

ECOSOC Resolution 2001/14

Prevention of diversion of precursors used in the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming that the control of precursor chemicals is a key component in the prevention of diversion of such chemicals to the illicit manufacture of drugs,

Alarmed by the continued spread of the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, including amphetamine, methamphetamine and Ecstasy-type drugs, and by the health hazards associated with their abuse,

Noting that the global nature of both the problem of synthetic drugs and the trade in chemicals makes cooperation at all levels, with all relevant agencies and with the chemical industry and trade, essential in preventing diversion,

Recognizing that the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988¹ provides the foundation and framework for such cooperation,

Recalling the provisions of the Action Plan against Illicit Manufacture, Trafficking and Abuse of Amphetamine-type Stimulants and Their Precursors and the measures to control precursors adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, devoted to countering the world drug problem together, in resolutions S-20/4 A and B of 10 June 1998, including the application of the principle “know your client”,

Recognizing that further information is required about the identity of chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs,

Recognizing also that many of the chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs are also used in the licit industry and trade,

Bearing in mind the use of non-controlled and easily substitutable chemicals in the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs,

Recognizing the importance of drug characterization and impurity profiling and of the results of forensic analysis of drugs in obtaining information on trends in, and on the chemicals used for, the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs,

Recognizing also that large quantities of 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone, also known as PMK (piperonyl methyl ketone), a controlled chemical included in table I of the 1988 Convention and an important precursor used in the illicit manufacture of Ecstasy-type drugs, are being seized, and that there is little legitimate trade in that chemical,

¹ *Official Records of the United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Vienna, 25 November-20 December 1988*, vol. I (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XI.5).

1. *Recommends* that concerned Governments and international and regional organizations make every effort to establish closer contact to facilitate the exchange of information between countries used as a source of key chemicals and those in which synthetic drugs are illicitly manufactured;

2. *Urges* Governments and international and regional organizations to make every effort to enhance cooperation at all levels, with all relevant agencies and with the chemical industry and trade, to ensure the rapid exchange of information, in particular relating to stopped shipments, suspicious transactions and new chemicals identified as being used in the illicit manufacture of drugs;

3. *Also urges* Governments to implement operating procedures for chemical control that would give effect, as a minimum, to the measures to control precursors, in particular those relating to pre-export notification, adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, devoted to countering the world drug problem together, in resolution S-20/4 B, and to articles 12 and 18 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988,² as well as article 13 thereof, relating to the tracking of essential laboratory equipment used in the illicit manufacture of drugs;

4. *Recommends* that Governments and international and regional organizations collect and exchange the information needed to identify the chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs and the sources of such chemicals. That information should be supplied to the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme for analysis, interpretation and dissemination as necessary;

5. *Calls upon* Governments and international and regional organizations to use the information thus obtained as the basis for future initiatives to prevent the diversion of such chemicals;

6. *Urges* Governments and regional organizations to make use of the limited international special surveillance list of substances established by the Board, adapted or supplemented, where appropriate, by lists of chemicals subject to voluntary monitoring, to reflect national and regional situations and changing trends in the illicit manufacture of drugs;

7. *Calls upon* Governments and regional organizations to consider the establishment of early warning systems for suspicious key nationally non-controlled chemicals found to be used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, in order to allow the rapid dissemination of information to the chemical industry and trade and to the appropriate authorities;

8. *Urges* Governments to develop cooperation programmes, together with the chemical industry and trade, to ensure the regular exchange of information, thus promoting greater awareness of chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, and to encourage reporting of suspicious transactions;

² Ibid.

9. *Recommends* that Governments and regional organizations consider drawing up guidelines for their chemical industry and trade, setting out indicators of suspicious transactions and allowing for the regular updating of regulations and procedures;

10. *Recommends also* that Governments consider facilitating, with the technical support of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, if necessary, the development and distribution of analytical methods for drug characterization and impurity profiling, and the development of chemical tracers, as tools for the identification of manufacturing trends and new chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs;

11. *Recommends further* that interested Governments and international and regional organizations consider the possibility of establishing a network of collaborating laboratories to serve as a source of primary information leading to a better understanding of illicit manufacturing trends, new drugs and the precursors used in illicit manufacture;

12. *Recommends* that Governments consider, if necessary, ways of improving the enforcement capacity, including the use of controlled delivery, where appropriate, available for investigation of illicit laboratories, stopped shipments and seized chemicals;

13. *Recommends also* that, in view of the very limited legitimate trade in PMK, all transactions involving that chemical be regarded with concern and that end-users be thoroughly verified before shipments are allowed to proceed in accordance with national legislation and procedures.

*40th plenary meeting
24 July 2001*