



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
7 March 2005

Original: English

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Forty-eighth session

Vienna, 7-14 March 2005

Agenda item 5

Drug demand reduction

Australia: draft resolution

Women and substance use

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Recognizing the conclusions of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime expressed in the report entitled *Substance Abuse Treatment and Care of Women: Case Studies and Lessons Learned*¹ that there are distinct gender differences in the patterns of uptake and use of illicit drugs, as well as gender-specific barriers that limit access to drug treatment services,

Noting the evidence presented in the above-mentioned report that women are less likely than men to use illicit substances such as opioids and cocaine, but more likely to use pharmaceutical substances, although there is also some evidence of convergence of rates of substance use among younger people,

Concerned at the adverse impact of drug use on women's reproductive health, including the effects of fetal exposure,

Deeply concerned at the link between child abuse and the later uptake of drug abuse, as recognized in the above-mentioned report,

Stressing the importance of more extensive data collection and research on gender issues relating to substance use,

Calling to mind the Political Declaration² and the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction³ adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, which reflected Member States' resolve to ensure that men and women benefit equally and without any discrimination from strategies directed

¹ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XI.24.

² General Assembly resolution S-20/2, annex.

³ General Assembly resolution S-20/3, annex.



at countering the world drug problem and that demand reduction policies shall be sensitive to both culture and gender,

Noting the observations in the third biennial report of the Executive Director on the world drug problem,⁴ which indicate that more needs to be done to strengthen efforts in prevention, rehabilitation and treatment, and the findings in the report of the Secretariat on the world situation with regard to drug abuse,⁵ that women experience difficulties in utilizing specialized treatment services in many regions,

1. *Commends* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for its timely publication, *Substance Abuse Treatment and Care of Women: Case Studies and Lessons Learned*,⁶ and urges that the publication be considered carefully by Member States;

2. *Calls upon* Member States to include collection of data relating to the use of illicit substances by women and their access to appropriate treatment services, as key elements of national demand reduction monitoring strategies;

3. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to ensure that gender issues are given appropriate attention in future reporting on the world situation with respect to drug use, having regard to the issues identified in its recent publication and report;⁷

4. *Urges* Member States to recognize the link between early childhood abuse and substance use and to implement broadly based prevention programmes to ensure that children and young people, especially girls and young women, exposed to trauma or family breakdown are protected from pathways leading to illicit substance use;

5. *Also urges* Member States to give priority to access to treatment for pregnant women who use illicit drugs and comprehensive support services post-partum for both mothers and children, and to ensure that the relevant legal structures facilitate rather than impede access to such treatment services;

6. *Calls upon* the World Health Organization and health promotion bodies in Member States to ensure the wide dissemination of information warning women and their partners of the link between injecting drug use and the transmission of HIV and other blood-borne pathogens;

7. *Urges* Member States to work with civil society to review barriers to treatment access by women and to work towards the elimination of such barriers;

8. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to assist Member States in the elimination of such barriers by continuing to promote examples of relevant programmes and policies that constitute good practice, with due regard to cultural factors, in the various regions.

⁴ E/CN.7/2005/2 and Add.1.

⁵ E/CN.7/2005/3.

⁶ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XI.24.

⁷ E/CN.7/2005/3.