

I. OVERVIEW

1. During the last two decades, the world has witnessed the "globalization" of the drug abuse problem and the situation has worsened drastically. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs no longer discusses individual situations such as the smuggling of heroin into China, the illicit traffic in opium from Turkey to Egypt or the supply of heroin to New York through the "French Connection". Some decades ago, the abuse problem was the concern of only a limited number of countries, but today countries that are not suffering from the harmful consequences of drug abuse are the exception rather than the rule.

2. The economic power and political influence of drug cartels are rising. While drug abuse has been "globalized", internationalization and cooperation among drug cartels have also increased. There is also clear evidence that trafficking organizations barter different types of drugs among themselves. Drug trafficking syndicates are increasingly becoming involved in other forms of organized and violent crime, making use of sophisticated technical aids and modern communication systems. Criminal organizations control drugs from the cultivation and production phases to the storage and distribution phases. Large amounts of drugs are stored at staging posts in certain countries to take advantage of weak or ineffective laws in those countries. There is evidence that drug trafficking organizations frequently make use of the territories of countries (a) that are not parties to the international drug control treaties; (b) that have formally ratified conventions without implementing their provisions; (c) that suffer from civil war, terrorist activities, political instability, ethnic conflict, economic depression or social tension; (d) that are not in a position to ensure governmental control over some parts of their territories; (e) and that are not able to maintain adequate law enforcement, customs and pharmaceutical control services.

3. More and more Governments are beginning to realize that international cooperation in drug control, which in the past was an expression of solidarity, has now become a matter of urgent self-defence. The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held at Vienna from 17 to 26 June 1987, was an important sign of the changing philosophy of the international community. It was followed in 1990 by the adoption by the General Assembly, in its resolution S-17/2, of the Global Programme of Action, an instrument facilitating international action through voluntary cooperation between sovereign States and international organizations.

4. The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988¹ is an even more important instrument. It created a global mechanism against international drug-related criminal activities by extending the scope of the international drug control treaties from basic drug control measures to concrete provisions against the activities of criminal organizations. The increasing number of countries that are becoming parties to the 1988 Convention is a reflection of the growing commitment of Governments to its compulsory application. It is not by chance that initiatives leading to the adoption of that Convention were taken by those countries in South America that are the main targets of criminal organizations.

5. In 1993, Governments have demonstrated again that the closest international cooperation possible is required to fight the worldwide scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The General Assembly therefore convened five high-level plenary sessions to examine the status of such international cooperation. Its adoption in October 1993, of resolution 48/12, on measures to strengthen international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities, may prove to be a significant step towards the further development of a common strategy and international machinery against drug abuse and illicit traffic. General Assembly resolution 48/12 is a clear manifestation of the determination of Governments to

increase their cooperation with international organizations and each other in the fight against drug problems, which threaten the basic fabric of society and the political stability of nations.

6. The International Narcotics Control Board notes with satisfaction that the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/12, stressed the importance of national and international action to implement the provisions of the international drug control treaties. In response to the requests made by the General Assembly in that resolution, the Board will continue to fulfil its basic responsibilities of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the international drug control treaties, cooperating with the Commission in identifying areas of progress and weakness, and assisting the Commission in formulating recommendations to the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council.

7. The functioning of the international drug control system depends on the universal application of the provisions of the international drug control treaties. Deficiencies in national legislation and/or in the implementation of national laws and regulations create loopholes in the global network of protective measures. The Board invites Governments to update their national legislation in line with the international drug control treaties and to ensure the implementation of that legislation and encourages them to request assistance from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) for those purposes.

8. The Board notes with concern that there continue to be deficiencies in Governments' compliance with reporting obligations established in the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961,² that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol,³ the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971⁴ and the 1988 Convention, as well as in numerous Economic and Social Council resolutions. The Board stresses that it is important that parties to those conventions, as well as non-parties, furnish in a timely manner the data required under those conventions or requested in those resolutions, in order for the international drug control system to function properly and in order for the returns and estimates to be comprehensive and accurate. In particular, the Board was compelled to defer its assessment on the present scope of control of precursors* under the 1988 Convention as requested by the Commission, because only a few Governments provided the necessary data.

9. The Board is deeply concerned that, more than 20 years after the adoption of the 1971 Convention, some of the major manufacturing and exporting countries have not yet become parties to it and have not introduced control measures for international trade in many psychotropic substances. This situation is undermining the functioning of the international control system for psychotropic substances and has had a particularly negative impact on numerous developing countries where the abuse of those substances is prevalent.

10. There is striking evidence that the abuse of stimulants is increasing in all regions of the world. Substantial quantities of fenetylline tablets have been seized in West Asia; the smuggling of amphetamine and pemoline into western Africa has continued; the regular abuse of amphetamine tablets by bus drivers has been reported in south-east Asia; amphetamine is the main drug of abuse in Scandinavian countries and in some other European countries; the abuse of methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA), commonly known as "ecstasy" has been the cause of many night-time road accidents in Europe; many clandestine methamphetamine laboratories have been

*The term precursor is used to indicate any of the substances in Table I or II of the 1988 Convention, except where the context requires a different expression. Such substances are often described as precursors or essential chemicals, depending on their principal chemical properties. The plenipotentiary conference that adopted the Convention did not use any one term to describe such substances. Instead, the expression "substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances" was introduced in the Convention. It has become common practice, however, to refer to all such substances simply as precursors; although that term is not technically correct, the Board has decided to use it in the present report for the sake of brevity.

dismantled in North America and in east Asia; the abuse of ephedrine (methcathinone) constitutes a major drug problem in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the same compound is synthesized in clandestine laboratories in North America. Increasing quantities of khat (*Catha edulis*) are being exported from producer countries to Australia and to countries in Europe and North America. The Board invites Governments to cooperate in preventing large-scale illicit trafficking in stimulants and to study the extent and patterns of the abuse of those substances listed in the 1971 Convention or other substances not subject to international control, such as ephedrine or khat.

11. The efforts of UNDCP are highly appreciated by the Board. In 1993, UNDCP has cooperated with 59 countries through 183 regional and country-specific drug control programmes. In addition, its operational work programme for 1993 includes 32 global projects supporting a broad range of drug control activities, such as specialized training, research and advisory services. Those activities have been implemented in collaboration with various specialized agencies in the United Nations system, other international organizations and various non-governmental organizations. The budget for technical cooperation projects in 1992 and 1993 totals 135.9 million United States dollars. UNDCP also supports the work of the Board by providing a secretariat administratively integrated into its structure, as well as other support on request.

12. Concerning precursor control, as the Board noted in its report on the implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention, submitted to the Commission at its thirty-sixth session,⁵ the Chemical Action Task Force, set up in 1990 by the heads of State or Government of the Group of Seven major industrialized countries and the President of the Commission of the European Communities (CEC), would not be maintained and follow-up tasks would be assumed by the Board and by the competent United Nations bodies, as provided for under that Convention. Within the framework of its functions under the Convention, the Board already assists Governments in developing procedures and mechanisms to control precursors, including verification of the legitimacy of transactions. The Board intends to expand further its current work and will take up additional activities as it deems necessary, subject to the availability of resources.

A. The importance of demand reduction

13. The Board, encouraged both by General Assembly resolution 48/12, in which the importance of the fundamental task of the Board, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of provisions of the international drug control treaties, was properly acknowledged and by the positive response of Governments to its firm position against legalization of the non-medical use of drugs under international control, continues to issue warning signals to Governments and international bodies. In the present report, it wishes to draw the attention of Governments to the crucial importance of demand reduction programmes.

14. In the past, distinctions were made between supplier and consumer countries. It is now widely realized that such distinctions no longer have any meaning: consumer countries have become supplier countries and vice versa. The term "transit countries" has also lost its original meaning: they, too, are quickly becoming consumer countries and may also become supplier countries. The simplistic view that suppressing illicit drug production in some "supplier countries" and/or reducing illicit drug demand in "consumer countries" will automatically lead to the solution of the drug problem is no longer valid, if indeed it ever was.

15. It is necessary, however, to keep in mind that demand reduction efforts cannot lead to success without substantially reducing the illicit drug supply: if drugs are readily available and easily accessible, new drug abusers will soon replace former ones. At the same time, there is evidence that

elimination of a given drug from the market does not mean the elimination of the drug problem but only a shift towards other drugs or substances of abuse. Consequently, without efforts to reduce illicit drug demand, actions aimed at reducing illicit drug supply will lead to only temporary successes.

16. The Board notes with satisfaction that this philosophy, this balanced approach, is reflected in the UNDCP strategy: assisting in the development of national legal instruments, strengthening law enforcement services, supporting alternative economic development, providing assistance aimed at improving social, educational and health conditions, are all included in the programmes and projects of UNDCP.

17. It is evident that, at the national level, supply reduction and demand reduction cannot be separated from each other. There is, however, a major difference at the international level. Measures against the illicit manufacture, production, traffic and diversion of drugs can be "codified" in international treaties, because their identical application constitutes the *sine qua non* criteria for the functioning of the international drug control system. Demand reduction methods, however, cannot be "standardized" by legal documents.

18. The Board invites Governments to consider demand reduction as one of their first priorities in the fight against drug abuse. It urges Governments to cooperate closely in exchanging information on the results (failures as well as successes) of their demand reduction programmes. The Board greatly appreciates the efforts of UNDCP and other United Nations entities such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), intergovernmental organizations and some non-governmental organizations. It invites Governments to cooperate with such organizations and to seek their assistance in developing demand reduction programmes.

19. The importance of demand reduction was initially realized by the international community 20 years ago: the idea was translated into the provisions of the 1971 Convention, followed immediately by the amendment of the 1961 Convention by the 1972 Protocol. It is noteworthy that the 1988 Convention, which was intended to be a convention explicitly against illicit traffic, also contains provisions for demand reduction.

20. The provisions of the international drug control treaties are aimed at preventing, or at least reducing, the illicit supply of drugs. Consequently, those provisions constitute the backbone of any national supply reduction programme. In the case of national demand reduction programmes, the situation is different: in most countries, alternative licit substances, above all alcohol, are available on the local markets. Creating a shift from the abuse of drugs under international control to the abuse of alcohol, organic solvents and other substances would constitute a questionable achievement of demand reduction programmes.

21. Thus, it is of the utmost importance that reduction of the demand for all substances of abuse be the goal of such national programmes. That philosophy is reflected in the WHO approach to the problem: the WHO Programme on Substance Abuse is comprehensive and not limited to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The Board commends the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence for drawing renewed attention to the problems associated with the use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs in its recently published twenty-eighth report. The Board welcomes the emphasis placed by the Expert Committee on the need for a comprehensive approach in combating the abuse of psychoactive drugs. The Board notes that such a comprehensive approach is also present in the UNESCO preventive education strategy.

22. The fundamental importance of demand reduction was highlighted by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in 1987, by the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, held in London from 9 to 11 April 1990, and by the General Assembly in 1990, when it adopted the Global Programme of Action. The Board wishes to emphasize that the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/12, paragraph 10, listed demand reduction first among the issues that it requested the Commission and the Economic and Social Council to consider and make recommendations on.

23. Development of demand reduction programmes and activities should be based on knowledge of the real drug abuse situation. In the opinion of the Board, it is possible to assess the nature and extent of drug problems without undertaking costly epidemiological studies. The collection of data and other information from law enforcement services, doctors, pharmacists and social workers allows already a rapid assessment of the drug abuse situation (which groups are taking which drugs, by what means etc.) and even a rough assessment of the extensiveness of the problem. The Board wishes to draw the attention of Governments to the need for continuous monitoring of the ever-changing drug abuse situations.

24. Demand reduction strategies should be carefully designed, taking into consideration not only the individuals concerned, but also the socio-cultural and economic milieu. It follows, therefore, that programmes must be adapted to the society in question.

25. Community empowerment in relation to drug abuse is often the key link between education and treatment services. Its purpose is to promote the extent to which a community feels that it has some control over the process of making decisions that directly affect them. Especially in circumstances where there may be a virtual absence of social controls, this approach can be crucial to the success of both demand and supply reduction strategies. Strengthening the cohesiveness of communities is therefore one of the most important tasks.

26. Education programmes must be carefully designed in order to avoid being counter-productive. Support may be given to mass media campaigns to raise public awareness concerning the dangers of drug abuse. The principal target group for education programmes are young people both in and out of school. Programmes for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle that incorporate a drug prevention element should be encouraged. It must be kept in mind that in many developing countries with inadequate health- and social-care services, education programmes are practically the only medium available for demand reduction activities.

27. The treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers are key elements of demand reduction strategies. No particular programme, however, has been effective for all drug abusers, even within a single country, and the transfer of a treatment regime from one culture to another has not always been constructive. Consequently, treatment and rehabilitation programmes must be adapted to local conditions and circumstances.

28. The success of demand reduction programmes depends on two factors: the political will of Governments to tackle the problem, as evidenced by, among other things, the provision of the necessary financial resources; and the community's willingness to cooperate. Without following "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches simultaneously, it is not realistic to expect positive results from demand reduction programmes.

29. The Board acknowledges the importance of certain aspects of "harm reduction" as a tertiary prevention strategy for demand reduction purposes. The Board considers it its duty, however, to draw the attention of Governments to the fact that "harm reduction" programmes are not substitutes for demand reduction programmes.

30. The Board wishes to bring to the attention of Governments some of the many examples of successful demand reduction activities. Increasing attention in this respect is given, also in developing countries, to strategies promoting the mobilization of entire communities to support the treatment and rehabilitation of drug-dependent persons. These appear to be efficient and relatively inexpensive interventions. The Board notes in particular the encouraging results reported by WHO on community-based approaches to detoxification and treatment in countries such as India, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. In Myanmar, such an approach also led to a considerable reduction in drug-related crime.

31. Successful demand reduction projects have also been reported by UNDCP. An integrated demand reduction project in Pakistan has succeeded in raising awareness among students and the general public concerning the dangers of drug abuse. Intervention teams involving a number of non-governmental organizations have directed community services in public education, community organization and treatment services for the prevention and reduction of drug problems. In Colombia, municipal authorities at Bogotá have been successfully involved in the implementation of a project for the prevention of drug abuse. The project, which is aimed at reducing risk factors leading to drug abuse, has focused on the individual, the family and the community. In Bolivia, targeting a well-defined group - in this case, street children - has been regarded as the reason for the good results achieved by a project for the development of strategies and policies to protect street children by promoting an alternative lifestyle through education, training, counselling and the creation of alternative employment possibilities.

B. Impact of corruption on drug control systems

32. The Board wishes to reiterate its deep concern about the impact of corruption on national drug control systems. Corruption is a problem to which no society, regardless of its level of development, can claim to be immune. Corruption among government officials or criminal justice personnel jeopardizes the very principles and goals of drug control treaties and ruins the efficacy of the international drug control system. The expansion of transnational and organized crime in recent years has compounded the problem. United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders have repeatedly invited all nations to fight against corruption.

33. The Board wishes to draw the attention of Governments to resolution 7 of the Eighth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and the Treatment of Offenders.⁶ In that resolution, entitled "Corruption in government", the Eighth Congress recommended that Member States devise a variety of administrative and regulatory mechanisms to prevent corrupt practices involving the abuse of power; and it invited Member States to review the adequacy of their criminal laws, including procedural legislation. The Board notes that the manual on practical measures against corruption⁷ and the draft international code of conduct for public officials, to be submitted to the Ninth Congress pursuant to resolution 7 of the Eighth Congress, can provide a basis for the design of training programmes for public officials and criminal justice personnel in the field of drug control, as well as practical assistance to Member States.

C. Prevention of money-laundering

34. Because drug trafficking on a global basis generates profits amounting to many billions of dollars annually and money-laundering facilitates the legitimization of those profits, there is an urgent need to combat money-laundering at the international level. Although efforts have been made in countries throughout the world to develop new legislation enabling the tracing, seizure and forfeiture of the proceeds of drug trafficking, much more needs to be done.

35. Many States have made effective changes to laws and regulations; have become parties to the 1988 Convention; have adopted most or all of the recommendations on strengthening the efforts of the international community in the fight against money-laundering, adopted by the Financial Action Task Force established by the heads of State or Government of the Group of Seven major industrialized countries and the President of CEC; have complied with the Council of the European Communities directive 91/308/EEC of 10 June 1991 on prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money-laundering; or have adopted model regulations concerning laundering offences connected to illicit drug trafficking and related offences, adopted in 1992 by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States (OAS). Coordination of the international efforts against money-laundering is intended to lead ultimately to effective programmes within most countries, thereby ensuring that effective legislation is implemented, investigations are conducted, practical measures are taken within the financial system, cross-border currency flow and suspicious currency transactions are reported and international cooperation is enhanced through the use of treaties of mutual legal assistance.

36. Money-laundering continues, however, mainly as a result of the increasing sophistication and changing tactics of drug traffickers to launder their proceeds. Drug traffickers seek out countries and territories with weak central banks, restrictive bank secrecy practices and limited controls on foreign exchange. Experience indicates that even where jurisdictions have enacted laws making money-laundering a criminal offence, such laws are likely to be ineffective unless bank, corporate and official secrecy requirements are relaxed, subject to appropriate safeguards. The 1988 Convention calls for relaxation of bank secrecy requirements in cases involving drug trafficking, including drug-related money-laundering. Complementary provisions are often required to limit opportunities for money-laundering and to ensure that if it occurs, documents and money can be traced to the satisfaction of the courts.

37. The struggle against the laundering of proceeds from drug trafficking is just beginning. The Board welcomes the action plan of UNDCP concerning money-laundering and financial investigations, as well as the activities of the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the United Nations Office at Vienna to assist Governments in combating corruption. The Board calls on the international community to enhance its support for those activities.

D. Additional observations

38. Without reducing availability and access to drugs of abuse in general, it is not realistic to expect lasting successes from demand reduction efforts. The legalization of any drug of abuse leads necessarily to increased availability of that drug. This is one of the reasons for the strong position of the Board against such experiments.⁸ The Board appreciates the overall support of Governments for its position on that matter at the 1993 session of the Economic and Social Council and at the thirty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. It notes with satisfaction that the option of legalization was rejected by all who spoke on the subject at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The Board hopes that the Government of Italy will remedy the situation in that country created by the issuance of a decree in June 1993 repealing the prohibition of the non-medical use of drugs, which is not in line with the spirit of the international drug control treaties. The Board appreciates that Portugal and Spain have recently enacted legislation that strengthens measures to prevent the non-medical use of drugs.

39. Since December 1992, the Board has sent missions to review the functioning of the drug control systems in Bolivia, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, India, Israel, Kenya, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Uruguay and Zambia. A joint technical mission of UNDCP

and the Board has visited Cameroon and Ethiopia. In the past, missions of the Board have had a positive impact in terms of treaty adherence and implementation and the Board is confident that the Governments of the countries that its missions have visited in the past year will also take steps to implement its recommendations.

40. The Board appreciates the increasing cooperation at the regional and subregional levels. The determination of Governments to join forces in cross-border operations and the efforts of UNDCP have resulted in a number of agreements and regional projects in Africa, south-east Asia, West Asia, Central America and the Caribbean. The Board encourages Governments, UNDCP, other international entities and regional organizations to continue to coordinate their efforts in the planning and implementation of regional and subregional joint actions.

41. The Board stresses the need to strengthen the cooperation within the United Nations system, in other international organizations and in intergovernmental organizations in every segment of drug control. The Board will continue to extend its regular contacts with United Nations entities and with other organizations such as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC) and the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO/Interpol). The Board suggests that the Secretary-General should convene a summit of the heads of all international organizations with a responsibility for or interest in drug-related issues, as discussed during a meeting of its President with the Secretary-General in September 1993.