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Fourteenth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE
AGENDA OF THE FOURTEENTH REGULAR SESSION: ITEM PROPOSED
BY THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

INTERNATIONAL ENCOURAGEMENT OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
INTO THE CONTROL OF CANCEROUS DISEASES
28 September 1959

On the instructions of the Government of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 15 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure, the inclusion of the following item in the agenda of the fourteenth session of the General Assembly, as an important and urgent matter:

"International encouragement of scientific research into the control of cancerous diseases".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure, an explanatory memorandum is attached hereto.

(Signed) K. Kiselev

Chairman of the Delegation of the
Byelorussian SSR to the fourteenth session
of the United Nations General Assembly

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic submits for the consideration of the fourteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly the question entitled "International encouragement of scientific research into the control of cancerous diseases".

This question is raised for the following reasons.

Mankind is becoming increasingly concerned over the wide spread of cancerous diseases. It is known that the problem of cancerous diseases contains many unclear and disputable questions. People in all countries regard cancer as a terrible and fatal disease, since its causes are not clear and effective remedies have not been found.

Statistical data on the incidence of and mortality from cancerous diseases indicate that the number of persons dying of cancer each year throughout the world is over 2 million. This means that for every 100,000 persons in the world, more than 100 die of cancer every year. Assuming that the average life expectancy of persons with malignant tumours is from two to three years, it can be said that approximately 5 million people throughout the world are now suffering from cancerous diseases.

In most countries, according to official data, cancerous diseases take second or third place among all causes of human death. The available statistical data on cancerous diseases throughout the world demonstrate that the control of such diseases is an international problem in solving which the United Nations could play a positive role.

The extensive scientific research which has been carried on in various countries for many years has already led to some progress in the control of cancerous diseases.

At the same time it must be said that the efforts so far made in this direction, nationally and internationally, have not yielded effective results. A great deal of work has yet to be done in order to find effective means of treating cancerous diseases. Of tremendous importance in clarifying the causes of the different forms of cancerous diseases in man is the study of the characteristics of this disease in different countries, of the relationship between

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the prevalence of particular types of cancerous growths and geographical, climatic, occupational and other factors.

There is no question that the problem of cancer control is one of the most important problems of world medical science. The eradication of cancer as a fatal and wide-spread disease of man is one of mankind's most important tasks. The United Nations should promote the fulfilment of this task. Article 13 of the United Nations Charter lays upon the General Assembly a direct responsibility - to initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose of promoting international co-operation in, among others, the health field. The General Assembly might accordingly adopt in this connexion a decision for the international encouragement of scientific research into the control of cancerous diseases.

A most important means of affording such encouragement would be the institution by the United Nations of international prizes for the most outstanding scientific work in connexion with cancerous-disease control. It would place no strain on the United Nations budget to establish three prizes, of a total value of \$100,000, to be awarded to scientists every four years.

At the request of the United Nations General Assembly, the International Union Against Cancer might undertake to award these prizes and to hold the first prize-giving ceremony at the regular world scientific congress on the control of cancerous diseases in 1962.

It would be desirable that world public opinion should be able to keep abreast of progress in the fight against cancer.

It would consequently be useful if the International Union Against Cancer would inform the United Nations General Assembly in 1962 of the progress achieved in the control of cancerous diseases.

In view of the foregoing, and guided solely by the interests of humanitarianism, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR introduces the following draft resolution for consideration at the fourteenth session of the General Assembly.

Draft Resolution

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

CONSIDERING that cancer is at present one of the diseases most dangerous to mankind,

RECOGNIZING the general desire of all mankind to eliminate wide-spread cancerous diseases among human beings,

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RECOGNIZING FURTHER that the national and international efforts so far undertaken for the control of cancerous diseases have not yielded sufficiently effective results,

WISHING to encourage scientific efforts in this field in all countries and international institutions,

(1) ESTABLISHES, for the most outstanding scientific work in connexion with the control of cancerous diseases, United Nations prizes:

(a) first prize: \$50,000

(b) second prize: \$30,000;

(c) third prize: \$20,000;

to be awarded once every four years;

(2) REQUESTS the International Union Against Cancer to undertake to award the prizes, holding the first prize-giving ceremony at the regular world scientific Congress on the control of cancerous diseases in 1962;

(3) REQUESTS the International Union Against Cancer to inform the United Nations General Assembly in 1962 of the progress achieved in the control of cancerous diseases.

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The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR expresses its confidence that the General Assembly will give this draft resolution careful consideration and will adopt a decision in the interests of all mankind, which expects a disease as wide-spread among human beings as cancer to be eradicated as quickly as possible.
