

ECOSOC Resolution 2004/43

Demand for and supply of opiates used to meet medical and scientific needs

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 2003/40 of 22 July 2003 and previous relevant resolutions,

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

Noting the fundamental need for international cooperation with the traditional and established supplier countries in drug control to ensure the 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 continued 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 is causing a mismatch and is now upsetting the delicate balance between the licit supply of and demand for opiates used to meet medical and scientific needs,

Emphasizing the importance of adhering to the estimates furnished to and confirmed by the International Narcotics Control Board on the extent of cultivation and production of opiate raw materials, particularly in view of the current oversupply,

Recalling the Joint Ministerial Statement adopted during the ministerial segment of the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs,³ in which ministers and other government representatives called upon States to continue to contribute to the maintenance of a balance between the licit supply of and demand for opiate raw materials used for medical and scientific purposes and to cooperate in preventing the proliferation of sources of production of opiate raw materials,

Reiterating the importance of medically appropriate use of opiates in pain relief therapy as advocated by the World Health Organization,

Noting 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 Ibid., vol. 520, No. 7515.

² Ibid., vol. 976, No. 14152.

³ A/58/124, chap. II, sect. A.

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

2. *Urges* the Governments of all producer countries to adhere strictly to the provisions of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961⁴ and that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol⁵ and to take effective measures to prevent the illicit production or diversion of opiate raw materials to illicit channels, especially when increasing licit production, invites the relevant Governments to contribute to the study being carried out by the International Narcotics Control Board on the relative merits of different methods of producing opiate raw materials, and encourages producer countries to adopt best practices in the cultivation and production of 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 calls upon all Governments of countries producing opium poppy to limit the cultivation of opium poppy, taking into account the current level of global stocks, to the estimates furnished to and confirmed by the Board, in accordance with the requirements of the 1961 Convention, and, calls upon producer countries, in providing estimates of such cultivation, to consider the specific demand requirements of consumer countries;

4. *Urges* the Governments of all countries where, in the past, opium poppy has not been cultivated for the licit production of opiate raw materials, in the spirit of collective responsibility, to refrain from engaging in the commercial cultivation of opium poppy, in order to avoid the proliferation of supply sites;

5. *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 sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, with the main States that import and produce opiate raw materials;

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 520, No. 7515.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

6. *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;

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

*47th plenary meeting
21 July 2004*