



STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA AT THE FIFTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS, 12-16 MARCH 2007, DELIVERED BY H. E. AMBASSADOR SAYED GALAL E. ELAMIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SUDAN

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the G-77 and China. I am pleased to convey our satisfaction in seeing you presiding over the 50th 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.

Before presenting some observations and comments on the issues of importance to the G77 and China, I would like to seize the opportunity of this 50th session of the CND to pay tribute to the work, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs has been undertaking in the reinforcement of the legal framework in the field of drugs as well as the role of the INCB in the field of control, during the last 49 sessions. Much has been achieved and still a lot remains to be done so as to reach the objectives the International Community has set up in the fight against illicit drugs.

The Commission will have the opportunity, during its next session, to examine in a detailed manner the outcomes, the results and the progress achieved by the Members States in meeting the goals and targets set out in the Political Declaration adopted by the Assembly at its twentieth special session. In this regard, the Group wishes to recall that actions against the world drug problem is a common and shared responsibility requiring an integrated and balanced approach in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman,

The choice of the thematic debate on new challenges for controlling precursor chemicals is timely. The figures on the new trends, patterns and methods of trafficking in precursors, as revealed in the biennial reports on ATS and precursor control as well as the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) report are matters of concern to the Group. The G-77 and China expresses the hope that the thematic debate provides the opportunity for Members states to exchange views and suggest some responses to the new challenges posed by the threat of chemical precursors diversion.

The trafficking and supply of precursors for manufacture of drugs continues to be a challenge in the global fight against illicit drugs. The shift towards abuse of synthetic drugs, especially amphetamines, in many parts of the globe, further compounds the problem. Hence, there is an urgent need to strengthen controls over precursors. On the other hand, an overwhelmingly large share of the total precursors manufactured is used for legitimate industrial and medical uses. Hence, the need to strike the right balance in regulation preventing diversion while not affecting legitimate trade and use.

The G-77 and China calls upon all 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 projects Prism, Cohesion and PEN online set by the INCB, that have already yielded satisfactory results.

The Group of 77 and China expresses its appreciation to the INCB for reporting on illicit opium, cocaine and cannabis production. The Group requests the INCB to continue reporting on the sources of precursors to

the major heroin, cocaine and amphetamine producing regions and to identify the weak links in the control of precursors.

The Group expresses its concern that the abuse of prescription drugs has already surpassed abuse of traditional illicit drugs such as heroin and cocaine in some parts of the world as stated in the INCB 2006 Report. In this context, the Group requests the INCB to closely follow and report on the development of this trend.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group has examined the biennial reports on the follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly regarding the progress made by Member States to fulfil their commitments for demand reduction, judicial cooperation, money laundering, and alternative development, ATS and precursors (as contained in doc no. 2007/2/Add1-6).

The Group notes that while the legal and procedural framework exists in many States, numerous difficulties remain in the implementation of all the measures and more particularly those related to legal, procedural and technical aspects with respect to international cooperation. In this context, the G-77 and China attaches great importance to international cooperation and urges Member States to take the necessary steps to strengthen their cooperation in this regard.

The Group also calls upon the international community to enhance its efforts at addressing the problem of the laundering of money derived from illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as well as from other crimes.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the reports on the World Situation on Drug Trafficking and Abuse, the Group notes the decline of opium poppy cultivation in some countries of South and Southeast Asia. However, the Group expresses its deep concern about the growth in the illicit cultivation, production and trafficking of opiates in Afghanistan, which have reached its highest level.

The Group reviewed the Executive Director's report on the "Implementation of the Paris Pact" and took note of the recommendations of the Moscow Ministerial Conference in June 2006 on provision of continued assistance to Afghanistan, strengthening co-operation between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries as well as the need for a balanced approach in tackling both drug supply and demand issues.

The Group, therefore, calls upon the International Community, in particular developed countries, to provide new and additional financial resources and technical assistance to Afghanistan as requested in the ECOSOC Resolution 2006/32 of 27 July 2006.

The Group, having in mind the crucial role that regional cooperation play in supply reduction and combating drug trafficking, requests that new and additional financial resources and technical assistance be also extended to the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan and transit countries.

Indeed, the Group considers that international cooperation should be strengthened to tackle the problems that all transit countries are facing as they constitute the main link between producers and consumers countries. The Group notes with deep concern the dramatic increase in the abuse of various types of illicit drugs, that has developed along transit trafficking routes, thereby creating lucrative markets in transit countries.

The increase in drug production and trafficking has led to increase, in some cases, in transnational organized crime and terrorism along the trafficking routes as well as in countries of origin and destination.

The Group of 77 and China emphasizes the usefulness of regional cooperation for the exchange of necessary information aimed at quick identification and dismantling of the illicit drug trafficking networks.

The Group expresses its concern regarding cannabis, which continues to be the most widely produced, trafficked and consumed plant-based drug worldwide. The G77 and China looks forward to the results of the UNODC global study on global illicit cannabis plant cultivation, potential production and marketing, as well as the health impact, which will undoubtedly enable the international community to devote greater attention to cannabis and take action accordingly.

In this regard, the Group considers it important that the UNODC implement programmes to curb cannabis illicit production, including through alternative development programmes.

Mr. Chairman,

As for alternative development, the G-77 and China attaches special importance to integral and sustainable alternative development and preventive alternative development projects in the context of drug control as well as in the wider context of development and in the strategies of poverty reduction.

In this framework, the Group of 77 and China welcomes the report of the Executive Director of Strengthening international cooperation for alternative development, including preventive alternative development, with due regard to environmental protection and shares its concerns for the lack of stable technical and financial resources to reinforce those programs. The G-77 and China calls on the development partners to provide greater resources to this end.

The G-77 and China wishes to highlight that reduction in cultivation of illicit crops to be sustainable, requires in the frame of shared responsibility, increased market access for alternative development products as well as appropriate financial and technical resources. The G-77 and China calls on the international community to make greater efforts to secure markets to those products.

The G-77 and China welcomes the fact that Alternative Development including preventive alternative development constitutes a component of the strategy of UNODC. Therefore, the Group encourages the UNODC to continue to use its advocacy role to encourage multilateral development agencies and bilateral donors to take AD and preventive alternative development into consideration, when implementing programmes.

The UNODC should also continue working on capacity building, promoting synergies and serving as an interface and catalyst of alternative development responses. In this context, the G-77 and China attaches a great importance to the role of UNODC in mobilizing resources to make possible AD and preventive alternative development initiatives and to respond to the world drug problem.

The Group of 77 and China notes that despite lower production of opiate raw materials, in 2005 and 2006 the stocks and the raw materials available continued to be sufficient to cover the expected demand. The Group of 77 and China therefore urges governments of producing countries to maintain future production at the levels currently planned and to avoid excessive stocks.

The Group of 77 and China appeal to all governments to comply with the ECOSOC resolution 2006/34 and to enact enabling legislation to prevent and prohibit the proliferation of sites used for production of opiate raw materials.

Mr. Chairman, The Group of 77 and China welcomes the Medium Term Strategy of the UNODC for the period 2008-2011, and expresses its appreciation to the Chairpersons of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for the extensive consultations they held

within the framework of the open-ended informal Group of Friends. This strategy should be reflected in the Strategic Framework and implemented through the consolidated biennial budgets for the periods 2008/2009 and 2010/2011. These biennial budgets should provide the core resources for the UNODC to carry out its functions and to enable the implementation of the respective mandates and policies set by Member States.

The Group of 77 and China reaffirms its position that resources approved by the CND should be commensurate with all the mandated programmes and activities in order to ensure their full implementation. There should not be any arbitrary decision to lower the level of resources or to impose an artificial ceiling, which could have an adverse impact on effective programme delivery. The Group calls upon the Executive Director to present proposals that meet the mandated programmes and activities set by the CND.

The Group of 77 and China notes, once more, the continuation of the alarming over-reliance on extra-budgetary resources and in particular earmarked funding which has led to highly fragmented, unpredictable, constrained funding patterns, and encouraged duplication and inefficiency. In addition, it limits the UNODC ability to make strategic decisions and leads to donor priorities rather than multilateral mandates determining some of the actions of UNODC.

The Group reiterates that the core activities of UNODC should be funded from the regular budget. While not discouraging provision of voluntary funding to the UNODC, there should not be too heavy reliance on the extra-budgetary resources to finance the core activities.

The Group considers that the inclusion of phrases such as "within existing resources" is in violation of current budgetary practices and procedures, as well as of General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 45/248B. We are of the view that the CND should refrain from the inclusion of such phrases in its decisions and resolutions.

The Group of 77 and China underscores the importance of determining technical assistance programs in accordance with national and regional priorities to ensure Country ownership.

The Group underlines the importance of conducting consultations with the host and concerned Member States before considering the opening or closing of Field Offices.

Thank you very much for your attention.