

ECOSOC Resolution 2003/40

Demand for and supply of opiates for medical and scientific purposes

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 2002/20 of 24 July 2002 and previous relevant resolutions,

Emphasizing that the need to balance the global licit supply of opiates against the legitimate demand for opiates for medical and scientific purposes is central to the international strategy and policy of drug control,

Noting the fundamental need for international cooperation with the traditional supplier countries in drug control to ensure universal application of the provisions of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961¹ and that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol,²

Reiterating that a balance between consumption and production of opiate raw materials was achieved in the past as a result of efforts made by the two traditional supplier countries, India and Turkey, together with other producer countries,

Expressing deep concern at the increase in the global production of opiate raw materials and the significant accumulation of stocks over the past few years as a consequence of the operation of market forces, which has the potential to upset the delicate balance between the licit supply of and demand for opiates for medical and scientific purposes,

Noting the importance of opiates in pain relief therapy as advocated by the World Health Organization,

Noting also that countries differ significantly in their level of consumption of narcotic drugs and that in most developing countries the use of narcotic drugs for medical purposes has remained at an extremely low level,

1. *Urges* all Governments to continue to contribute to the maintenance of a balance between the licit supply of and demand for opiate raw materials for medical and scientific purposes, the achievement of which would be facilitated by maintaining, insofar as their constitutional and legal systems permit, support to the traditional and legal supplier countries, and to cooperate in preventing the proliferation of sources of production of opiate raw materials;

2. *Urges* Governments of all producer countries to adhere strictly to the provisions of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961³ and that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol,⁴ to take effective measures to prevent illicit production or diversion of opiate raw materials to illicit channels, especially when increasing licit production, and welcomes the study carried out by the International

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 520, No. 7515.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 520, No. 7515.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

Narcotics Control Board on the relative merits of different methods of producing opiate raw materials;

3. *Urges* Governments of consumer countries to assess their licit needs for opiate raw materials realistically and to communicate those needs to the International Narcotics Control Board in order to ensure easy supply, and requests the Governments of producer countries to ensure that their future production of opiate raw materials is adjusted to conform to the actual requirements for opiate raw materials worldwide, bearing in mind the current level of global stocks of opiate raw materials, and to cooperate in preventing the proliferation of sources of production of opiate raw materials;

4. *Commends* the International Narcotics Control Board for its efforts in monitoring the implementation of the relevant Economic and Social Council resolutions and, in particular:

(a) In urging the Governments concerned to adjust global production of opiate raw materials to a level corresponding to actual licit needs and to avoid unforeseen imbalances between the licit supply of and demand for opiates caused by the exportation of products manufactured from seized and confiscated drugs;

(b) In inviting the Governments concerned to ensure that opiates imported into their countries for medical and scientific use do not originate in countries that transform seized and confiscated drugs into licit opiates;

(c) In arranging informal meetings, during the sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, with the main States that import and produce opiate raw materials;

5. *Requests* the International Narcotics Control Board to continue its efforts in monitoring the implementation of the relevant Economic and Social Council resolutions in full compliance with the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and with that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the text of the present resolution to all Governments for consideration and implementation and to report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-seventh session on progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*44th plenary meeting
22 July 2003*