

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-FOURTH SESSION
Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
33rd meeting
held on
Monday, 6 November 1989
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 33rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KABORE (Burkina Faso)

later: Mr. OGURTSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist
Republic)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 111: INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST TRAFFIC IN DRUGS (continued)

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned
within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2 750,
2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.3/44/SR.33
20 November 1989
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 111: INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST TRAFFIC IN DRUGS (continued)
(A/44/572, A/44/601, A/44/119, A/44/235-S/20700, A/44/321, A/44/380, A/44/409-S/20743 and Corr.1 and 2, A/44/415-S/20749, A/44/551, A/44/477, A/44/578, A/44/598, A/44/607 and A/C.3/44/6)

1. Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia) said that the international campaign against traffic in drugs was one of the paramount issues at the current session of the General Assembly, because of its devastating impact on virtually all nations. Its seriousness lay not only in its current effects but also on those it would have on future generations if efforts to deal with it failed.
2. Two United Nations conferences had recently been held to address the problems stemming from the traffic in drugs: the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, which had approved the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control and a Declaration signalling the international community's political commitment to achieving lasting results; and the United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The Convention, approved in 1988, expanded the existing legal framework and enhanced international co-operation in the field of law enforcement and drug control. It made provision, *inter alia*, for the lifting of banking secrecy and for courts to be empowered to make available or seize information related to banking or to the financial and commercial sectors. His delegation urged Member States to become parties to that important Convention as soon as possible and to take the necessary measures for its implementation.
3. The Economic and Social Council, for its part, in resolution 1989/17, had decided that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs would hold a special session in 1990 to consider further measures that might be required to facilitate the entry into force of the Convention. As a member of the Commission and a signatory to the Convention, Indonesia would make every effort to formulate substantive recommendations and ensure the success of the meeting.
4. Another noteworthy event was the holding of the Second Interregional Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, which had approved a recommendation of special interest to Indonesia entitled "Support to transit States".
5. Indonesia supported the holding of a special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs with a view to expanding the scope and increasing the effectiveness of such co-operation. It also agreed that the special session should be at a high political level, and should examine ways of improving the existing drug control mechanisms of the United Nations system so that they could be used to their full potential.

/...

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

6. Where regional co-operation was concerned, Indonesia had co-operated with the other member States of the Association of South-East Asian Nations and other countries in the region to find a common solution to a common problem. Moreover, as the distinction between producer, consumer and transit countries was growing smaller each day, his Government undertook to join in the multilateral efforts to eliminate drug abuse and illicit trafficking.
7. Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda) said that in a mere 15 years world trade in illicit drugs, currently estimated at \$US 500 billion a year, had become second in magnitude only to the trade in arms. All countries of the world had been made vulnerable as a result of that explosion of the drug problem, and consequently the international community as a whole had joined together to fight that scourge.
8. The unfortunate events that had occurred in Latin America, especially in Colombia, had acted as a catalyst for the international community's response to the true dangers of drugs. The speed with which those events had occurred necessitated urgent measures to prevent entire generations of young people being lost. The Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda extended their support to the Government of Colombia in the war it had declared against the "narco-terrorists".
9. The United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) was of vital importance to developing countries, including Antigua and Barbuda, which had the will but not the means to combat drug use. As for the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, his Government considered that it was a giant step in a struggle that might prove to be a protracted one, and pledged to ratify the Convention.
10. However, new initiatives were needed to activate and complement existing programmes. At a meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Caribbean region held in July 1989, the Government of Jamaica had proposed the establishment of a multilateral force to respond to emergency situations which small nations could not deal with on their own, while the Government of Trinidad and Tobago had proposed the establishment of commissions of inquiry and an international court empowered to investigate and define criminal responsibilities in cases of drug trafficking.
11. His delegation considered that the two proposals were complementary, and that the United Nations system was capable of providing the necessary assistance for their adoption and implementation. His Government also supported the Swedish proposal that a small task force of experts should be convened to develop a global programme of action on drugs.
12. Mr. MATELA (Poland) said that, although drug abuse was nothing new in modern society, the recent dramatic developments in Colombia had revealed the new dimensions of the problem, which endangered the social, economic and democratic development of several States. Much had been said about the effects of drugs on their users, but drug addiction was even more detrimental to society itself, since it gave rise to traffic in drugs, with all its resulting crimes both locally and internationally.

/...

(Mr. Matela, Poland)

13. Fortunately, the international community had finally decided that the time had come to take concerted action. For example, the new Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances had been adopted, containing, inter alia, provisions to facilitate extradition of offenders and mutual legal assistance between States in cases involving illicit traffic in drugs. Poland had signed the Convention in March 1989, and steps were currently being taken to ensure its speedy ratification.

14. His Government supported various proposals adopted at the thirty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, of which it was a member. It recently started contributing to UNFDAC in amounts which, though modest, indicated the importance it attached to the Fund's activities.

15. There had been no significant changes in drug abuse in Poland in comparison to the previous year. After an increase a few years before, the situation had stabilized, although that did not mean that the authorities had become less vigilant. There were also various non-governmental organizations that disseminated information to young people on the dangers of drugs. One of them, the Polish Society for Prevention of Drug Abuse, had recently organized a European forum for prevention and treatment of drug dependence, held in Warsaw with United Nations assistance.

16. All Governments had a moral obligation to fight drug abuse. Poland therefore welcomed the initiative of the Government of the United Kingdom to host an international conference to be held in London in 1990, which would focus primarily on demand reduction. It also welcomed the decision to hold a special session of the General Assembly to deal with the question of international co-operation on drugs, and agreed that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should act as a preparatory body for the special session.

17. Mr. BAKALOV (Bulgaria) said that drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs had worsened in most countries. The constant increase in the number of drug addicts, the dangerous nature of the substances used and the spread of drug abuse among all segments of society, particularly young people, had prompted many States to take determined action to halt the evil.

18. Bulgaria considered that the efficient combating of drug abuse was only possible through international co-operation. Bulgaria's problems in the field of drugs were not related to abuse, but rather to illegal trafficking. Owing to Bulgaria's geographical situation much of that traffic passed through its territory. Because of the enormous volume of the trade, Bulgaria devoted considerable resources to combating it, above all as a preventive measure, so that the evil would not spread among its young people, and also as a contribution to the international community's war on illegal drug trafficking. Bulgaria had supported General Assembly resolutions 39/141 and 40/120, on the basis of which the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had begun to draft a new convention. Bulgaria had taken part in all stages of the drafting: in the Commission, the Intergovernmental Expert Group and in the Diplomatic Conference in November-December 1988.

(Mr. Bakalov, Bulgaria)

19. The Convention marked the end of a long process of establishing the international legal foundations for co-operation among Member States in combating illegal drug trafficking, particularly in the area of criminal law. The Convention, together with the Conventions of 1961 and 1971, constituted a solid legal base, capable of promoting efficient co-operation among States, with due respect for the sovereignty and legitimate interests of every country. He considered that the changes introduced in the policies of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) were positive. Its field of action had been broadened, its foundations had been strengthened, and its activities had become increasingly result-oriented, all of which had encouraged States' involvement in the Fund's projects.

20. Bulgaria fully supported draft resolution A/44/L.12 on the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation in combating drug production and abuse, and would not only continue to support the multilateral measures to that end, but would also continue to pursue its own national policy aimed at completely eliminating that social evil.

21. Mr. THAN (Myanmar) said that the problem of drugs was a growing threat to the international community which must be addressed urgently as a priority task. His country welcomed the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 1 November calling for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on the question of illicit drugs. The drug menace required co-operation among States and the rationalization and strengthening of existing machinery and institutions within the United Nations system.

22. However, every State had exclusive sovereignty in carrying out the strategy to combat illicit drugs in its own territory. Myanmar was using all the resources at its disposal - material, financial and human - in that fight. An interministerial committee on narcotic drug abuse control had been set up, chaired by the Minister for Home Affairs and vested with wide powers, which operated through a network of sectoral and regional committees. The anti-drug strategy covered the whole gamut of drug abuse control activities, such as law enforcement, crop substitution, livestock breeding, medical treatment, social and vocational rehabilitation, education and information. Recently a new programme of integrated rural development had been added to those activities, with particular emphasis on infrastructure building, crop substitution and overall improvement of socio-economic conditions in the poppy-growing regions. Those measures were having a perceptible impact on the problem, and it was to be hoped that they would lead to the more rapid eradication of opium cultivation in Myanmar.

23. A legal framework for tackling the problem already existed in Myanmar. In 1974 the Government had enacted the Narcotic and Dangerous Drugs Law, reinforced by other legislation in 1983 and 1988. Those laws and rules prohibited the whole range of drug-related crimes, from the cultivation of poppy plants to illicit trafficking in and abuse of narcotic drugs, and prescribed stiff sentences for such offences. Under those laws drug addicts were required to register with State institutions and receive medical treatment, and provision was made for the

/...

(Mr. Than, Myanmar)

destruction of the crops and confiscation of equipment used in the production of drugs. For more than 15 years intensive large-scale military operations had been carried out every year to destroy poppy crops, halt the traffic in drugs and dismantle the drug production centres in the frontier areas. Since 1974, those operations had resulted in the destruction of 207,132 acres of poppy plantations, with a production potential of 92,138 kilograms, and the seizure of 9,263 kilograms of heroin. The total quantity of heroin seized or prevented from going into production amounted to about 100,000 kilograms.

24. Operations on such a scale entailed great sacrifices by the Myanmar security forces: in the course of the operations 109 members of the armed forces had lost their lives and 542 had been wounded. As the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar had said in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 6 October, members of the Myanmar security forces engaged in a relentless war against drug traffickers might not be wearing blue helmets, but the cause for which hundreds of them had sacrificed life and limb was no less internationalist and no less worthy. In fact, the achievements of Myanmar's campaigns against illicit drugs had drawn high praise in foreign quarters. It was thus curious that, despite such praise, unfounded allegations to the effect that the Myanmar security forces had been collaborating with drug traffickers had been levelled against it.

25. The drug problem was not an exclusively social problem, but also a political one, particularly in the case of Myanmar, where illicit drug trafficking was inseparably linked with the insurgency problem. He wished to make it known that in his country the proceeds from drug trafficking constituted the life blood of the various groups that had risen up in arms against the State.

26. Since 1976, Myanmar had been co-operating with UNFDAC, which, in recognition of the significant headway made in the country's campaigns against illicit drugs, had approved the granting of an additional sum of \$10.5 million in assistance to the country. In conclusion, he said that it was imperative that the problem should be addressed in its totality, from cultivation, transit and export to consumption and the laundering of drug money.

27. Mr. MENON (India) said that world trade in illicit drugs had reached a total of \$500 billion annually, second in volume only to the arms trade. Over the last two decades the illicit demand for drugs had spread at a frightening rate and had become a global problem. The Conference of plenipotentiaries held in Vienna had adopted by consensus the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, an excellent example of multilateral co-operation. That Convention, which reinforced those of 1961 and 1971, introduced new areas of co-operation, such as extradition of drug traffickers, exchange of information about drug-related offences, assistance to transit States, measures to eradicate the illicit cultivation of narcotic plants and prohibition of narcotic traffic by sea, in free trade areas and through the mail.

28. India had faced a somewhat singular situation, as it provided a substantial portion of the legally grown opium for medical and scientific purposes. For that

/...

(Mr. Menon, India)

reason, in the last several decades it had a licensing and control system for the cultivation of the opium poppy. India, whose experience had served as the basis for formulating article 23 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, would have preferred it if the new Convention had placed poppy straw under a control scheme, but the Conference had not taken a position on the definition of controlled substances. His delegation had placed on record its opinion on the importance of placing poppy straw under such a control scheme, as it was a raw material used in the production of opium. The situation of transit States in drug trafficking called for special attention. India, due to its intermediate position in southern Asia, was increasingly being used as a transit route by drug traffickers, which was creating tensions and signs of social disintegration within its own borders. It was taking severe measures to curtail such activities.

29. In recent years the Government of India had made use of the communications media to heighten public awareness of the dangers of drug abuse and had established detoxification and rehabilitation programmes for drug addicts. Several voluntary organizations had been given financial support and technical assistance for such activities. Thus, the Government was attempting to fight the problem on all fronts: demand control, supply reduction, curbing of illicit trafficking and promotion of rehabilitation programmes for drug-dependent persons.

30. Drug control efforts in the past had been aimed primarily at the supply side. But the alarming increase in the number of drug users, which had reached over 50 million persons world wide, required that efforts be concentrated on curbing demand. It was encouraging that the new United Nations Convention covered both aspects.

31. India had urged that assistance to national Governments for drug control should be channelled through the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC), and appreciated the assistance it had received from the Fund, such as the appointing of field advisory officers.

32. India believed that the International Narcotic Control Board was also doing good work.

33. In the past year the Prime Minister of India had set up a cabinet sub-committee to co-ordinate the efforts of different departments. A police training programme in drug law enforcement had been instituted. Intelligence machinery had been strengthened and narcotics units established in State police organizations, along with special courts for cases relating to drug traffic. Efforts were being made to ensure that illicit drugs seized were immediately destroyed, and illicit cultivation was being controlled.

34. It was now apparent that all such tasks were beyond the capacity or resources of any single country. The drug cartels recognized no frontiers and the war against them must necessarily be waged at the national, regional and international levels. Consequently, India had entered into bilateral, regional and multilateral co-operation agreements in that field.

/...

(Mr. Menon, India)

35. Following the joint meeting of CPC and ACC in October 1989, ACC had been mandated to prepare a system-wide plan of action for drug control activities to be undertaken by United Nations organizations individually and collectively, so that available resources could be utilized most effectively. India supported that endeavour and also believed that the special session of the General Assembly proposed for 1990 to consider the question of international co-operation against the production, supply, demand, trafficking and illicit distribution of narcotic drugs would mark a significant new stage in international co-operation in that field. The war on drugs required that no facet of that cancer be overlooked. For instance, drug profits must be controlled as much as the drugs themselves. Indigent growers who depended on cultivation of drug sources for their livelihood must be offered alternatives. Treatment and rehabilitation was another area of major concern. India was ready to participate in that international co-operative endeavour.

36. Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia) said that, owing to recent events, the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking had reached a critical stage of such magnitude that it required urgent, effective and concerted international action. The war that must be fought by Governments in co-operation with the United Nations required not only the use of arms but the political will to act decisively and boldly. To that end, it was important to strengthen the role of the United Nations as a focal point for concerted action. The distinctions between producer, consumer, or transit countries must be set aside: all countries were affected. Non-governmental organizations, religious bodies and community organizations could also assist in that process.

37. All Governments had shown their concern over the scourge of drug abuse, at various high-level international meetings held that year, such as the meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government in Kuala Lumpur. The determination to tackle the drug problem was reflected in the recent unanimous decision adopted by the General Assembly to convene a special session to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs, with a view to expanding the scope and increasing the effectiveness of such co-operation. A number of proposals had also been submitted which spoke of the seriousness of the situation. They must be studied, without forgetting that instruments already existed providing an appropriate framework for such co-operation. Two years ago the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control and the Declaration of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking had been adopted. Through them, States had expressed their resolve to take concerted action and that resolve had been further strengthened by the adoption of the 1988 Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

38. Malaysia was applying its own anti-drug programmes, in accordance with the provisions of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, and was taking steps to ratify the 1988 Convention. Furthermore, it had recently signed a bilateral agreement with the United Kingdom pertaining to the confiscation of proceeds from illegal international drug trafficking.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

39. The United Nations had a very significant role to play in that area through the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and UNFDAC. At the forthcoming special session those bodies should be given a wider mandate and greater responsibility. He supported the proposal for the establishment of a multinational force under United Nations auspices for the interdiction of drug supplies. However, despite the magnitude of the problem, the funds allocated were not commensurate with the more active role the United Nations was called upon to play in the international fight against that scourge. Priorities must be reordered, in the context of available resources, so that the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other relevant bodies could join forces in a comprehensive and multidisciplinary effort.

40. Mr. ARAMBARRI (Argentina) said that, in recent years, drug trafficking had grown alarmingly and had spread geographically. The illicit consumption of drugs caused great physical harm to human beings and, at the same time, undermined the ethical foundations of society. It had also given rise to imaginably vast criminal organizations with huge sums of money which they used to spread corruption and to threaten the political and institutional stability of countries. Governments could not deal with that scourge on their own; the international community must take concerted action on the basis of an objective analysis which made no distinctions between producer, consumer or transit countries but which focused on international criminal organizations.

41. It was encouraging that the international community had recently become more aware of the various aspects of the problem, and that countries had abandoned the fruitless pursuit of laying the blame on each other. The resolute action of the Latin American countries, especially Colombia, in that struggle was commendable. Argentina made common cause with that brother country and offered it all the support within its means, despite its own difficult economic situation. Argentina had given Colombia three Pucará aeroplanes which, because of their easy manoeuvrability, could be very useful in fighting bands of drug traffickers.

42. The Government of Argentina was determined to combat illicit drug trafficking and had strengthened all its enforcement machinery. Nevertheless, the struggle would not end until the demand in the major consumer countries, which were usually the developed countries, declined. Therefore, those countries, which also had greater economic resources at their disposal, had a special responsibility to adopt measures to eradicate the drug scourge. It was also necessary to eliminate production through arrangements to replace illegal crops. The industrialized countries should co-operate through technical and economic assistance and rural-development programmes in order to ensure that the crop-substitution programme was successful, and that farmers could earn the same amount from lawful activities as they could from growing coca.

43. The Latin American countries had already concluded bilateral and regional agreements on mutual aid among Governments. One important instrument was the South American Agreement on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, whose executive secretariat was based at Buenos Aires. At the international level, Argentina supported the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug

/...

(Mr. Arambarri, Argentina)

Abuse and welcomed the adoption of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Argentina also supported the assistance rendered by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) to developing countries affected by drug trafficking, as well as the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board. His delegation hoped that the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs would lead to a new, more vigorous and more effective stage in efforts to combat drug trafficking.

44. Ms. NIKOLIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the unprecedented danger posed by drug abuse and illicit trafficking had been brought into focus by the grave events which had taken place in Colombia, which had responded to the situation with commendable determination and courage. The disturbing reality of today's world could be summarized in four words: drugs, debt, development and democracy. Drugs affected every society, distorted economies and accounted for a gigantic turnover of funds, undermining the political, administrative and judicial structure of society.

45. Developing countries, which were the producer countries, were the most affected. Her delegation welcomed the initiative of the United Kingdom to act as host to an international conference on that subject in April 1990.

46. The non-aligned countries had emphasized, in the Declaration of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and in a resolution adopted at the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade, that the struggle against drug trafficking was a responsibility of the entire international community, which should take concerted measures for its eradication. Consequently, the role of the United Nations must be strengthened. The results of the 1987 Conference, which had adopted the Declaration and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse, as well as the adoption of the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, represented important progress.

47. Yugoslavia fully supported the recommendation to prepare a system-wide programme of action, and believed that narcotics control should receive a much higher priority within the regular budget. Her delegation also considered interesting the proposals made by Jamaica and Sweden to strengthen the role of the United Nations in that area. The forthcoming special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs would facilitate the adoption of long-term measures.

48. As a transit country, Yugoslavia had had to implement rigid controls in order to deal with the problems posed by criminal organizations which engaged in illegal drug trafficking in its territory, and it had received assistance from UNFDAC, which had helped it strengthen its frontiers.

49. Within the framework of co-operation among Balkan countries, an Expert Meeting on co-operation in the struggle against terrorism, the illegal arms trade and

/...

(Ms. Nikolić, Yugoslavia)

illicit drug trafficking had been held at Belgrade on 7 and 8 June 1989. At that Meeting, the desire had been expressed to conclude an agreement on inter-Balkan co-operation in that field and on the implementation of the standards contained in existing international instruments. Such co-operation should be undertaken by all countries since the struggle against drugs was the struggle for peace, democracy and international solidarity.

50. Ms. THORPE (Trinidad and Tobago) said that, in many countries, drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking were a source of great suffering and despair. They also resulted in the weakening of many Governments. The most dramatic example of those negative consequences was the power of the drug cartels in Colombia, against which the Government of that country was waging a continuing, courageous fight. The struggle of Colombia and other countries to combat the scourge of drugs and the political will demonstrated by world leaders on that and other problems which threatened international peace and security were factors which had been a source of great enthusiasm and hope in the current debate in the Committee.

51. Trinidad and Tobago had not remained immune to drug trafficking. As a small island State in the Caribbean, strategically placed between the producer and consumer markets, Trinidad and Tobago had been obliged to channel part of its limited resources towards combating that threat, which had already led to the increasing availability of drugs in the country. That demonstrated how transit countries were becoming consumer countries. Her delegation therefore welcomed the recommendation on support to transit States adopted at the Second Interregional Meeting of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies held at Vienna in September 1989. That recommendation urged parties to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances to provide technical and financial assistance to transit States for the purpose of improving their infrastructure in the fight against illicit trafficking. Her delegation hoped that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and, subsequently, the international community at large would endorse that recommendation.

52. The drug traffickers possessed many advanced resources for impeding the detection and confiscation of drugs. Accordingly, the developed countries should assist the developing countries in the training of personnel and the acquisition of equipment to strengthen the fight against the drug scourge. In that regard, the \$1 million contribution provided by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) for a regional project to facilitate rapid communication between law-enforcement agencies in the Caribbean region was crucial to combating illicit drug trafficking. The work being undertaken nationally and world wide by UNFDAC was highly commendable. On the national level, it had assisted her country in the furtherance of its national drug programme while respecting the priorities and strategies established by the Government. While not ignoring the importance of law enforcement, Trinidad and Tobago was currently emphasizing demand reduction. In keeping with that priority, UNFDAC had provided her country with almost \$500,000 to finance a project on preventive education.

/...

(Ms. Thorpe, Trinidad and Tobago)

53. From the legislative standpoint, Trinidad and Tobago's fight against drug trafficking included the extradition of those who committed offences relating to dangerous drugs and narcotics and the confiscation of proceeds obtained from drug sales, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

54. One aspect of the fight against drugs which warranted greater attention from the international community was the absence of an international criminal jurisdiction, which in many cases allowed drug traffickers to escape justice. Her delegation had made a proposal in the Sixth Committee for the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on the establishment of an international criminal court with jurisdiction over persons engaged in illicit drug trafficking across national frontiers, as well as other transnational criminal activities. That proposal had been endorsed by all the Caribbean countries and was also attracting support from Member States in other regions. It was to be hoped that a majority of countries would endorse the proposal. Together with the other Caribbean countries, Trinidad and Tobago supported the Jamaican proposal to establish a multilateral force to strengthen the capacity of States in their fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The gravity of the drug menace dictated that the international community must redouble its efforts pending the convening in February 1990 of the special session of the General Assembly on drugs and the international conference on demand reduction to be held in London in April 1990.

55. Ms. LISSIDINI (Uruguay) said that there was no region in the world which could consider itself free from the scourge of illicit drug trafficking and its consequences of degradation and suffering; therefore, it was necessary to adopt effective measures to avoid the loss of human lives, the diversion of resources towards illicit activities, the weakening of social institutions and the threat to international peace and security which resulted from drug abuse. She noted with satisfaction that there was now a recognition of shared responsibility for the existence of that complex problem. The accusing finger was no longer pointed solely at the farmer who grew coca; rather, he was now regarded as one more link in a chain of growers, traffickers, industrialists, chemical manufacturers, consumers and bankers.

56. She commended the work being undertaken by the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system in the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. However, it was paradoxical that at a time when narcotics trafficking was mobilizing huge sums of money, those agencies were forced to limit their activities for lack of sufficient funds. A particularly commendable job was being done by the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs, which, with a reduced budget, had to carry out the tasks assigned to it under the 1988 Convention, in addition to its usual work. The assistance provided by the Division's laboratory to the international community in its fight against new trends in the illicit traffic in chemical substances and equipment used in drug manufacturing was of particular importance. The work being undertaken by UNFDAC, which in the immediate future would approve a one-year project on preventive education for Uruguay with a budget

(Ms. Lissidini, Uruguay)

of \$40,000, was also highly commendable. Her country also supported the activities of the International Narcotics Control Board, particularly the measures taken to implement the objectives of chapter II of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control adopted by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held at Vienna in 1987. The tragic situation resulting from drug abuse and illicit trafficking should not stand in the way of thinking about its underlying causes. Undoubtedly, there were economic reasons which drove farmers in some countries to prefer growing coca to growing food. Accordingly, it was essential to create the requisite conditions for making legal crops profitable. Moreover, greater attention should be given to the motives which induced so many persons, especially youth, to use drugs, choosing a path marked by suffering and degradation. The causes of such growing dissatisfaction, with its self-destructive consequences, should be discovered and eliminated. No efforts should be spared to assist young people in overcoming drug addiction.

57. Her delegation had many hopes invested in the convening of the special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs. The special session should put forward clear and specific guidelines which could effectively promote international co-operation on the various aspects of the problem. In that regard, it should be noted that at the third summit meeting of Presidents under the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Political Action, held in Peru in October 1989, the heads of State of the Latin American countries had undertaken to co-ordinate policies and methods with a view to strengthening the fight against drugs.

58. Although in her country the drug problem had not taken on such alarming dimensions as in others, it had experienced an appreciable increase in narcotics use and trafficking. A national plan had been adopted to deal with the problem, and a national board for the prevention and punishment of drug abuse and illicit trafficking had been established to propose appropriate measures. In view of the possibility that Uruguay might be used as a transit State in the world-wide drug-distribution network, efforts had been made to render the national law-enforcement agencies as efficient as possible. Her country had also concluded agreements with other Latin American countries, including Argentina and Brazil, to give greater effectiveness to the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

59. Mr. CRUZ (Chile) said that the problem of drug production, trafficking and illicit use was one of the worst scourges now plaguing mankind. The growing concern of the United Nations with the adoption of measures to combat the problem effectively was fully justified. In view of the universal nature of the problem, no country could legitimately be exempted from the search for adequate and realistic solutions. His country was no stranger to that concern and, although its problem had not taken on the tragic dimensions which it had assumed in other countries, Chile had developed a national policy for the prevention of drug abuse and the reduction of demand. The campaign being undertaken by the international community should take into account some basic characteristics of the problem. It

/...

(Mr. Cruz, Chile)

was undoubtedly necessary to carry out such a campaign in the drug-producing and -processing centres. However, the action would be futile and doomed to failure if the drug-using societies did not launch a genuine war against drug use.

60. Chile fully supported the convening of a special session of the General Assembly in 1990 to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs, and had co-sponsored the draft resolution submitted by Venezuela on the application of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In that resolution, inter alia, States were urged to adopt legislative and administrative measures to ensure that their domestic legal regulations were compatible with the spirit of the new Convention. In the domestic sphere, Chile was undertaking a wide-ranging policy intended to prevent and punish drug abuse, and had established a national drugs commission whose task was to study the problem, advise the President of the Republic on the matter, and propose measures to eradicate drug traffic and consumption. In that regard, it bore noting that seizures of cocaine in Chile in 1989 had been ten times higher than during the same period the previous year.

61. Chile supported the conclusion of an inter-American convention on traffic in narcotic drugs. In October 1989 it had also chaired the first meeting of experts on precursors and chemical substances, held in the context of inter-American activities to combat drug traffic.

62. Mrs. BANGOURA (Guinea) said that in the context of regional co-operation to suppress drug abuse, her delegation attached particular importance to the recommendation that a subregional training centre should be established in each of the five African subregions, giving priority to the West African subregion as the main transit zone. Until recently, most African countries had not suffered the effects of drug abuse and illicit traffic, except for certain isolated cases associated with traditional rites. The evil had proliferated, however, and the time had come to adopt immediate measures to combat it.

63. The Government of Guinea had set up a technical committee consisting of representatives of different ministries concerned with the various aspects of drug addiction: prevention, treatment and suppression. With regard to international activities, Guinea had co-sponsored draft resolution A/44/L.12, on the holding of a special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against drugs, and was proposing to participate at a high political level, in accordance with the provisions of that draft resolution.

64. Her delegation agreed that it was necessary to provide technical and financial assistance to the transit States, and, in particular, to the developing countries, to help them improve the infrastructure required for the prevention and control of illicit trafficking. In the framework of integrated rural development, Guinea supported the designing of new projects and the execution of ongoing programmes by UNFDAC. The Fund had already financed the participation of officials of the Guinean Government in training seminars held in Abidjan. Furthermore, in its

(Mrs. Bangoura, Guinea)

medium-term plan for the period 1989-1993, the Fund had earmarked the sum of \$100,000 to facilitate assistance to Guinea in strengthening its legislative framework, preventive education and health.

65. Drug abuse and illicit trafficking were even more serious for the countries of Africa, in view of their economic and social situation. Her delegation appealed for more intensive regional and international co-operation in that sphere and for an increase in contributions to UNFDAC with a view to enhancing its effectiveness.

66. Mr. GBEHO (Ghana) said that the threat posed by the drug problem to society as a whole could not and must not be underestimated.

67. At the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held in Vienna in 1987, it had been stressed that the time had come for Governments and the mass media to pay more attention to the security of the public in face of the detrimental effects of drugs, and a Declaration had been adopted which constituted a major step forward in the struggle against that social evil. His delegation urged all Governments to intensify international co-operation and, for that purpose, to adhere to the principles contained in the Declaration, especially those relating to prevention, control and suppression of drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and to treatment and rehabilitation of victims.

68. His delegation considered that the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances adopted in Vienna in 1988 was a very important and timely instrument which should enter into force as a matter of urgency, in view of the rapid worsening of the problem throughout the world. However, of the 77 countries that had signed the Convention, only three had ratified it. His delegation urged those countries that had not yet ratified the Convention to implement its articles pending ratification. Ghana had been one of the first countries to sign the Convention, and was currently taking the necessary steps towards ratification. Meanwhile, it had enacted laws empowering the State to confiscate property that was the product of illicit traffic in drugs.

69. With regard to regional co-operation, Ghana had signed an agreement on mutual administrative assistance with Nigeria, Togo and Benin, under which the parties undertook to prevent the export of drugs to the other signatory countries or the transit of drugs through their territory.

70. In the area of exchange of information and field work on drug-abuse control, the function of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs as a policy-making body was of great importance. The UNFDAC activities provided for in its medium-term programme, particularly those relating to promoting public awareness and stimulating an anti-drug culture, were also important. It was to be hoped that those objectives would be considered as part of the Fund's programme of integrated rural development. Ghana also welcomed the support of UNFDAC for multisectoral drug-control programmes and the expansion of its activities in developing countries, and commended the Government of the United Kingdom for its proposal that London should be the venue for a ministerial conference on the drug problem in April 1990.

/...

(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

71. In the fight against drugs, Ghana attached special importance to preventive measures, including educational programmes designed to alert the public to the dangers of drug abuse. Such programmes were particularly targeted at young people and the rural population, because of their greater vulnerability. Attempts were also being made to promote parental involvement and counselling by non-governmental organizations. Periodic campaigns had been launched to generate widespread awareness of all aspects of the drug phenomenon and to alert the security agencies to suspected illicit drug situations. Rehabilitation programmes had been set up to ensure social reintegration. Such efforts would be greatly enhanced if they were complemented by rigorous programmes at the international level to encourage growers, manufacturers and traffickers gradually to move to other activities. Chemical-precursor producers could also assist by ensuring that their exports could not be used for the illicit production of drugs.

72. Because of its geographic location, Ghana was one of the developing countries now serving as transit States for drug traffickers. It was a matter of common knowledge that most transit States were chosen by traffickers largely because their depressed economies made individuals easy to recruit but also because they lacked the sophisticated equipment for effective detection and control of the items of the trade. In spite of its successes in that field, Ghana continued to need international assistance, particularly in terms of sophisticated detecting devices and the training of personnel to deal effectively with the drug traffickers, who were already employing the most modern techniques. He supported the proposals made by Colombia that banks and other financial institutions which were involved in the laundering of drug trafficking profits assume their responsibilities in that respect. Assistance to peasant farmers and Governments of the producing countries was also extremely important if there was to be a significant reduction of production. Assistance was also needed in substituting other crops and in ensuring that the introduction of alternative crops whose prices were already depressed on the international market did not further worsen the plight of the farmers involved.

73. His delegation wished to thank all United Nations agencies, particularly UNESCO and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) as well as the donor Governments that had assisted Ghana to implement programmes in detection and training of personnel to assist in the war against drugs.

74. Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand) said that drugs represented a deadly threat which respected no State boundaries and was accompanied by violence. The growth of that threat was alarming: millions of human lives had been destroyed or hopelessly shattered and society as a whole was threatened with disintegration. Both national efforts and international co-operation and co-ordination were vital in the war against drugs. The strategy should be aimed at reducing the demand as well as the supply of illicit drugs. The message that should be sent to the drug traffickers was that there was no safe haven for them anywhere on earth.

75. His Government was pursuing a two-pronged strategy against supply and demand. In 1989, it had succeeded in clearing 4,583.6 acres of land which would have produced approximately 11 tons of opium. The success of its campaign against

/...

(Mr. Pibulsonggram, Thailand)

narcotic drugs owed much to the Hilltribe Development Project initiated by the King of Thailand in 1969. The project followed an integral approach to rural development. The hilltribes people were motivated to shift from opium to other cash crop cultivation. At the same time, their quality of life was improved through the community development projects, which had thus far benefited about 100,000 people. In 1989 the authorities had seized over 20 tons of heroin and other opiate drugs, destroyed nine heroin refineries and increased their efforts to suppress marijuana. 472 tons of which had been destroyed in 21 provinces in 1988.

76. Thailand had worked closely with UNFDAC in the implementation of two master plans and at present the Fund was financing four integrated development projects in northern Thailand, with two more to begin shortly. But those national campaigns could only be effective with an international effort that attacked every link in the producer-to-user chain.

77. On the supply side, the drug business was such that if one country succeeded in reducing the supply, operations would shift to an adjacent country, so that only by acting in concert could the international community decrease drug supply. It was necessary to eliminate the first link in the chain, that is, the cultivation of narcotic drugs, and to that end his delegation was in favour of employing two main strategies: the reduction of the incentive to plant illicit crops and the eradication of those crops prior to harvest. Domestic laws against the illicit drug trade must be as tight as possible and should include measures to facilitate the identification, tracing, seizure and forfeiture of drug proceeds.

78. Thailand was enacting new legislation on that matter. The 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances would strengthen the international legal framework for combating the traffic in illicit drugs. International co-operation in the area of interdiction would effectively disrupt the trafficking network. That involved the interception of illicit drugs, processing chemicals and equipment during their movements across international boundaries. A network of enforcement agencies should be created to facilitate the sharing of intelligence and joint operations. Money laundering must be stopped and strict domestic legislation against it should be enacted.

79. The measures he had described would be ineffective, however, unless demand was attacked. Educational campaigns should be conducted to enhance public awareness of the dangers of drug abuse. The public must be mobilized to participate in the war against drugs, particularly through the family and school. Treatment and rehabilitation programmes should be developed.

80. His delegation wished to commend the United Kingdom Government for its initiative in convening a world ministerial meeting in April 1990 which would focus on the reduction of demand. International efforts to reduce the demand and supply of drugs needed the co-ordinating role of the United Nations. For years, the United Nations and its subsidiary organs, namely, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotic Control Board had played a central role. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the conclusions

/...

(Mr. Pibulsonggram, Thailand)

of the recent joint meeting of the Advisory Committee on Co-ordination and the Committee on Programme Co-ordination on drug abuse control and supported the call for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly in 1990 to consider all aspects of international co-operation against narcotic drugs. It was important that that special session produce the needed concrete programme of action to combat the drug plague.

81. Mr. Ogurtsov (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) took the Chair.

82. Mr. OLEINIK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that drug abuse was like a cancer which continued to spread and recognized no geographic frontiers. In many countries, the activities of the drug traffickers threatened democratic institutions. The seriousness of the situation required that all States take concerted measures in co-operation with the United Nations and the non-governmental organizations.

83. He welcomed the results of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held in Vienna and added that the recommendations adopted there would help in taking measures to combat drug trafficking. In spite of the diversity of their interests, all States had united in a common goal, and that had given the conference an exceptionally constructive character. He hoped that the same spirit would prevail in the Committee's meetings.

84. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Its text was well balanced and likely to favour its universality, and the instrument would make the existing system of treaties more effective. The Ukrainian SSR had signed the Convention and was in the process of ratifying it. It supported the idea of holding a special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against narcotic drugs, having voted in favour of the corresponding resolution. It also favoured strengthening the role of the Division of Narcotic Drugs.

85. In its view, most proposals could be incorporated into a single resolution which would contain also his country's proposal regarding the proclamation of a United Nations decade against drug abuse. The formulation of a programme of action could be one of the major achievements of the special session, since it would enable United Nations activities to be co-ordinated and national and international efforts to be consolidated.

86. In his country, a comprehensive programme to combat drug addiction had been drawn up and its basic guidelines were prevention, the detection, registry and treatment of drug users and the elimination of illicit drug trafficking. Twenty-seven thousand drug users had been registered, more than half of them addicts. In the past three years, 23,000 drug-related offences had been reported and more than 1,000 illegal organizations had been uncovered, leading to the confiscation of 24 tonnes of basic substances valued at \$24 million on the black market. The most widespread narcotic drugs in his country were derived from

(Mr. Oleinik, Ukrainian SSR)

plants, and consequently the cultivation of opium poppies had been prohibited and hemp growing on State farms had been limited. Controls over the production, transport, registry and storage of medicinal drugs had been made more stringent. The penalty for drug trafficking was up to 15 years imprisonment and confiscation of assets, the goal being to eradicate that scourge once and for all. The fact that it had not yet been possible to do so in no way altered his country's faith in the final victory.

87. Mr. AL-SHAKAR (Bahrain) noted the obvious concern of all societies over the drug epidemic, which was impeding development at a time of rapid technical and scientific evolution. Drugs were a two-edged sword, because they could be used for therapeutic ends but also to destroy the lives of millions and threaten the security of States, since they struck at the very structure of society by affecting family life, health and mental balance and increasing criminality and terrorism.

88. Drug trafficking gave power to the drug traffickers and brought them incalculable profits. That phenomenon was to be found not only in the wealthy developed countries but in all countries of the world, and it was not limited to one age group, sex, class or nation. The danger of drugs and illicit drug trafficking were problems that concerned the international community because they threatened world peace and security. Bahrain was ready to help increase international co-operation in the struggle against the disastrous consequences of drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. The United Nations provided the appropriate forum for such co-operation. The General Assembly had accordingly adopted resolution 44/16 aimed at convening a special session to consider the question of international co-operation against narcotic drugs, a step which demonstrated the international community's political will to put an end to the production and trafficking of those poisons.

89. The religious prohibition of the use of drugs and psychotropic substances had limited its spread in Bahrain, especially among young people. Religion was a solid moral barrier that prevented the phenomenon from becoming generalized. Islam prohibited the use of drugs except in legitimate scientific or therapeutic instances. Anything that affected the brain, such as drugs or alcohol, was prohibited by Islam, and consequently the use and consumption of narcotic drugs in Bahrain was not a serious problem. In addition, drug trafficking was subject to very severe penalties, which could go as far as capital punishment or life imprisonment. Nevertheless, there were a few cases recorded in Bahrain. Most involved foreigners, especially from drug-producing and drug-consuming countries.

90. Bahrain would take part in an international year against narcotic drugs and in campaigns proclaiming the international slogan "Yes to life, no to drugs". In addition to the activities that had already taken place in the past year, the Government would be organizing publicity campaigns, using the broadcasting media and regional and community organizations, directed especially at young people.

91. Bahrain supported joint efforts between the States of its region to combat the transit of drugs and had already adopted many measures to control it in its own

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

territory. Drug trafficking was a crime against humanity and consequently a co-ordinated international effort was needed to fight it. Inspired by that principle, Bahrain had in September 1989 signed the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Likewise, the Government had taken steps to ratify that Convention and the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the Protocol of 1972, and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971.

92. His country was hopeful that the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly would adopt measures such as a code of conduct laying down the duties of States with regard to the problem of drug trafficking, thus making it possible to eradicate this blot upon the world.

93. Mr. Kabore (Burkina Faso) resumed the Chair.

94. Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu) said that, throughout its history, mankind had faced a series of serious challenges and currently it found itself struggling against the new threat posed by drug abuse and the illicit traffic in drugs. It was no longer necessary to convince anyone of the great importance of that issue. Every nation that had spoken during the general debate at the current session had highlighted the grave seriousness of the drug threat. The struggle being waged by the Government and people of Colombia against the drug traffickers in their nation was a very clear example of the dimensions that threat could acquire.

95. Vanuatu was a country relatively far removed from those parts of the world where the impact of the drug problem was greatest. However, the Government and people of Vanuatu did not doubt for a moment their own potential vulnerability to the harmful effects of the drug trade.

96. Vanuatu had never been impressed by the argument that the drug problem was primarily one of demand. Nor was it convinced by the argument that it was primarily one of reducing the supply. No nation in the world could claim to be only a producer and not a consumer of drugs; no nation in the world could claim to be only a transit point and not a consumer of drugs. The drug traffic had disastrous consequences for the producer countries as for the consumer and transit countries: the drug problem was one by which all were affected. No nation had a monopoly on the misery, corruption, death and destruction caused by those who trafficked in illicit drugs, just as no nation had a monopoly on virtue and could claim that it was free of the consequences of that evil. All nations must address the problem together or they would succumb to drugs one by one.

97. His delegation supported the proposals put forward by Jamaica and endorsed by the Caribbean countries regarding the establishment of a multilateral force to control transnational drug trafficking. It also supported the proposals made by Sweden on behalf of the five Nordic countries

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.