

1997/37. Review of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme: strengthening the United Nations machinery for international drug control within the scope of the existing international drug control treaties and in accordance with the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the special session of the General Assembly devoted to the question of international cooperation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and the adoption by the Assembly, on 23 February 1990, during that special session, of the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action,¹⁹⁶ including the proclamation of the period from 1991 to 2000 as the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse,

Taking note of the existing international drug control treaties, the Global Programme of Action and the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control,¹⁹⁷ which contain a sound and comprehensive framework for drug control activities by States and all the relevant international organizations, and stressing the need for consistency in efforts to implement those activities,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 45/179 of 21 December 1990, by which the Assembly established the United Nations International Drug Control Programme as the single body with the exclusive responsibility for coordinating all drug control activities within the United Nations system and for providing effective leadership in promoting international cooperation in drug control, thereby producing a catalytic impact on other international and national bodies,

Recognizing with appreciation the valuable work done by the International Narcotics Control Board in encouraging Member States to adhere to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988⁸⁵ and to ensure the comprehensive implementation of the provisions of that Convention,

Recognizing that Governments have the main responsibility for implementing the international drug control treaties, and emphasizing that the United Nations system has an important role in strengthening the national capacity to do so,

Deeply alarmed by the magnitude of the increasingly rising trend in the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, which are a grave and persistent threat to the health and well-being of millions of people, in particular youth, in all countries of the world,

Noting that contributions to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme have hitherto been made by a limited number of States and that the future of the Programme depends on the retention of existing donors and an enhanced donor base,

Expressing appreciation to donors for their contributions, which have been essential to the growth of the Programme as a centre of excellence,

Recognizing that to maintain and enhance its activities, the Programme depends on general-purpose funds as well as earmarked funds,

Recognizing also that the provision of appropriate and sufficient policy guidance is essential to the success of the Programme, and recalling its resolution 1991/38 of 21 June 1991, in which it called upon the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to give policy guidance to the Programme and to monitor its activities,

Noting the progress of the ad hoc open-ended informal inter-sessional working group established by the Commission at its thirty-ninth session for the purpose of considering options for improving the work of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, in particular its agenda and organization, and of examining the role of the Commission as the governing body of the Programme, as well as possible options designed to enhance active participation by more Member States,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 51/64 of 12 December 1996, in which the Assembly decided to convene a special session in June 1998 to consider, *inter alia*, special measures to strengthen international cooperation in addressing the problem of illicit drugs,

1. *Recognizes* that the extraordinary and unrelentingly high levels of illicit use, cultivation, production and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and of illicit drug trafficking necessitate a comprehensive review of the international drug control machinery in place, including institutional arrangements and approaches in the light of the work of the task force on reform of the United Nations established by the Secretary-General, giving due consideration to questions of governance and improved policy guidance from Member States, in particular with reference to the threat to the security of States arising from the use, consumption and production of and trafficking in illicit drugs;

2. *Concludes* that the general decline in resources allocated to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme from both regular and extrabudgetary sources seriously impairs the efforts of the international community against illicit trafficking in and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and requires innovative solutions for funding;

¹⁹⁶ General Assembly resolution S-17/2, annex.

¹⁹⁷ See A/49/139-E/1994/57.

3. *Reaffirms* the leadership role of the Programme as the main focus for concerted international action for drug abuse control and as the international coordinator of drug control activities, in particular within the United Nations system;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To convene a small group of experts, selected after appropriate consultations, *inter alia*, with Governments, and with due regard to equitable geographical distribution and relevant sectoral expertise, to undertake a comprehensive review of how the efforts against illicit drugs have evolved within the United Nations system since the creation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme pursuant to General Assembly resolution 45/179, with the aim of identifying measures to strengthen future international cooperation against illicit drugs;

(b) To instruct the expert group, *inter alia*, to identify any measures necessary to strengthen the core activities of the Programme, taking into account the work of the task force on reform of the United Nations established by the Secretary-General and the ability of the United Nations system to perform its increasing tasks in the light of existing mandates;

(c) To prepare a progress report on the issues identified by the expert group, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its special session devoted to the fight against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities, to be held in June 1998;

(d) To prepare a final report based on the work of the expert group, taking into account the views expressed during the special session of the General Assembly, on how to strengthen the United Nations machinery for international drug control, to be submitted to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-second session;

5. *Decides* that the work of the expert group should be financed entirely through voluntary funds, and urges Member States to provide financial and other support.

36th plenary meeting
21 July 1997