



STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE 47TH SESSION OF THE CND, 15-22 MARCH 2004 DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR TAOUS FEROUKHI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA

Mr. Chairman

The G-77 and China is pleased to see you preside over the 47th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). The Group is confident in your ability to successfully conduct the activities of this session and I wish to assure you of the Group's support in the task ahead.

Let me also extend the Group's appreciation to the Secretariat for putting together the documents for this session. The G-77 and China would like to make some observations and comments on some of the issues on the agenda of this session.

Mr. Chairman

The choice of amphetamine-type-stimulants (ATS) and control of precursor chemicals for the thematic debate is timely, coming after the 2003 Global Survey of ATS by the UNODC. The G-77 and China welcomes this survey and notes with concern that all countries are part of the ATS problem, either as producers and or consumers. It is also a matter of concern that the abuse of ATS is rapidly spreading, regardless of nationality, age, gender or income with the attendant health problems and hazards. The Group calls on Member States to urgently develop their supply reduction programmes for ATS, to complement and ensure the effectiveness of demand reduction initiatives.

The Group also calls upon Member States to strengthen their mechanisms for control of precursor chemicals, in particular the prior notification of export mechanism and to share relevant information in order to prevent their diversion into illicit market. In this regard, we urge all states to provide active support for Operation Topaz, Operation Purple and Project Prism. These important projects by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) are in danger of being discontinued due to inadequate funding. We therefore, appeal to all Member States, especially the development partners for continued and adequate funding of these projects.

Mr. Chairman

The G-77 and China wishes to recall the Joint Ministerial Statement at the 46th session of the CND, especially the new commitments contained in the Statement, which were aimed at meeting the goals and targets set out in the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session. We urge the Secretariat to take note of these new commitments and to follow-up on them appropriately.

Mr. Chairman

On the agenda item on drug demand reduction, the G-77 and China is concerned about the drug liberalization policies of some Member States in breach of the three Narcotic Conventions, which could promote drug abuse and fuel supply and trafficking of illicit drugs. The Group wishes to reiterate that the ultimate aim of the three Narcotic Conventions is to reduce harm globally, and that national harm reduction programmes carried out by some Member States should not be considered as complementary or substitutes for demand reduction programmes. The Group calls on all States to adhere strictly to the provisions of the three conventions.

The G-77 and China welcomes the establishment of the HIV/AIDS Unit within the Division of Operations at the UNODC, which will integrate the activities of the Office on HIV/AIDS issues. In addition, the Group expresses the hope that the UNODC will give priority attention to addressing risk-taking behavior resulting from drug abuse within the context of the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction (GA resolution S-20/3 annex) and in particular, the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (GA resolution S-26/2 annex), which calls for the provision of a wide range of prevention programmes aimed at reducing risk-taking behavior.

Mr. Chairman

On the agenda item on illicit drug traffic and supply, the G-77 and China wishes to recall that the Joint Ministerial Segment of the 46th session urged Member States to prevent proliferation of sources of licit opium. If this appeal is not heeded, this has the potential to disturb the delicate balance between supply and demand for licit opium, which had been achieved over the years through the efforts of INCB. Also, ECOSOC Resolution 2003/40 on this subject, which was adopted on the recommendation of the CND, specifically underscored the need to maintain this balance. The Group notes with deep concern that the actions of some Member States have upset this balance, as contained in the INCB report for 2003. We urge all States wishing to cultivate opium for therapeutic purposes to exercise utmost caution and, to adhere to the established system in order to prevent proliferation of sources of licit opium.

The Group welcomes the report of the Cannabis Survey conducted by Morocco in cooperation with UNODC in 2003. This survey is a significant tool for the analysis, data collection and an assessment of the major factors behind the rise of cannabis cultivation. Indeed, it has shown the urgent need for the international community to redouble its efforts in combating the cultivation and trafficking of cannabis. It is in this connection that the Group recommends to the UNODC to conduct a global survey of cannabis, before the forty-eighth session of the Commission and strongly supports the African Group draft resolution on the control of cultivation and trafficking of Cannabis in Africa.

Mr. Chairman

The connection between consuming and producing countries is transit countries. We note with deep concern the dramatic increase in the abuse of various types of drugs that has developed along transit trafficking routes, thereby creating lucrative markets in transit countries. This development has led to flourishing of transnational organized crime, increased terrorism and in some instances has even affected governance in transit countries and along the trafficking routes.

The G-77 and China re-affirms its conviction that the fight against demand and supply of drugs requires a combination of preventive and enforcement measures and a need for cooperation in tackling the problems of States most affected by transit of drugs. It is in this connection that the Group reiterates its call upon international organizations and developed countries, in the spirit and principle of shared responsibility, to provide new and additional financial resources and technical assistance, including alternative development programmes and preventive alternative development projects, to drug producing countries and transit countries in their efforts in fighting the drug problem.

Mr. Chairman

At various occasions, the G-77 and China had sought to know the issues being discussed by the Paris Pact and whether the resources of the UNODC were being committed to the meetings of the Paris Pact. The Group has difficulties in understanding the reasons for the lack of transparency that the Secretariat has created around the Paris Pact, even when the members of the Pact had requested that other countries be invited to its meetings. The Group is confident that the Secretariat would find it necessary to brief the Commission on the activities of the Paris Pact.

Mr. Chairman

The G-77 and China wishes to recall that the amount allocated to some regions in our Group in the 2004-2005 biennial budget had declined in quantitative and in real terms, especially in Africa. The Group notes the efforts of the UNODC to secure more funds for projects in our countries and appealed to development partners not to relent but to further assist and give the UNODC certain measure of flexibility in the use of earmarked funds. Therefore, the Group encourages UNODC and the major development partners to allocate and implement a more balanced programme based on equal geographical distribution. In addition, the Group calls on the Secretariat to allocate more resources to INCB and to ensure that the priorities set by the CND are given higher share of its regular budget.

I thank you.