

## ECOSOC Resolution 2006/34

### **The need for a balance between demand for and supply of opiates used to meet medical and scientific needs**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolution 2005/26 of 22 July 2005 and previous relevant resolutions,

*Recognizing* that the medical use of narcotic drugs, including opiates, is indispensable for the relief of pain and suffering,

*Emphasizing* that the need for a balance between the global licit supply of opiates and 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 supplier countries in drug control to ensure universal application of the provisions of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961<sup>1</sup> and that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol,<sup>2</sup>

*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 established supplier 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 to meet medical and scientific needs,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the system of estimates, based on actual consumption and utilization of narcotic drugs, furnished to and confirmed by the International Narcotics Control Board on the extent of cultivation and production of opiate raw materials, in particular 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,<sup>3</sup> 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,

*Considering* that opiate raw materials and the opiates derived from them are not just ordinary commodities that can be subjected to the operation of market forces and that, therefore, market economy considerations alone should not determine the extent of cultivation of opium poppy,

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 520, No. 7515.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

<sup>3</sup> A/58/124, sect. II.A.

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

*Noting* that countries differ significantly in their level of licit demand for 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 maintaining a balance between the licit supply of and demand for opiate raw materials used for medical and scientific purposes, supporting traditional and established 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 1961<sup>1</sup> and that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol,<sup>2</sup> and to take effective measures to prevent the illicit production or diversion of opiate raw materials to illicit channels, and encourages improvements in practices in the cultivation of opium poppy and production of opiate raw materials;

3. *Urges* Governments of consumer countries to assess their licit needs for opiate raw materials realistically on the basis of actual consumption and utilization of opiate raw materials and the opiates derived from them and to communicate those needs to the International Narcotics Control Board in order to ensure effective supply, calls on Governments of countries producing opium 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 urges that, in providing estimates of such cultivation, producer countries consider the actual demand requirements of importing countries;

4. *Endorses* the concern expressed by the International Narcotics Control Board in its report for 2005<sup>4</sup> regarding the advocacy by a non-governmental organization of legalization of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, and urges all Governments to resist such proposals and to continue to strengthen drug control in compliance with their obligations emanating from the international drug control treaties;

5. *Urges* all the Governments of countries where 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, and calls on Governments to enact enabling legislation to prevent and prohibit the proliferation of sites used for the production of opiate raw materials;

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

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<sup>4</sup> *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.XI.2), para. 208.

(a) In urging the Governments concerned to adjust global production of opiate raw materials to a level corresponding to actual licit requirements and to avoid creating 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;

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

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the text of the present resolution to all Governments for consideration and implementation.

*41st plenary meeting  
27 July 2006*