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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Letter dated 22 May 1981 from the Permanent Representative  
of Bolivia to the United Nations addressed to the  
Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you the gratitude of the Government of Bolivia for the interest which the Secretariat has taken in the requests to the United Nations for co-operation in the campaign against the drug traffic.

You will no doubt recall the first note I sent to you in this connexion, which was dated 20 February 1981. That note was followed by a communication signed by His Excellency the Bolivian Minister for Foreign Affairs (A/36/179, annex I). I have also transmitted to you the text of an appeal made by my Government to the international community for co-operation with Bolivia in the difficult task of stamping out the drug traffic (*ibid.*, annex II). All these communications have met with a positive response. I have subsequently held wide-ranging discussions on the subject with Secretariat officials.

In a recent communication, authorized United Nations departments correctly list the following Bolivian requests:

1. Visit to Bolivia in the near future by an expert, with a view to establishing contact with the Government and co-operating in project identification;
2. Visit by a high-level expert mission later in 1981;
3. Resumption of the services of the rehabilitation clinic for drug addicts, which were suspended in December 1980 because of economic difficulties;
4. Initiation of crop substitution projects, in co-operation with the United Nations Development Programme.

\* A/36/50.

In connexion with all the above, the United Nations has officially informed me that:

Action is being taken on the first item as a matter of priority;

The second item, the most important of all, is receiving due consideration, and more precise information will be provided shortly;

With reference to the third item, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control is currently seeing about the reopening of the rehabilitation clinic;

With reference to the fourth item, the United Nations Development Programme is prepared to consider the question of crop substitution as soon as a formal request is received from our Government.

In addition to the foregoing information, we have been advised, in a commentary, of the importance attached by the Secretary-General to the activities being undertaken to combat drug abuse and of the preparedness of the United Nations to extend whatever assistance it can in this area. We express our gratitude for all this and wish to take the opportunity to provide the following additional information.

Three months ago, the Government of Bolivia began an all-out campaign against the clandestine production of and the illegal trade in cocaine in Bolivia. To this end, it has begun by establishing an internal customs system to monitor stringently the coca leaf trade. It has entrusted this complicated and risky operation directly to the Armed Forces Command. To date, it has occupied and dismantled over 100 clandestine cocaine factories. It has apprehended and is quickly bringing to justice more than 200 drug traffickers, nationals and foreigners alike. It has seized and destroyed dozens of kilos of cocaine, as well as over 1,500 tons of coca leaf intended for the clandestine drug industry. In the course of these operations, several drug traffickers, some of them foreigners, and one Bolivian member of the anti-drug police force have died. In all these cases, there has been firm evidence of clear and dangerous links between the drug traffickers, the members of the international extremist guerrilla movements of leftists and rightists, and the arms suppliers.

It is therefore not wrong to say that in addition to its wretchedness as an instrument corrupting the morals and health of our peoples, the traffic in drugs is an illegal source of income and armed strength for the disruptive forces being promoted in our countries by the international extremists, with a view to bringing to fruition in America one of their most obvious, deadly and criminal battle-plans.

In the light of all the foregoing factors and considerations, my Government attaches the greatest importance to the concrete assurances of co-operation offered to us by the United Nations and, at the same time, welcomes your expression of personal support. Since I believe that this matter and imminent developments are clearly of international concern, I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter distributed as an official document of the General Assembly under item 12 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Fernando ORTIZ SANZ  
Ambassador