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Addendum

Drug demand reduction

1. At its 1278th and 1279th meetings, on 14 and 15 March, the Commission considered agenda item 5, which read as follows:

“Drug demand reduction:

“(a) Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction;

“(b) World situation with regard to drug abuse.”

2. For its consideration of the item, the Commission had before it the report of the Secretariat on the world situation with regard to drug abuse (E/CN.7/2007/3) and the report of the Executive Director on expanding the capacity of communities to provide information, treatment, health care and social services to people living with HIV/AIDS and other blood-borne diseases in the context of drug abuse and strengthening monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems (E/CN.7/2007/11).

3. The Officer-in-Charge of the Division for Operations of UNODC made an introductory statement. A representative of the Secretariat presented an analysis of the world situation and trends with regard to drug abuse since 1998, a summary of key findings based on the biennial reports questionnaire on drug demand reduction and the report on services to people living with HIV/AIDS in the context of drug abuse. Statements were made by the representatives of Germany (on behalf of the European Union), Peru (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States), Ukraine, Nigeria, Turkey, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Colombia, India, the United Kingdom, Brazil, the United States, Namibia and Canada. Statements were also made by the observers for Slovenia, Denmark and the Netherlands. The



observers for the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the World Health Organization also made statements.

Deliberations

4. Appreciation was expressed for the reports and the information provided by the Secretariat. The importance of drug demand reduction in the development of national responses to the drug problem was reaffirmed. Speakers emphasized the importance of an approach balancing law enforcement and demand reduction measures, as well as the importance of using an approach to drug abuse that focused on public health. Several representatives provided information on demand reduction activities that had been initiated in their countries following the adoption of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction (General Assembly resolution S-20/3, annex) and its Action Plan (Assembly resolution 54/132, annex). Several speakers highlighted the fact that, beyond national responses, drug abuse was a problem that needed to be approached as a shared responsibility.

5. Several representatives reaffirmed the importance of improving the availability of reliable and comparable data on drug abuse and the essential role that good quality data played in supporting the formulation of evidence-based responses for demand reduction. One representative expressed appreciation for the new multidimensional analytical tool developed by the Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse of UNODC, which provided a basis for the representation of complex and multidimensional information on drug abuse. One representative noted that the information on drug abuse trends provided by the Secretariat confirmed the information collected through regional monitoring mechanisms in Europe. Reference was made to cooperation between the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and UNODC, including their recent joint launch of a toolkit for data collection that provided technical guidelines for establishing treatment and reporting systems using common reporting standards.

6. Several representatives highlighted the importance of primary prevention, in particular among youth, and underlined the need to develop programmes and activities on the basis of international experiences and best practices. Speakers mentioned, among other things, the importance of school-based prevention programmes, campaigns to raise public awareness about the risks and related consequences of using psychoactive substances, and the involvement of the media, the entertainment industry and other sectors, having a strong influence on attitudes and behaviour among youth. A number of speakers mentioned the need to develop new prevention measures to respond to changing trends in the abuse of drugs. Other speakers acknowledged the negative role that poverty, social exclusion and the lack of prospects played in increasing vulnerability to drug abuse.

7. Several representatives called for improved availability of and access to treatment and rehabilitation services and the need to better meet the growing needs of particular target groups, such as young addicts, and needs related to the abuse of specific substances, such as cannabis, while maintaining and extending the provision of treatment services to help long-term drug abusers, in many cases abusers of opioids. Several representatives described the extent and the

characteristics of treatment services in their countries and expressed appreciation for the work done by UNODC through the network of drug dependence treatment and rehabilitation resource centres (Treatnet).

8. Several speakers called for strengthening responses to the problem of HIV/AIDS infection as a consequence of drug dependence, welcomed the leading role of UNODC in that work and commended UNODC for facilitating the consultative meeting on HIV/AIDS prevention and care among injecting drug users, held in Vienna, on 6 and 7 March 2007. It was recommended that a follow-up meeting be held involving participants from the law enforcement, judiciary and penal sectors. Several representatives, expressing alarm at the situation with regard to HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases contracted through drug abuse, such as hepatitis C, underlined the importance, in the context of a comprehensive strategy to reduce demand for drugs, of reducing the negative health and social consequences of drug abuse, such as HIV/AIDS and other blood-borne diseases. Several representatives provided examples of programmes targeting drug users and providing a comprehensive package of measures related to HIV/AIDS prevention and care, including the provision of information on the risks associated with drug abuse, sterile injecting equipment, substitution therapy, treatment and rehabilitation, voluntary counselling and testing, antiretroviral treatment and other services.

9. Several speakers expressed support for the work of UNODC as a co-sponsor of UNAIDS, in particular its role in drug abuse prevention as it related to the care and prevention of HIV/AIDS among injecting drug abusers and in prison settings, as well as its coordination of the response to HIV/AIDS as it related to trafficking in persons. In that connection, one speaker noted that, in dealing with the issue of HIV/AIDS in the context of drug abuse prevention, UNODC should focus on prevention, where the Office had expertise and a comparative advantage. Several representatives referred to the commitment to scaling up universal access to care for people infected with HIV/AIDS. In that context, one representative noted the need to explore ways to provide opiate analgesics to patients infected with HIV/AIDS in order to reduce their pain.

10. One representative referred to innovative research being conducted into the treatment of young cannabis abusers. Noting that cannabis abuse was a significant problem in his country, the representative invited those States conducting such research to share the outcome of the research with States in Africa, where cannabis was the most widely abused illicit substance, to provide an opportunity for researchers from that region to participate in the project and, if that research was successfully completed, to assist in carrying out similar studies in Africa.