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Thirty-sixth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF A SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM IN THE  
AGENDA OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE DRUG TRAFFIC

Letter dated 11 August 1981 from the Permanent Representative  
of Bolivia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-  
General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request you to take the necessary action for the inclusion, pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, of an item entitled "International campaign against the drug traffic" in the agenda of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Attached herewith is a memorandum explaining why the Government of Bolivia proposes that the supreme organ of the United Nations should consider the item in question.

(Signed) Fernando ORTIZ SANZ  
Ambassador

ANNEX

Need for an international campaign against  
the drug traffic

1. Since its inception, the United Nations has been concerned with the problem of the drug traffic. The political and technical debates on this item in the world forum have been legion. However, they have had little impact, inasmuch as the problem of drug addiction is outpacing any action which the international community can take to combat it. The aggravation of the situation in recent years makes broader and stronger measures essential.
2. Drug addiction and the victims of drug addiction - a group inevitably including the thousands of affected families - inherently pose a serious problem. The vast illicit profits generated by the drug traffic for the international underworld give rise to such other problems as bribery and widespread corruption, problems which such questionable resources bring with them to the communities of nations.
3. Bolivia is not a nation which has had or now has a problem of drug addiction, except on the most limited scale. However, Bolivia, together with another country of the region, is one of the few producers of the coca leaf. The coca shrub, which is indigenous to the region, is the raw material in the production of cocaine, that dangerous alkaloid the use of which is increasing in alarming proportions in the ruinous centres of the drug traffic, the large capitals of the prosperous nations.
4. Through this criminal traffic, huge sums of hard currency are entering Bolivia and are being used to encourage corruption, to subvert the political order and to turn the nation into an inexhaustible source of revenue for the international underworld.
5. For decades the Government of Bolivia has been denouncing this situation, without securing the co-operation it needs. In recent years, the clandestine production of cocaine and the illicit traffic in the drug have reached catastrophic proportions. At the thirty-fifth session of the Assembly, the Bolivian delegation strongly supported resolution 35/195, which was adopted by consensus and which is a highly important document in the campaign. In February 1981, the Permanent Representative of Bolivia requested the Secretary-General's support in this matter. Shortly thereafter, the Bolivian Minister for Foreign Affairs himself wrote to the Secretary-General on the same matter and forwarded to him the text of an appeal made by Bolivia to the international community to combat the drug traffic. These communications were followed by others which have been distributed as official documents of the General Assembly (A/36/179, annexes I and II, and A/36/284).
6. In the meantime, the Government of Bolivia has enacted the necessary legislation establishing an internal customs system to centralize the entire coca leaf trade. Rapid military operations led to the dismantling of some 100 clandestine cocaine factories and to the imprisonment of some 200 persons involved, most of them foreigners. This campaign is continuing with permanent and intensive monitoring of the coca fields, the borders, international luggage and the airports.

7. All these efforts are, however, of very little account as against the damage which the immense sums of money brought into Bolivia by international traffickers are continuing to cause the country. Inasmuch as there is a somewhat similar situation with regard to other drugs in other regions of the world and inasmuch as the real remedy to this evil lies in crop substitution and border controls, which are possible only through concerted efforts and considerable resources, Bolivia believes that it is necessary to revitalize the debate and adopt scientific, technical and policing measures commensurate with the gravity of the problem. Accordingly, confirming the validity of all action that has been taken and recognizing the value of the agencies dealing with the problem within the United Nations system, Bolivia proposes that an item entitled "International campaign against the drug traffic" should be included in the agenda of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

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