

ECOSOC Resolution 2006/31

Using alternative development programmes to reduce the cultivation of cannabis plants

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the provisions of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961,¹ that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol,² the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971³ and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988,⁴

Recalling also the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session,⁵ in which Member States recognized that action against the world drug problem was a common and shared responsibility,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 59/160 of 20 December 2004 on the control of cultivation of and trafficking in cannabis,

Recalling Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 45/8 on the control of cannabis in Africa,

Noting the progress made by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 59/160, and looking forward to the forthcoming release of the market survey on cannabis requested by the Assembly in that resolution,

Emphasizing the need for States parties to continue to honour their obligations under the 1961 Convention, that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention,

Noting that cannabis is by far the most widely and most frequently abused of the drugs listed in the international drug control treaties,

Concerned that cultivation of cannabis plants and trafficking in and abuse of cannabis are on the increase in Africa, in part as a result of extreme poverty, the absence of any crops offering viable alternatives and the lack of resources for the identification and eradication of cultivation of cannabis plants and for interdiction efforts and in part because of the profitability of such activities and the high demand for cannabis in other regions,

Emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in combating both drug trafficking and drug abuse in a balanced and integrated manner,

Recognizing that alternative development programmes have proved to be a useful tool in efforts to eradicate illicit drug crop cultivation,

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

² *Ibid.*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1019, No. 14956.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1582, No. 27627.

⁵ General Assembly resolution S-20/2, annex.

Aware of the importance of programmes promoting alternative development, including, where appropriate, preventive alternative development,

Having regard to the successes recorded so far in the reduction of coca bush and opium poppy cultivation through the application of alternative development programmes,

Taking note of the report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2005, in which the Board regretted the absence of alternative development projects or programmes in Africa, despite the large amount of cannabis produced in the region,⁶

Desiring that the successful application of alternative development programmes in efforts to sustain the reduction of coca bush and opium poppy cultivation be replicated, as appropriate and possible, in efforts to reduce the cultivation of cannabis plants,

1. *Calls upon* Member States to continue to adhere to the international drug control treaties and to adopt policies that promote international cooperation;

2. *Calls upon* Member States and requests the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to implement General Assembly resolution 59/160 on the control of cultivation of and trafficking in cannabis;

3. *Urges* Member States, in accordance with the principle of shared responsibility and as part of their commitment to the fight against illicit drugs, to extend cooperation to affected States, especially in Africa, in the area of alternative development, including research into crops offering viable alternatives to cannabis, and technical assistance, with due regard to the environmental degradation caused by the cultivation of cannabis plants;

4. *Calls upon* Member States and invites organizations with experience and relevant expertise in the eradication of illicit crops and in the design and implementation of alternative development programmes to share that experience and expertise, upon request, with States seeking to develop and implement eradication and alternative development programmes with a view to reducing the cultivation of cannabis plants, especially in Africa, and requests the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to facilitate efforts in that regard;

5. *Urges* Member States in which the large-scale cultivation of cannabis plants is taking place to carry out, as a matter of priority and as appropriate, a comprehensive assessment of the extent of such cultivation and to use that assessment to inform both eradication and alternative development strategies with a view to further reducing the supply of cannabis;

6. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, when requested by States reporting the large-scale cultivation of cannabis plants, to conduct a study with development partners, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, on the feasibility of implementing alternative development programmes in those countries;

⁶ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.XI.2), para. 33.

7. *Urges* Member States implementing alternative development programmes to integrate them into other drug control measures, including demand reduction strategies, at the national and regional levels in such a way as to ensure the sustainability of those programmes;

8. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to consider the possibility of developing a global, integrated and balanced strategy for alternative development in consultation with Member States, in coordination with ongoing efforts to establish an overarching strategy, pursuant to paragraphs 9 and 10 of Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 48/14;

9. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its fifty-first session on the implementation of the present resolution.

*41st plenary meeting
27 July 2006*