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on Thursday, 27 June 1996, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GERVAIS (Côte d'Ivoire)

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC
AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES
(continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES
(continued) (E/1996/18 and Add.1, E/1996/57, E/1996/60)

Mr. CEVERS (Observer for Latvia) said that while his Government recognized its own responsibilities in the matter, because of Latvia's importance as a transit State, the international community had a significant role to play in the suppression of the illicit transport and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances. Latvia welcomed the significant moral and practical assistance which it received from the UNDCP office in Riga.

Latvia was party to the 1961, 1971 and 1988 Conventions and its parliament had recently enacted legislation to permit the orderly and controlled legal distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances and precursors within the context of the democratic, free market society that was developing in that country. Draft legislation aimed at preventing the legalization of criminally acquired financial resources was also in the final stages of completion. Unfortunately, lack of experience in the field of banking legislation and the excessively liberal conditions that had been permitted in the banking sector during the early years of the re-establishment of the State had caused certain problems whose solution required external technical assistance. It was no secret that the economic recovery was fuelled by dirty money. He assured the Council, however, that his Government would do all within its power to prevent money-laundering from taking place in Latvia.

At the institutional level, a national coordinating commission had been established in 1993 to prepare and implement a national programme to combat drug addiction. In recognition of the need to educate civil society, and especially young people, about the dangers of narcotics and psychotropic substances, including so-called "light narcotics", the Minister of Education had been made a member of the commission.

In the medical and social fields, attention was being focused on the rehabilitation of drug addicts through socially correct medical treatment and their reintegration into society. A scientifically sound rehabilitation

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programme was being planned to replace the forced treatment programmes which had existed previously.

A special police department coordinated narcotics investigations with assistance from other States. A committee had also been set up within the Ministry of Social Welfare to control the legal distribution of narcotics and to supervise pharmacies and medical institutions. The Government was preparing to establish complete control over the manufacture and trade of precursors, through computerization and data analysis.

Certain problems related to the control of narcotics and precursors, however, could only be addressed through increased international cooperation. The effective pursuit of drug traffickers was possible only if officials received specialized training and had access to sophisticated information systems and surveillance apparatus. As an economically fragile State, Latvia needed the assistance of the international community in the fight against drugs. Indeed, it welcomed such cooperation in the field of economic and social development as a whole and, to that end, had announced its candidacy for a seat on the Economic and Social Council in 1997.

Mr. Soo Gil PARK (Observer for the Republic of Korea) said that, despite some encouraging developments at the local and subregional levels, the global trend towards increasing drug abuse continued unabated. Trade liberalization and the growing interdependence of the global economy had facilitated the flow of illicit drugs and the laundering of the ill-gotten gains. Producer, transit and consumer countries were equally affected and a substantial amount of synthetic narcotics was now being manufactured in consumer countries.

While drug abuse had only just become a serious problem in the Republic of Korea, his Government had implemented strict control policies to combat trafficking in illicit drugs, an activity which threatened the very fabric of society. The impact of drug abuse on health and welfare transcended even the spread of HIV/AIDS. Preventive education to stem the spread of that pernicious practice was therefore of crucial importance.

Given the increasingly complex nature of the drug problem, a collective response was needed to effectively control the flow of illegal drugs and implement a viable programme to reduce demand. Consumption was the primary stimulus for illicit drug production and trafficking and any strategies for

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reducing demand and controlling supplies should be mutually reinforcing. His Government was actively encouraging the civil society to lead the campaign against drug abuse and to promote public awareness of its devastating effects.

For its part, the United Nations had a pivotal role to play in strengthening inter-agency cooperation. In particular, his Government welcomed the initiative of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) in developing a more operational United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and the substantive work being carried out by UNDCP in the areas of supply control and demand reduction, regional and cross-border cooperation and national drug control plans. The Republic of Korea therefore supported initiatives to strengthen the financial basis of UNDCP. It also welcomed the proposal of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs that a special session of the General Assembly be convened in 1998 to discuss ways of dealing with the world-wide drug epidemic.

Finally, his Government attached great importance to regional and subregional cooperation to combat the disturbing rise in the use of synthetic narcotics in north-east Asia and stood ready to actively participate in any regional arrangement designed to achieve that objective.

Mr. LAGOS PIZZATI (Observer for El Salvador), speaking on behalf of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador, said that the international community should demonstrate a firm political commitment to combating production, sale and trafficking of drugs, particularly in vulnerable States whose institutions were under threat. While States should have primary responsibility for drug control, multinational cooperation was indispensable. The United Nations should coordinate strategies in the fight against drugs, and should be given the means with which to do so. He supported the proposal for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly in 1998.

A number of regional initiatives had been undertaken aimed at preventing Central American countries from becoming bases for drug traffickers, including the conclusion of regional cooperation accords, the enactment of appropriate legislation and the establishment of drug monitoring and security systems.

For the future, Central America believed that more international resources should be allocated to the fight against drugs in the region, in order to reduce demand and safeguard the future of the young at a particularly sensitive time in the area's history.

Mr. KAUSIKAN (Observer for Singapore) said that, given its location near to the poppy fields of the so-called "golden triangle", Singapore had not been spared the attentions of international drug traffickers. The drug situation in that country, however, was under control and had remained stable over the previous two decades. There were no areas in Singapore where drugs were openly bought and sold. Drug addicts did not abuse drugs openly and death from drug overdose was virtually unheard of. The fight against drugs, however, was a never-ending battle and his country's relative success was due to the vigorous enforcement of tough laws against drug trafficking syndicates and to a two-pronged strategy aimed at reducing both demand and supply.

In order to reduce demand, the Central Narcotics Bureau was empowered to forcibly commit drug addicts to drug rehabilitation centres for treatment and rehabilitation, and it regularly conducted country-wide operations to round up suspected drug addicts. Upon release from the rehabilitation centres, addicts were subjected to a two-year compulsory supervision programme under which they were required to report to police stations for regular testing in order to ensure that they remained drug free. Drug addiction was viewed in Singapore not as a medical but as a behavioural problem. An addict was ultimately responsible for the consequences of his own actions.

An extensive education programme was also in place to educate the public, especially impressionable teenagers, about the dangers posed by drug abuse. In order to discourage experimentation with drugs, students were taken on tours of drug rehabilitation centres to see for themselves the tough regime that awaited addicts.

Given the international dimensions of the drug menace, the Singaporean authorities worked in close cooperation with regional and international enforcement agencies, including the Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States of America, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Australian Federal Police and drug enforcement agencies in neighbouring countries.

As a small country, Singapore had no room for social experimentation and no tolerance for drug abuse. The battle against drugs required firm political will and commitment at both the national and international levels.

Mr. FRAIH (Jordan) said that despite the best efforts of the international community, global demand for narcotic drugs and illicit substances had grown, to the detriment of social and economic stability. It was therefore

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imperative that the international community should cooperate more effectively to address the reasons for increased demand and ways of achieving demand reduction.

At the international level, concerted action to develop effective drug control measures was the cornerstone of a global anti-drugs strategy. At the regional level, UNDCP support for meetings between neighbouring States had proved an invaluable way of achieving progress on the fight against drugs and drug trafficking.

International cooperation should not be restricted to the exchange of information, however, but should also provide assistance to countries less able to finance the measures needed to rid themselves of the drug scourge. In that regard, the United Nations, the only body capable of sustaining international cooperation against drugs, faced an onerous task. UNDCP and other related bodies deserved the full support and commitment of all States, particularly those most directly affected by the drug problem.

As for Jordan, it would continue to support all efforts towards greater international cooperation in the hope that future generations would be spared the pernicious effects of drug abuse, production and trafficking.

Ms. MARTINEZ (Observer for Ecuador) said that her delegation wished to re-emphasize the importance of taking stock and reformulating the international cooperation mechanisms which should be put in place or further refined in order to combat drugs. A special session of the General Assembly dedicated to the fight against the illegal production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances and other related activities would be the most appropriate way of promoting such cooperation.

The proposed special session of the General Assembly ought to proceed from the principle that responsibility for dealing with the drug problem should be shared by producer and consumer countries, bearing in mind existing arrangements that had already been agreed at regional level. A balance should be struck between all the elements which made up the problem, including crime, money-laundering and illegal arms trafficking. The special session should also fully acknowledge the global nature of the problem, thus eliciting a useful exchange of views and experience. The Ecuadorian Government also endorsed the idea of convening a world conference on narcotic drugs and the elaboration of an Inter-American convention on money-laundering.

Mr. MAPURANGA (Zimbabwe) said that the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking transcended national borders, and there was a need for global vigilance and cooperation on all fronts, particularly through initiatives such as the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly in 1990.

His delegation was concerned at the general decline in the level of resources at the disposal of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and UNDCP. The 27 per cent drop in resources since 1993 reflected a marginalization of a very important United Nations agency. Zimbabwe urged all countries, and especially developed countries, to contribute more to the UNDCP general-purpose fund to ensure the Programme's viability. The linkage of voluntary contributions to specific technical cooperation activities had led to the concentration of efforts in specific geographical regions, whereas the only effective way of dealing with the drug menace was from a global perspective. International efforts had thus far tended to focus on programmes in producer and consumer countries to the virtual exclusion of transit countries such as Zimbabwe. There were alarming indications that transit countries were slowly becoming consumers of illicit drugs as a result of such neglect and prolonged exposure to drugs. The United Nations, as the most effective framework for the international community to tackle the drug problem, should play a vital role in efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

His delegation wished to draw attention to the obvious link between poverty and the problems of drug abuse. As long as the international community failed to mount sustainable efforts at economic and social development in general, and poverty eradication and unemployment in particular, drug abuse and illicit trafficking would continue to cause problems.

At the national level Zimbabwe had taken various steps to prevent its territory from being used as a transit route for illegal trafficking. At the regional level, it was cooperating with its neighbours to control drugs.

Mr. KIWANUKA (Uganda) said that the worldwide drug problem was a cause for grave concern and underscored the need for all States to develop national drug control strategies which would integrate and coordinate the fight against illicit drugs. Such strategies should include appropriate legislation, education programmes and drug law-enforcement initiatives.

The problem should be tackled from the standpoint of reducing both supply and demand. In many countries, poverty and unemployment were major causes of

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the drug problem. Poverty eradication was therefore one of the most effective ways of confronting the issue. To curtail demand, it was imperative that proper drug rehabilitation programmes for addicts should be given priority. On the supply side, there should be greater international cooperation to monitor and prevent the movement of drugs. In addition to rehabilitation, the Ugandan Government had initiated a programme of awareness, education and community development activities to warn young people of the dangers of addiction while pointing out the attraction of a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. His Government was seriously concerned about the effects of drug abuse on children, and particularly the most vulnerable categories such as street children.

Uganda had also promulgated laws and implemented programmes designed to neutralize drug trafficking networks and control imports. It was also rigidly enforcing customs controls and coordinating policy with foreign drug enforcement agencies to identify, monitor and neutralize trafficking syndicates.

His delegation particularly welcomed useful and productive exchanges of views and expertise, for example technical cooperation in drug abuse control at the operational level. The Ugandan Government also wished to reaffirm its commitment to UNDCP, and welcomed the idea of holding a special session of the General Assembly in 1998 to deal with the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking. He hoped that the special session would manifest greater awareness of the so-called "new and emerging" drug regions such as Africa.

Mr. de FIGUEIREDO (Observer for Angola) said that, despite the efforts being carried out at the national, regional and international levels, the illicit production, sale and distribution of narcotics was increasing. International drug traffickers were taking advantage of the fact that Angola was recovering from 20 years of war. Since its borders were vulnerable and it lacked adequate financial and human resources, the country was increasingly being turned into a transit zone for illegal drug traffic. It was in drug traffickers' interest to create instability in Angola, and other countries in the Southern African region were facing the same threat. His Government had appealed to UNDCP for assistance in establishing an adequate institutional structure and juridical framework, and also for assistance in planning and implementing prevention programmes. However, since UNDCP lacked resources its capacity to intervene remained limited. It was essential that UNDCP should be provided with adequate financial and human resources.

Angola wholeheartedly advocated regional cooperation and was participating in an action programme initiated by the Organization of African Unity to combat drug abuse; however, his Government was acutely conscious of the meagre resources at its disposal.

Mr. ELTINAY (Sudan), said that disease, poverty and drugs threatened to destroy the social, spiritual and moral fabric of communities for generations to come. The Sudan, one of the few countries in which the drug problem was not yet critical, attached great importance to education of the young as a way of countering increased drug demand. As drugs threatened the future of the developed world and the chance for progress in the developing world, international cooperation had become the most appropriate response.

For its part, the Sudan had adopted a number of national laws seeking to control and eradicate drug trafficking and production. The death penalty had been introduced for those found guilty of drug dealing, while severe sentences were imposed for drug-related offences. The Sudan spoke to the young through educational and sports programmes as well as public information campaigns, while cooperating fully in international and regional agreements aimed at combating the drugs trade.

Given the existence of an inextricable link between drug problems and development, donor States should ask themselves whether there was sufficient political will to help developing countries combat drugs, for the tendency to offer assistance strictly on the basis of political interest could ultimately prove to be self-defeating, pushing needy countries into seeking alternative and illicit sources of income.

In the meantime, the Sudan supported the proposal concerning a special session of the General Assembly on drugs in 1998, and hoped that the trend towards reducing funding for the UNDCP would be reversed.

Mr. POERNOMO (Indonesia) said that the United Nations remained the most effective and appropriate organization for the promotion and coordination of international drug control strategies. To that end, his delegation supported the proposal of holding a special session of the General Assembly on the drugs issue in 1998.

His delegation believed that the drug problem should be viewed as a threat to development programmes and activities. While UNDCP efforts to promote

international strategies for drug control were laudable, it must be given adequate resources if it was to function properly and effectively.

For its part, Indonesia remained committed to cooperating with its international partners on ways of developing a comprehensive anti-drugs strategy for the benefit of the global community.

Mr. MENCZEL (Observer for Hungary), said that Hungary's national drug prevention strategy sought to provide education, treatment and rehabilitation as well as training for health professionals and other personnel involved with drug-related issues. As part of its commitment to combating drug production and trafficking at the regional level, Hungary had participated in meetings of Central European States in order to elaborate a drug control cooperation plan.

With the crisis in the Balkans, drug traffickers had begun to use Hungary as a country of transit, and currently one tenth of all European drug seizures were made by Hungarian authorities. As evidence of its determination to reverse that situation and to support the international struggle against drugs, Hungary endorsed the proposal for a special session of the General Assembly in 1998 devoted to drugs, and pledged its full cooperation in all international efforts to combat the problem of drugs.

Mr. YELTENENKO (Observer for Ukraine) said that despite all the measures that had been implemented at national and international level, the scale of the drug problem was increasing. Collective efforts were necessary to overcome the threat. Of particular concern to his delegation was the linkage between illicit drug trafficking and international crime. Crime syndicates were inflicting incalculable damage on the economic fabric of a number of States.

Ukraine was being used as a transit point in the westward flow of narcotic substances. Traffickers were taking advantage of its under-funded law-enforcement authorities. The problems faced by Ukraine and other transition economies required the special attention of United Nations specialized agencies. His Government had particularly high regard for the work being done by UNDCP and fully shared its aim of reducing drug supply and demand while combating illicit trafficking. Accession by States to international conventions on narcotics was also important, and his delegation had been disappointed to note that certain drug producer and exporter countries had yet to accede to those instruments. Despite the growing number of signatories to anti-drugs conventions, only a

handful of States had actually put into effect control mechanisms regarding precursor drugs.

At the national level, his Government had taken a number of legislative and institutional steps designed to deal with illegal drug trafficking. Ukraine also welcomed the work being done by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as part of the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly in 1990. But it was important to stress that action against drugs would only be truly effective when all States presented a united front.

Mr. ILLUECA (Observer for Panama) said that, as a country at the crossroads of the world's great maritime routes, Panama firmly supported the Global Programme of Action as the launching pad for national, regional and international efforts to combat the production and illicit trafficking of narcotics and psychotropic substances. In keeping with the principles of shared responsibility and international cooperation, his Government had proposed the creation in the former Panama Canal Zone of a multilateral centre to combat drug trafficking and related crimes. Panama would make available to the centre existing buildings and infrastructure and participating States would contribute the required human resources and mobile equipment.

The Government of Panama had enacted various pieces of legislation to combat drug-related crimes and money-laundering, including agreements with other countries in the region. It welcomed the decision of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to follow up on the Mexican initiative by recommending that a special session of the General Assembly should be held in 1998 to examine ways of strengthening international cooperation and ensuring more effective implementation of existing international instruments in the field of narcotics control.

In that connection, however, greater efforts should be made to ensure that more realistic budgetary resources were available to UNDCP, regional organizations and national authorities for the fight against drug abuse, particularly since the global narcotics industry generated profits of some US\$ 500 billion. He therefore supported the call made by the Executive-Director of UNDCP for the appropriation of resources to the Programme commensurate with its mandate. The colossal resources available to the transnational criminal organizations and the globalization of the problem made it imperative to undertake an extensive, generously funded programme to control the production,

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demand, consumption and illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Efforts could no longer focus only on control but must include action in the areas of the family, health, education, the workplace, criminalization and the judicial system. Finally, given the global scale of the problem and the blurring of the distinction between producer and consumer countries, only the United Nations was capable of leading the global fight against a scourge which threatened the biological and moral destiny of all mankind.

Mr. NAKKAWITA (Observer for Sri Lanka) said that the drug problem compounded the other problems of developing countries by obliging them to commit a significant part of their resources to that area, when they were needed to grapple with other development issues. Fighting drug abuse required human resources, but it was precisely those resources that were placed at greatest risk by the spread of drugs. The world must focus on the link between terrorism and illicit drug trafficking, as many developing countries found their survival challenged by terrorist groups which trafficked in illicit drugs and used the proceeds to buy weapons, which were used to destabilize legally constituted Governments.

Sri Lanka had ratified all the international drug control conventions and was in the process of formulating domestic legislation to put them into effect. Particular emphasis was being laid on money-laundering, forfeiture of assets derived from drug trafficking and treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers. The strategies contained in the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control had been incorporated into its national policy. Sri Lanka believed in the central role of the United Nations in drug control and pledged to support fully all initiatives in that area.

Mr. DANESH-YAZDI (Observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his Government firmly believed that the United Nations provided the most effective framework within which to address the drug problem. Thus, the unilateral initiatives of any country which duplicated the work of United Nations bodies and attempted to judge the cooperation of other Member States was harmful and would undermine the multilateral approach and weaken international cooperation.

To ensure that its national efforts had maximum impact, Iran was cooperating in drug control activities of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

Its Member States were located in a crucial segment of traditional drug trafficking routes, and they attached particular importance to developing effective narcotics control programmes. His delegation underlined the need for UNDCP to support the Economic Cooperation Organization in its initiatives and in implementing its plan of action, which in turn would promote implementation of the System-wide Action Plan. Another important area of regional activity was the project document on strengthening the law enforcement capacities in the border area between Iran and Pakistan. His Government welcomed the UNDCP initiative for the joint programme, which was crucial in countering trans-border trafficking. The project had been successful in achieving its goal of exchanging operational intelligence, joint patrols and increased surveillance along the border. Over the past two years, Iran had entered into several fruitful arrangements, not only with its immediate neighbours like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkey, but also with India, Bangladesh and Kyrgyzstan.

His delegation believed that UNDCP should be prepared to assist countries requiring information and expertise in formulating national strategies. Interdiction should not be regarded as the sole strategy for the control of supply; eradication of illicit drug production and crop substitution were also of vital importance. It also opposed any trends towards legalization of non-medical uses of drugs.

Mr. Win MRA (Observer for Myanmar) said that Myanmar was completely committed to the total elimination of the drug menace and had established a two-pronged national strategy for drug abuse control, which consisted of drug eradication and prevention activities combined with the gradual elimination of poppy cultivation by raising the standard of living of indigenous groups living in remote areas where poppy was grown. To that end, the Government had implemented extensive development projects in remote border areas.

The priorities of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control, the main body for implementing the drug policy of Myanmar, included supply reduction, demand reduction and law enforcement. It had also entered into cooperative efforts with its neighbours. A major offensive in late 1995 by the defence forces in the border areas near Thailand had led to the confiscation of a vast arsenal of weapons and the total eradication of opium cultivation in the Loilang and Homain regions. While it would welcome any opportunity for international

cooperation, Myanmar was determined to use whatever resources it had at its disposal in its efforts to eradicate the drug menace.

Mr. OTUYELU (Observer for Nigeria) said that Nigeria had demonstrated its commitment to international anti-drugs cooperation by signing all the United Nations conventions on narcotic drugs. Tough anti-drug legislation was in force in the country and a powerful national agency had been set up to tackle the problem. In addition, his Government fully supported the relevant Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly in 1990, and pursuant to that Programme a national drug control strategy had been established. Nigeria had taken a number of specific steps to tackle the problem of money-laundering, and had been very active in drug law-enforcement operations at the regional level.

The problems of drug abuse and illicit trafficking required a non-partisan and transparent approach that dispensed with name-calling and self-righteousness. Such recriminations could only weaken international solidarity and play into the hands of illicit traffickers and their backers.

The capacity of UNDCP should be enhanced and greater emphasis should be placed on system-wide coordination of United Nations activities with a view to combating the drugs menace. Governments needed to cooperate more with private enterprises and individuals to prevent the illicit production, trade, traffic and distribution of drugs, and the role of the media, religious groups and non-governmental organizations should be enhanced in drug control activities.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to begin an informal dialogue on the threat posed to the world economy by international drug trafficking and the strengthening of the United Nations role in drug control.

Mr. GONZALEZ GALVEZ (Observer for Mexico) noted the lack of precise and reliable information on the impact of drug trafficking on the world economy. According to some estimates, drug revenues were even greater than those of the oil industry, yet such assertions were difficult to prove. A link was frequently drawn between illicit trafficking and free trade agreements, which should be discussed in greater detail. It was important to determine whether trade liberalization actually did facilitate illegal trafficking; that did not appear to be the case in all regions of the world. It might be useful for the Council to propose a resolution that all future free trade agreements should contain provisions against money-laundering.

As to the assertion that drug revenues could sometimes benefit a country's economy, some 90 per cent of such revenues were derived from distribution rather than production, and as such, benefited no one but the traffickers.

The fragmented approach to money-laundering had not been highly effective, and it might be time to elaborate an international convention in that area. Financing was among the most important ways in which the work of the United Nations could be strengthened, and accordingly, Mexico had decided to increase its contribution to United Nations drug control activities. Strengthened resources should be combined with a review of existing mechanisms, however.

Mr. MEDELLIN (Colombia) said that his country, which had suffered the effects of narcotics production and trafficking for many years, had long been calling for an integrated approach to the problem. Thus, the current dialogue among equals and the unanimous view that supply and demand were integral parts of the same problem were greatly welcomed.

Ironically, demand was seen as an internal problem, whereas supply had thus far been viewed as an international matter. In fact, demand should also be seen as an international public health issue. His Government agreed on the need for an international convention against money-laundering.

There was a tremendous need for fresh and comprehensive information and statistics on the scope of the problem. His Government had found international assistance in that area very useful in drawing up legislative reforms imposing the most severe penalties yet for narcotics trafficking offences; they were soon to be introduced in the Congress of Colombia.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.