



COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS
Seventh session
Agenda item 6

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION
IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF NARCOTIC DRUGS

Memorandum by the Secretary-General

1. Under the terms of article 49 of the Universal Postal Convention of 1947 and the corresponding provisions of the Agreements concluded in accordance with article 4, paragraph 2 of that Convention, the international shipment by post of "opium, cocaine and other narcotics" is either prohibited absolutely or permitted only to countries which allow such shipments for medical and scientific purposes^{1/}.
2. As a result of continuous progress in synthetic chemistry, the number of narcotic drugs which it has become necessary to subject to international control has grown considerably in recent years and gives every indication of continuing to increase. In this situation the Commission may consider it appropriate to take steps to ensure that all narcotics falling under international control are subjected to the same restrictions that now apply to the postal shipment of "opium, cocaine and other narcotics".
3. With the aid of information furnished by the national postal administrations the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union publishes "a list of prohibited articles"^{2/}. This list contains those provisions of the Universal Postal Convention, of the Agreements concluded under article 4, paragraph 2

^{1/} Article 49 of the Universal Postal Convention of 1947; article 12 of the Agreement of 1947 concerning Letters and Boxes with Declared Value; and article 16 of the Agreement of 1947 concerning Postal Parcels. See also article 32 of the 1947 Provisions concerning the Transportation of Regular Mails by Air, and article 20 of the 1947 Provisions concerning the Transportation of Postal Parcels by Air.

^{2/} The list is published under article 173, paragraph 4 (c) of the Regulations of 1947 of Execution of the Universal Postal Convention.

/thereof,

thereof, and of national postal regulations that provide for the absolute or conditional prohibition of the shipment by post of certain goods, including "opium, cocaine and other narcotics". If the Commission should consider it desirable for all narcotic drugs which are now or may in the future be placed under international control to be individually mentioned in the "list" as subject to the restrictions of the Universal Postal Convention and of the Agreements concluded under it, proposals relating to the amendment of the "list" might be laid before the Economic and Social Council.

4. In connexion with its work on the proposed Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the Commission may also wish to consider the desirability of proposing to the Council that the United Nations and the Universal Postal Union should jointly give some consideration to the following questions:

- (a) Whether the international shipment of narcotic substances by letter post should continue to be prohibited;
- (b) Whether the international shipment of narcotic substances by post in boxes or parcels should, as at present, be permitted to countries which allow the use of the mails for the carrying of boxes or parcels of narcotics intended for medical or scientific use, or whether such shipment should be absolutely prohibited;
- (c) If the shipment of narcotic substances by post in boxes or parcels should continue to be permitted to countries which allow such importation by post for medical and scientific purposes, whether such shipment should be exempted under the proposed Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs from the provisions for the control of narcotic substances in transit^{1/};
- (d) Whether the consignment of narcotics to a post office box should be prohibited^{2/}; and
- (e) How provisions for the control of the international shipment of narcotic drugs by post could be most appropriately divided between the proposed Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the Universal Postal Convention and the Agreements supplementing that treaty.

^{1/} See article 15, paragraph 5 of the 1925 Convention.

^{2/} See paragraph 21 of the Model Administrative Code to the International Opium Convention of 1925 (League of Nations document C.774.M.365.1932.XI.).

5. In anticipation of the Commission's desire to see some or all of the measures outlined above put into effect, the Secretary-General has the honour to lay before it, as an annex to the present document, a draft resolution which the Commission could recommend to the Council for adoption.

ANNEX

Draft Resolution

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION
IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF NARCOTIC DRUGS

The Economic and Social Council

Mindful of the need for close co-operation between the United Nations and the Universal Postal Union to facilitate the effective international control of narcotic drugs,

Considering the necessity for applying to the postal shipment of all such substances falling under international control the restrictions in the Universal Postal Convention of 1947 and in the Agreements concluded in accordance with article 4, paragraph 2 thereof that apply to the postal shipment of "opium, cocaine and other narcotics",

1. Recommends the Universal Postal Union to consider the amendment or interpretation of the provisions of article 49 of the Universal Postal Convention of 1947, of article 12 of the Agreement of 1947 Concerning Letters and Boxes with Declared Value and of article 16 of the Agreement of 1947 Concerning Postal Parcels, or the corresponding provisions of the Universal Postal Convention and Agreements as may be concluded at the Universal Postal Congress of 1952 to provide expressly for the restrictions therein relating to the postal shipment of narcotics to apply to all narcotic drugs which are or may be placed under international control;
2. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to the Universal Postal Union such draft propositions for interpretations of or amendments to the Universal Postal Convention and Agreements concluded thereunder as may be necessary in this connexion;
3. Further requests the Secretary-General to consult the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union on the possibility of amending and supplementing from time to time the list of prohibited articles published by the Bureau in accordance with article 173, paragraph 4 (c) of the Regulations of 1947 of Execution of the Universal Postal Convention, or with the corresponding provisions of Regulations to be adopted at the Universal Postal Congress of 1952 or at later Postal Congresses, so as to include in the list all narcotic drugs which are or
/may be placed

may be placed under international control as being subject to the restrictions referred to in the first operative paragraph of this resolution; and

4. Asks the Universal Postal Union to send to the Secretary-General as soon as feasible an opinion on the following questions:

- (a) Whether the international shipment of narcotic substances by letter post should continue to be prohibited;
- (b) Whether the international shipment of narcotic substances by post in boxes or parcels should, as at present, be permitted to countries which allow the use of the mails for the carrying of boxes or parcels of narcotics intended for medical or scientific use, or whether such shipment should be absolutely prohibited;
- (c) If the shipment of narcotic substances by post in boxes or parcels should continue to be permitted to countries which allow such importation by post for medical and scientific purposes, whether such shipment should be exempted under the proposed Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs from the provisions for the control of narcotic substances in transit;
- (d) Whether the consignment of narcotics to a post office box should be prohibited;
- (e) How provisions for the control of the international shipment of narcotic drugs by post could be most appropriately divided between the proposed Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the Universal Postal Convention and the Agreements supplementing that treaty; and
- (f) Whether, in the view of the Universal Postal Union, other measures or regulations connected with the shipment of narcotic drugs by post might assist in curbing the illicit traffic in such substances.
