished.

There were also occasional cases of patients for whom medicaments containing narcotic drugs had been prescribed and who illicitly sold such medicaments to drug addicts. All such incidents were thoroughly investigated and the guilty parties severely punished; such cases were given publicity in the USSR press in order to make the public aware of the seriousness of the offences.

In order to prevent illicit imports of narcotic drugs, all postal packages containing pharmaceutical products were inspected by the competent authority and could not be delivered to the addressee without a clearance certificate.

Customs officers in the USSR had discovered some cases of smuggling of marijuana cigarettes by foreign tourists; the quantities involved were usually negligible and appeared to be intended for personal use. Details of all those cases were given in the USSR report, including the name and nationality of the offenders.

The law strictly prohibited any prescribing of narcotic drugs to addicts for maintenance purposes, a practice which was inadmissible from the medical point of view, amounting to an act of collusion between the physician and the addict. Some experts claimed that complete withdrawal accompanied by treatment was excessively harsh, but in the long run it was less cruel than the issuing of maintenance doses.

Strict control was also maintained over the storage of narcotics in hospitals and pharmacies. If, for example, a pharmacy was found not to have proper alarm installations, it could be deprived of the right to sell narcotics.

Soviet Customs authorities worked in close liaison with those of neighbouring countries.

In conclusion, he stressed that the control measures adopted in his country were effectively preventing the illicit production of and traffic in drugs.

Mr. TRAIN (United Kingdom) said that several representatives had referred to the increased illicit traffic in cocaine and in liquid hashish. Both forms of traffic existed in the United Kingdom and were a cause of concern to his Government. The need to watch the cocaine traffic had been stressed by the representative of ICPO/INTERPOL (755th meeting). The proportions of that traffic in the United Kingdom were not alarming but the authorities were watching the position. His delegation regarded the traffic in liquid hashish as worthy of the attention of the international community.

In his introductory address (755th meeting), the representative of the Secretariat had referred to resolution 220 of the Inland Transport Committee of ECE. That resolution dealt with prevention of abuse of the TIR Customs transit system for illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The TIR Convention had established a transit system which allowed goods to be carried through the territory of States parties to the Convention with a minimum of interference, provided that they were packed in secure containers and carried in vehicles under Customs seal. In the United Kingdom, there was no evidence of attempts to use the TIR system to any significant degree for the purpose of smuggling drugs into the country. Indeed, when the ECE Group of Experts on Customs Questions affecting Transport had studied the problem, only isolated instances had been mentioned of drugs being found in containers carried under the TIR system. In the opinion of the United Kingdom Customs authorities, drug smuggling was carried out by all forms of

transport, including private vehicles, goods vehicles, ships and aircraft. There was therefore no reason to single out goods carried under cover of the TIR system for special attention. It should be remembered that the standards of construction imposed by the TIR Convention made the load compartments of vehicles less attractive to smugglers. That Convention applied only to the sealed compartments. Drugs found concealed in the chassis, the engine or the driver's cabin of a lorry did not constitute an abuse of the TIR system. Those parts of the lorry could be examined in the same way as those of any other vehicle. His delegation shared the general concern at drug smuggling but thought that it might be counter-productive to give special attention to the TIR system, because that might divert attention from other more profitable and more freely used forms of smuggling.

Since the TIR system had been designed to facilitate international trade, he was led to stress a more general point. Law enforcement officers faced the problem of countering smuggling without interfering with the normal activities of law-abiding citizens. For example, it was clear that only a very small number of the 24 million passengers who passed through London airport annually were smugglers. It would be impossible to inspect the baggage of all of them. Similarly, an attempt to examine all containers moving under cover of TIR carnets would bring road traffic to a standstill. Clearly, therefore, it was essential to concentrate on the large-scale traffickers. It was with that aim in view that a Central Drugs Intelligence Unit had been organized in his country. Its purpose was to gather, collate, analyse and disseminate information and intelligence on the drug traffic and on drug offences. The setting up of that unit represented the United Kingdom's response at the national level to the needs of international co-operation in accordance with article 35 (Action against the illicit traffic) of the 1961 Convention. His Government regarded that step as only one link in an international chain and therefore warmly welcomed the opportunity provided by the European Economic Community to establish good working relations with similar bodies in the other member countries of the Community.

For the same reason, his delegation welcomed the initiative being considered by ICPO/INTERPOL relating to the establishment of an international system for gathering and analysing intelligence on the illicit traffic. In that context, intelligence did not mean simply the transmission of information about old cases or even of specific information about a particular smuggler. It meant criminal intelligence in the sense in which it was understood by police forces in his country and elsewhere, namely, the painstaking collection of small items of information which, when pieced together, gave a revealing picture of the criminal activities under observation. His delegation hoped that the Division of Narcotic Drugs would, in its training programme, give attention to that particular aspect of police work.

Serious thought was being given in the United Kingdom to the use of scientific and technological aids in the detection of drug offences, as was already being done in the case of certain other types of offences. His delegation therefore welcomed the initiative taken by the United States of America in that respect.

Lastly, in view of the importance of Hong Kong in connexion with the topic under discussion, the Commissioner for Narcotics in Hong Kong, who was a member of the United Kingdom delegation, would make a separate statement.

Mr. ROLPH (United Kingdom) said that the total area of Hong Kong was only 400 square miles; 4 million inhabitants lived in only 12 per cent of that area, the result being an overcrowding of people in tall buildings and a concentration of vehicles. It was believed that there were 100,000 opium or heroin addicts, representing 2 per cent of the total population. Hong Kong thus faced the worst opiate addiction problem in the world. The little abuse of cannabis or synthetic drugs that took place was largely confined to young Europeans. No poppy was grown or allowed to be grown in Hong Kong.

The enormous opium market was fed by illicit imports, estimated at between 35 and 50 tons of opium and between 7 and 10 tons of crude morphine a year, the latter being converted locally into heroin, mostly of the adulterated kind known as No.3. The bulk of the imported opium originated in the so-called Golden Triangle and was brought in by fishing boats into which it was trans-shipped from the vessels that transported it from the exporting countries.

An almost unbelievable change had taken place in 1973. The representative of Thailand had already explained (755th meeting) the radical steps taken in his country to curb the production of and traffic in narcotic drugs. Strict measures were also being taken in Burma and the Republic of Viet-Nam to disrupt that traffic. In consequence of all those efforts, a very great shortage of opium and morphine base had developed in Hong Kong, accompanied by a sharp rise in prices. As a result, a large number of addicts had come forward to seek treatment and rehabilitation.

Drug seizures in 1973 had amounted to only 3 tons, against an annual total of 6 tons in 1971 and 1972. That drop was due not to any lack of success in intercepting the illicit traffic but to the great reduction in the total quantities of drugs moving in the illicit traffic.

In order to deal successfully with the problem of the illicit traffic in Hong Kong, it was necessary to make a simultaneous attack on the four main aspects of that problem: the illicit cultivation of opium, the transportation to Hong Kong, the illicit manufacture and distribution, and the huge addiction problem. The results obtained by dealing with only one or two of those aspects would be purely temporary. The campaign against the illicit production of and trade in narcotic drugs were matters of international moment and provided a fertile field for international co-operation.

In conclusion, the United Kingdom delegation regarded the situation in the Far East as encouraging. Vigorous international action had been taken in 1973 which had effectively disrupted the major avenues of the illicit traffic. The United Kingdom delegation earnestly hoped that those successes would be pressed home.

Mr. OLIVIERI (Argentina) said that he wished to draw the Commission's attention to the results of the South American Plenipotentiary Conference on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances held at Buenos Aires from 25 to 27 April 1973,^{3/} results that were relevant to the discussion of the question of drug abuse (agenda item 4), as well as to that of the illicit traffic (agenda item 3). Nine States - Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela - had participated in the Conference, which had also been attended by observers for Chile and for a number of international bodies including INCB, OAS and ICPO/INTERPOL. Several countries outside the region, such as France, the Netherlands, Turkey and the United States of America, had also sent observers.

The Conference had revealed a marked degree of agreement on the measures to be taken to combat drug abuse and on regional co-operation in the matter. In the recommendation it had formulated,^{4/} it had accepted an offer by OAS to set up within its secretariat a unit dealing with prevention and rehabilitation. It had also made a recommendation for the promotion of research, and in particular social research, into the factors involved in drug consumption, particularly by young people and adolescents; that recommendation had stressed the need for co-ordination with the work of the Division of Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations Secretariat.

^{3/} See Bulletin on Narcotics, vol. XXVI, No.1, January-March 1974, pp.1-15.

^{4/} Ibid., pp.8 and 9.

The Conference had adopted the South American Agreement on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances,^{5/} article 2 of which called for the establishment in each country of a body to co-ordinate and centralize all matters connected with drug abuse at the national level. Article 4 dealt with the intensive planning of education. In that connexion, he had been surprised that no reference had been made during the present discussion to the admirable work done by UNESCO on measures for the prevention of drug abuse and the rehabilitation of abusers.

The most significant provisions of the new Agreement, however, dealt with the illicit traffic. Article 1 made provision for measures of close co-operation and for the effective exchange of information with regard to such matters as the control and suppression of the illicit traffic and co-operation between national security bodies.

Article 8 of the Agreement provided for joint action by the countries concerned to combat the illicit traffic. Article 10 called for the intensification of measures to eradicate the cultivation of the cannabis plant and the coca bush and to prevent the cultivation of the opium poppy.

The first additional Protocol to the Agreement dealt with the criminal and civil legislation to be enacted by the States parties. The criminal law provisions in question related, *inter alia*, to the definition of drug offences, the consequences of those offences and the question of aggravated offences. As far as civil law was concerned, the Protocol called for the enactment of rules to safeguard the health and welfare of addicts and to protect their families, children in particular.

The second additional Protocol made provision for uniform rules on the licit trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, an approach which represented a major advance.

The Agreement was now open to ratification by the States which had participated in the Conference, but its adoption by the Plenipotentiary Conference showed that its provisions reflected a general consensus.

Mr. LOGARAS (Observer for Greece), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that drug abuse in his country was very limited and the authorities' main task was to create an effective barrier to transit trafficking. Considerable success had been achieved in seizures of narcotic drugs at the Greek frontiers in 1972 and 1973. The country's requirements in narcotic drugs were covered by imports from abroad. The cultivation of opium and the production of opium alkaloids were prohibited, as was the cultivation of the cannabis plant for the production of marijuana or cannabis resin, but cannabis in its wild form grew naturally in various forest regions, particularly in northern Greece. In the spring of each year, the competent authorities sent out teams to uproot and burn wild growths of the cannabis plant. The police force kept records of persons arrested in connexion with drug abuse. After sentencing, an addict entered a suitable correctional or other public institution to receive appropriate treatment. Addicts who were not sentenced were treated at State hospitals and private clinics. The majority of cases (almost 200) involved addiction to hashish; there were no heroin addicts and only a few cases of amphetamine addiction.

^{5/} Ibid., pp.9-15.

In 1973, 265 kg of cannabis resin, 270 kg of cannabis and 7 kg of opium had been seized by the police authorities and 312 kg of cannabis resin and 9,840 kg of opium by the Customs authorities. 350 persons, 176 of whom were aliens, had been arrested in connexion with illicit traffic. In January 1974, 250 kg of hashish had been discovered on a small uninhabited island near Crete. Smugglers were organized in bands and constantly changed their methods of operation, thus presenting a problem to the police forces. The main sources of supply for the illicit traffic were countries of the Near East, particularly Turkey and Lebanon. In conclusion, it should be noted that Greece had been among the opium-producing countries under the provisions of article 6 (International trade in opium) of the 1953 Protocol, but it had decided to prohibit the cultivation of the opium poppy and to revoke the relevant provisions as from 19 January 1972.

Mr. HUYGHE (Observer for Belgium), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that although drug abuse in Belgium was not yet as alarming as in the neighbouring countries, there were serious indications that sooner or later Belgium would be faced with the same difficulties as other European countries. The quantities of drugs seized, and particularly of cannabis and its derivatives, increased regularly each year, rising from 25 kg in 1970 to 92 kg in 1973 in the case of cannabis and from 9 kg in 1970 to 436 kg in 1973 in the case of cannabis resin. The numbers of arrests, convictions and sentences passed were also increasing. The quantities of psychotropic medicines consumed, even legally, were also giving rise to concern. Steps were being taken to obtain a clearer picture of the situation and to prevent and control drug abuse. A special working group set up under the Ministry of Public Health had carried out a survey on drug abuse and was publishing information brochures for the use of the teaching profession. A national bureau for the prevention of drug abuse, a centre for the study of the side-effects and abuse of medicines, and an information centre for doctors and chemists had also been set up. A bill providing, inter alia, for sentences of up to 20 years' forced labour for drug trafficking had been introduced in Parliament. Measures were also being taken to ensure co-operation in drug control with other countries, particularly France, and to provide special training for police and Customs officers.

Amphetamines had been subject to the same control as narcotic drugs since 1946, and all hallucinogens, including certain precursors not covered by the 1971 Convention, were similarly controlled. The products included in schedules III and IV of that Convention were subject to national control. Regrettably, some cases of abuse of products not covered by any narcotics treaty had been detected (13 cases involving pentazocine and a recent serious case involving propoxyphene injections). Those cases would be duly reported to WHO.

Dr. AZARAKHCH (Iran) said that the illicit traffic situation in his country continued to be disturbing despite all the efforts made. A number of new factors had intervened during the past few years, namely, the introduction of the death penalty for first-degree drug smugglers in 1969, the intensification of law enforcement measures, the reduction and subsequent prohibition of opium production in Turkey, and the development of international tourism. Whereas in the past illicit supplies of opium had entered Iran in almost equal quantities from east and west, the bulk now came from the east (93 per cent of the total in 1971 and 95 per cent in 1972). In 1973, a single seizure at an eastern frontier point had yielded 12,282 kg of opium. At the same time, opium seizures in the north-western provinces had dropped from a total of 7 tons in the years immediately preceding 1969 to 200-300 kg in the years following that date. The opium illegally imported into Iran was used for heroin

manufacture in clandestine laboratories and to supply non-registered addicts. Total opium seizures in 1973 had amounted to more than 20 tons, as against 9,694 kg in 1972 and 13,189 kg in 1971. Traffickers (both Iranian nationals and aliens) were frequently armed and clashes with police patrols occurred repeatedly, especially on the eastern frontier, involving loss of life on both sides.

The situation with regard to morphine was somewhat different. All the morphine illegally imported into the country was intended for heroin production. In some cases, morphine and heroin were seized at the same time. The illicit traffic in morphine across the north-western frontier had increased simultaneously with the decrease of opium smuggling over that frontier, the total quantity of morphine seizures reaching the unprecedented figure of 77 kg in 1973. That situation was regarded as highly alarming.

Clandestine manufacture of heroin, whether from raw opium or from morphine, was concentrated in towns of the north-western region or in Tehran. Seven such laboratories had been discovered in 1973 and the total quantity of heroin seized in 1973 had amounted to more than 100 kg, as against 26 kg in 1972.

The cannabis plant occurred in the wild state in certain regions but was not cultivated. Possession of cannabis was punishable by prison sentences or fines. As a result of the development of international tourism, the illegal traffic and seizures of cannabis at the eastern frontier had of late been increasing annually, rising from 45 kg in 1967 to 4,500 kg in 1973. Iran had become a country of transit for cannabis, and some of the traffickers arrested on entry had been found to possess large quantities of the drug intended for the European market. A recent development was the clandestine transport of cannabis in lorries, and the Iranian Government was taking intensive measures to stop that new method of smuggling. Considerable amounts of liquid cannabis in the possession of aliens had been seized on two occasions and the relevant reports had been transmitted to the United Nations and ICPO/INTERPOL. The number of arrests and cases of illicit traffic dealt with by military courts in 1972 had been approximately the same as in the preceding year. Of the 635 professional traffickers brought before those courts, 32 had been sentenced to death and executed, 153 to life imprisonment, 96 to imprisonment for 10-15 years, 198 to imprisonment for 3-10 years and the remainder to shorter terms of imprisonment.

Dr. ARTIGAS NOVOA (Chile) said that there were no problems in Chile with regard to the use and control of narcotic drugs obtained from legal sources, such as morphine, pethidine and methadone, and that there had been no diversions of those drugs from the licit trade. Chile was, however, encountering problems with the illicit traffic in cocaine and cannabis, the latter being obtained from illicit diversions from industrial plantations. With regard to cocaine, Chile was a country of transit in the traffic in cocaine intended for the United States of America and, to a lesser extent, for Europe. Although there was considerable trade in cocaine hydrochloride in Chile, its illicit consumption was low and it was intended mainly for foreign markets, where a higher price was obtained.

The coca bush was not cultivated in Chile and the raw material generally came from neighbouring countries. As a result of its extensive frontiers with producing countries, where green or concentrated coca was obtained, Chile was a strategic centre for clandestine laboratories where cocaine was refined.

In order to counteract the illicit traffic, the Government had established specialized drug control services within the Department of Customs Investigations and the police force, which were in direct contact with ICPO/INTERPOL. Late in 1973, several international and domestic traffickers had been arrested. The drug laws were now being more strictly enforced. In 1973, six clandestine cocaine laboratories had been discovered. Any cocaine seized was transferred to the National Health Service and was then destroyed, because the drug had no medical use in Chile. In 1973, the enforcement services had seized 68 kg of cocaine hydrochloride and 165 kg of cannabis straw and plants. During the same period, 129 kg of cocaine of various grades and 715 kg of cannabis had been destroyed.

It was now considered that, as a result of arrests of traffickers, the illicit traffic had been halted in Chile. Once the Bolivian winter had ended, however, coca leaves would be dried and brought to Chile by other traffickers and clandestine laboratories and the illegal sale of cocaine might again make their appearance.

Seizures of cannabis had increased yearly, amounting to 165 kg in 1973.

The Government of Chile was concerned about the serious problem of drug trafficking and was studying some of its aspects, such as the geography of traffic in coca and relations with other countries, particularly the United States of America, which had provided invaluable advisory services for Chile's police activities, in order for a decision to be taken upon the methods which should be included in future legislation.

The Chilean health authorities were giving continuous attention to the problems which arose as a result of the abuse of psychotropic substances. The 1963 Decree concerning such substances contained special provisions for their sale on medical prescription and for the control of imports, production and exports. In practice, however, it had become clear that prescriptions could be forged or altered and that sales without prescriptions were difficult to prove. Abuse of such substances was therefore continuing. A regulation concerning dependence-producing pharmaceutical products had accordingly been adopted in 1970, under which prescriptions were required for the dispensing of amphetamines, barbiturates and meprobamate. Thus, sales were being more strictly controlled and the forging of prescriptions had been eliminated. The consumption of psychotropic substances in 1971 had shown a decrease of 72 per cent as compared to that for the period 1967-1970. In general, the same situation had prevailed until 1973 and it was now estimated that nearly all the psychotropic substances consumed were necessary for medical purposes and that drug abuse had been reduced or diverted to drugs not covered by the 1971 Convention. Finally, that Convention had been adopted as part of Chilean legislation and national regulations were being amended to bring their provisions into line with medical needs.

Dr. ELLINGTON (Jamaica) expressed surprise at the very great number of cannabis plants reported in paragraph 35 and in the table following section (b) of document E/CN.7/564, to have been destroyed by the Jamaican authorities in 1972. The Jamaican health authorities did not take the figure of 400 million plants very seriously and he hoped that the Commission would likewise treat it with a measure of scepticism.

The problems of illicit drug traffic might be compared to a balloon with a bulge in it; pushing in the bulge only produced another bulge in a different place, unless, of course, the push was hard enough to burst the whole balloon. Jamaica had for a number of years been making strenuous efforts to stop cannabis production, yet it appeared that cannabis produced in Jamaica and Mexico was still reaching markets in the United States of America and Canada. In 1972, Jamaica had become a transit area for heroin and in 1973 for cocaine, both destined for the United States market.

The evidence suggested that, to use the same metaphor, pressure on the bulge in Mexico was creating the bulge in Jamaica. However, in the light of comments about the diminishing supplies of heroin and morphine-based drugs made by the representatives of the United States and Canada (755th meeting), there seemed to be some hope that the programme initiated in Turkey, as well as the technical assistance programme mentioned by the United States representative might provide the harder push which would eventually burst the balloon of illegal drug traffic.

Mr. EYRIES VALMASEDA (Observer for Spain), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that, because of its situation at a cross-roads between three continents, its close proximity to areas of cultivation or clandestine manufacture, and the large number of persons passing through its territory as tourists or as workers en route for various European countries, Spain served as a base for the operations carried out by international traffickers. Traffic in cannabis was being replaced by traffic in other drugs which were more widely accepted on the international illicit market, such as hashish resin, cocaine, heroin and LSD.

As had been indicated in his Government's annual report, nearly 12 kg of cocaine had been seized in 1972. While almost 200 kg of heroin had been seized in 1967 and 1971, only 30 g had been seized in 1972. That meant either that the traffic in heroin had been diverted to other European countries or that the traffic had been adversely affected by the reduction in its original sources of supply, particularly of opium. Nearly 600 kg of marijuana and hashish and 1,939 LSD pills had been seized in 1972.

In 1973, there had been some smuggling of cocaine, but no seizures of heroin. There had, however, been seizures of 886 kg of marijuana and 2,000 kg of cannabis resin. There had also been two seizures of hashish oil. With regard to LSD, 1,198 pills had been seized in various cities.

In previous years, seizures had been made mainly of marijuana (griffa), which was now being replaced by hashish resin and oil. It was considered that that change had occurred because those drugs were more valued on the illicit market and required less space when transported.

With regard to the traffickers themselves, they were, in most cases, young people, tourists who needed money, people whose travel expenses were paid in return for services performed, and groups of workers from other countries travelling to northern Europe. In 1972, about 800 persons and in 1973 about 1,000 persons, had been charged with offences against public health under the Penal Code, the Act on the Socially Dangerous and their Rehabilitation and the Contraband and Fraud Act, in addition to other cases which had been tried in the competent administrative courts. Fines and sentences to terms of imprisonment of from three years to ten years and a day had been imposed.

Very satisfactory results had been achieved through close co-operation between the various police and Customs services and through contacts with ICPO/INTERPOL and the police departments of various countries and the United States Bureau of Narcotics.

With regard to the problem of psychotropic substances, the health authorities, in co-operation with the police, were keeping a close watch on increases in the consumption of or trade in preparations containing them. In certain cases, there had been diversions of amphetamines and barbiturates from normal consumption, but the necessary measures had been taken and there had been an increase in the frequency of visits by pharmaceutical inspectors of the National Health Department to manufacturers,

distributors and retail pharmacies. Moreover, stricter legal and administrative measures had been taken in order to prevent the abuse of psychotropic substances. Thus, in 1965, before the adoption of the 1971 Convention, which his Government had ratified in July 1973, a ministerial order had been issued specifying the substances which could be obtained only against a medical prescription.

The Government of Spain was well aware of the need for its officials to be well trained in order to control the illicit traffic and, since 1964, courses had been provided for members of the enforcement services. The most recent courses had been given in 1972 and 1973 and were attended by more than 600 officials belonging to various branches of the administration. During those years also, two courses were organized under the auspices of the United States Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, in close co-operation with the appropriate Spanish authorities.

Mr. SAMSOM (Observer for the Netherlands), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that the volume of illicit traffic in his country had grown considerably during the past two years. In particular, the quantity of heroin seized in 1973 gave cause for alarm, amounting to 25 kg as against 3 kg in 1972. The precise origins of the drug were not yet clear, but persons originating from Hong Kong and Singapore had been involved in each case. The geographical situation of the Netherlands, its large sea ports and its important international airport all combined to make it particularly difficult to control drugs entering and leaving the national territory. The total seizures of hashish had also risen from approximately 1,636 kg in 1972 to almost 6,000 kg in 1973. Opium seizures, on the other hand, had remained virtually unchanged. Cocaine had reappeared on the scene, with a seizure of approximately 3 kg in 1973. There was no evidence of the existence of clandestine laboratories for heroin production, but an illegal laboratory manufacturing amphetamine had been discovered.

Action against illicit traffic was the responsibility of the local police, supported by the Central Intelligence Service which, at the same time, acted as the national office of ICPO/INTERPOL. Regional intelligence centres were at present being set up and collaboration with the corresponding services of neighbouring countries was highly satisfactory. Nevertheless, despite the redoubled efforts being made by the authorities, it had to be recognized that, as in many other countries, illicit traffic in the Netherlands was on the increase.

Mr. ABU PAKAR bin FATHIL (Observer for Malaysia), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said he thought that the picture of the situation conveyed by paragraph 78 of document E/CN.7/564 needed to be brought up to date. Prior to 1973, enforcement activities against illicit traffic in narcotics and dangerous drugs had not been properly co-ordinated. Since that date, however, a Central Narcotics Bureau had been established with a view to concentrating enforcement activities in a single department. One of the Bureau's most important functions was to co-ordinate all the enforcement efforts being made, and the results achieved so far had been very rewarding. The Bureau also ensured liaison between the Malaysian Government and other Governments and international organizations on all matters connected with illicit traffic and drug abuse. It also served as a central intelligence and collection body and maintained records on traffickers.

Malaysia was not an opium-producing country. A small proportion of the opium illegally imported was intended for domestic consumption, while the rest was in transit to international markets. The seizures in 1973 had been as follows: 5,700 lbs of opium, as against 3,050 lbs in 1971; 171 lbs of morphine, as against 17 lbs; 46 ozs of heroin, as against 3 ozs; and 72,800 marijuana plants, as against 10,190. One of the greatest successes of the Central Narcotics Bureau in the first year of its operation had been the discovery of a clandestine heroin-producing laboratory, thought to have

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Mr. ABU BAKAR bin FATHIL (Observer for Malaysia), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said he thought that the picture of the situation conveyed by paragraph 78 of document E/CN.7/564 needed to be brought up to date. Prior to 1973, enforcement activities against illicit traffic in narcotics and dangerous drugs had not been properly co-ordinated. Since that date, however, a Central Narcotics Bureau had been established with a view to concentrating enforcement activities in a single department. One of the Bureau's most important functions was to co-ordinate all the enforcement efforts being made, and the results achieved as far had been very rewarding. The Bureau also ensured liaison between the Malaysian Government and other Governments and international organizations on all matters connected with illicit traffic and drug abuse. It also served as a central intelligence and collection body and maintained records on traffickers.

Malaysia was not an opium-producing country. A small proportion of the opium illegally imported was intended for domestic consumption, while the rest was in transit to international markets. The seizures in 1973 had been as follows: 5,700 lbs of opium, as against 3,050 lbs in 1971; 171 lbs of morphine, as against 17 lbs; 46 ozs of heroin, as against 3 ozs; and 72,800 marijuana plants, as against 10,190. One of the greatest successes of the Central Narcotics Bureau in the first year of its operation had been the discovery of a clandestine heroin-producing laboratory, thought to have

been in existence for two years. Information on other possible laboratories was being followed up at the present time. The drug laws had recently been revised, providing for stricter punishment for the possession of opium, morphine and heroin. Marijuana was grown in Malaysia, but only on a small scale, and larger amounts were smuggled in from outside. Effective operational liaison had been established with other countries, particularly Singapore, Australia and the United States of America, and it was hoped to establish similar co-operation with more countries in the near future. The Malaysian Government, fully aware that the menace of illicit traffic could not be fought in isolation, was willing to extend its international co-operation in that field and would welcome reciprocal action on the part of any other country.

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Illicit Traffic in the Far East Region, 1973
(E/CN.7/563 and Corr.1)

The CHAIRMAN invited the representative of Australia to introduce the 1973 report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Illicit Traffic in the Far East Region (E/CN.7/563 and Corr.1).

Mr. KELLY (Australia), speaking as the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Illicit Traffic in the Far East Region, said that, since he had been unable to take part in the Committee's study tour, he would prefer the report to be introduced by the representative of India. He would, however, first like to refer to organizational matters affecting the work of the Committee. In its resolution 8 (XXV), the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had decided that an Ad Hoc Committee on Illicit Traffic in the Far East Region should be established to consult with the countries concerned and to report to the Commission concerning the most suitable means of realizing and promoting a more effective co-operation and mutual assistance in the suppression of illicit traffic within, from and into the Far East region. The Committee was composed of representatives of Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand and the United Kingdom. INCB and ICPO/INTERPOL had been invited to participate in its work.

Subsequently, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1780 (LIV) had authorized the Committee to make a study tour of the countries of the Far East region in 1973, with the approval of the Governments concerned, and had requested it to report and make recommendations to the Commission at its current session. On the advice of the secretariat of the Commission, it had been agreed that, for the purposes of the terms of reference of the Committee, the countries of the Far East region should be Australia, Burma, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Khmer Republic, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Viet-Nam, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. In addition, the Chairman of the Committee had been requested to invite the Government of China and the Government of the Republic of Korea to participate in the Committee's work. The representative of China had indicated that, in his view, it was unnecessary for the considerations of the Committee to include his country and it had not been possible to start a dialogue with the Korean authorities.

Because of economic and time considerations, the Committee, in planning its study tour, had been forced to limit its programme of inspection to Burma, Hong Kong, the Khmer Republic, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, the Republic of Viet-Nam, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Subsequently, it had proved impossible to visit Burma, the Khmer Republic and Nepal or to hold consultations with the Governments of those countries. The authorities of those countries had, however, been given the opportunity to reply to the questionnaire and the recommendations contained in the Committee's report. On 19 February 1974, the secretariat of the Commission had received a communiqué from the Burmese Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicating that, because of other commitments, it did not wish to offer any comments on the questionnaire or the recommendations.

Again because of economic and time restrictions, it had not been possible to visit Australia, India, Indonesia and Japan. Information had, however, been obtained from representatives of those countries who had been members of the Ad Hoc Committee. For similar reasons, it had also been impossible to visit New Zealand, but a summary of that Government's views had been communicated to the Committee.

Finally, he expressed appreciation for the assistance given to members of the Committee by the Division of Narcotic Drugs, INCB Board and ICPO/INTERPOL.

Mr. CHAWLA (India), introducing the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Illicit Traffic in the Far East Region, said that, when the draft resolution concerning the establishment of Committee had been considered at the twenty-fifth session of the Commission, the question of financial implications had been raised and it had been estimated that the Committee might have to visit 10 countries in the Far East region in about 30 days. After the Commission's resolution had been endorsed by the Economic and Social Council, the Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs had suggested that the members of the Ad Hoc Committee should meet at Bangkok on 7 October 1973 for a study tour to Bangkok, Rangoon, Kathmandu, Colombo, Kuala Lumpur, Saigon, Vientiane, Hong Kong, Manila and Singapore. The Committee had, however, been informed that the Governments of Burma and Nepal would not be in a position to participate in its work at that time. It had discussed that development and had authorized its Chairman to seek advice from the Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs. It had expressed concern that it might not be able to discharge its task adequately, since Burma was one of the countries in the border area where opium problems were known to exist and Nepal was a country where the problem of cannabis smuggling arose. Since the Committee had not been able to visit those countries, it regretted that its report was somewhat incomplete.

Paragraphs 8 to 94 of the report contained information provided by the Governments of the countries visited during the study tour. Paragraphs 95 - 141 contained information on the four countries which had not been visited. The Committee had been able to visit only the capitals of the countries concerned and had therefore not visited any problem areas where the opium poppy and cannabis were illegally cultivated. Moreover, owing to the lack of time, it had not been able to provide draft summaries of its report to the Governments concerned for their approval.

Paragraphs 142 - 156 contained a general assessment of the drug problem in the Far East region. The Committee considered that drug problems in the region were diverse in nature and that different countries or groups of countries were faced with different situations. All the countries contacted by the Committee had agreed on the importance of regional co-operation, with emphasis on the co-operation which could be achieved through free and frank exchanges of information at the operational and enforcement levels. Several countries had suggested that it would be useful to hold an annual conference of the operational heads of the national narcotics law enforcement agencies of the countries of the region and that such a conference should be financed by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. In its recommendations, contained in paragraphs 157 and 158, the Committee had endorsed those views, but, in order to keep the proposed conference to a manageable size, it had suggested that it should be attended by those countries in the region which were affected by the traffic from the "border area". It had also suggested that the conference should be organized by the Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the expenses met by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. Finally, although the report contained no recommendations on matters such as crop substitution and treatment of addicts, he was of the opinion that the Commission should consider them as fully as possible during the discussion of the report.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.