

ECOSOC Resolution 2007/9

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 2006/34 of 27 July 2006 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 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 established supplier countries,

Noting that the stocks of opiate raw materials continue to be sufficient to cover the expected licit demand and that, despite lower production levels in 2005 and 2006, excessive stocks should be avoided,

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 of 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,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,

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

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

² *Ibid.*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

³ A/58/124, sect. II.A.

considerations should not determine the extent of cultivation of the opium poppy,

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 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, and encourages improvements in practices in the cultivation of the opium poppy and the 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 the opium poppy to limit its cultivation, 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 producer countries, in providing estimates of such cultivation, to consider the actual demand requirements of importing countries;

4. *Endorses* the concern expressed by the International Narcotics Control Board in its report for 2005⁶ regarding the advocacy by a non-governmental organization of legalization of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and urges all Governments to strongly oppose such proposals and to continue to strengthen drug control in compliance with their obligations emanating from the international drug control treaties;

5. *Urges* the Governments of all countries where the opium poppy has not been cultivated for the licit production of opiate raw materials, in compliance with the relevant Economic and Social Council resolutions and with the appeal of the International Narcotics Control Board in its report for 2006⁷ and in the spirit of collective

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

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

⁶ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.XI.2), para. 208.

⁷ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2006* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.XI.11), para. 65.

responsibility, to refrain from engaging in the commercial cultivation of the opium poppy in order to avoid the proliferation of supply sites, and calls upon 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:

(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 from seized and confiscated drugs;

(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.

*44th plenary meeting
25 July 2007*