



European Drug Conference: International co-operation

International co-operation - Presentation by Mr. Sandro Calvani, Representative, United Nations International Drug Control Programme UNDCP), at the International Conference on Drugs policy in Europe (February 29)

1. Introduction

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished delegates,

Good afternoon. It is an honour to address you. I represent the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). Together with the Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP) it constitutes the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP) based in Vienna, Austria.

This workshop on international co-operation in drug control is the last one during these two days of deliberations, but it certainly does not make it less important. The problems related to illicit drug crop cultivation, drug trafficking and drug abuse are by definition transnational. It is UNDCP's role, in collaboration with counterparts all over the world, to facilitate effective policies to confront this menace.

2. United Nations General Assembly Special Session to counter the world drug problem: a historical breakthrough built a unique worldwide consensus.

In the summer of 1998, 150 high-level delegations, which included 32 Heads of State or Government came together in New York for the special session of the UN General Assembly to counter the World Drug Problem. Also, many European Heads of State and Government, and the European Commission, were present indicating their support and commitment. The EC, the Council

of the EU and the European Parliament fully endorsed the decisions taken by the world leaders in New York.

The Special Session constituted a major breakthrough in international drug control and the decisions taken there guide today, not only the work that UNDCP is doing around the world in order to assist governments with their drug control efforts, but also other important political documents like the newly adopted EU Action Plan on Drugs 2000-2004, which I am sure you are all familiar with.

In New York the International community agreed for the first time on the importance of demand reduction and on the necessity of adopting a balanced approach, addressing all aspects of drug control simultaneously. The European Member States were protagonist decision makers in the preparatory process leading to this significant consensus.

As a result of this consensus, all the nations of the world at the UN Special Session adopted a number of documents which set out priorities for international drug control by establishing specific targets dates and by stipulating the special role entrusted to UNDCP.

First there is

A political Declaration, which basically recognizes the shared responsibility of all States and outlines their political commitment to overcome the world drug problem by reducing both the illicit supply and demand for drugs. Five- and ten-year goals (i.e. 2003 and 2008) are specified in a number of areas, such as money-laundering, judicial co-operation, demand reduction and the elimination of illicit crops.

There was **(II) the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction**, which indicates the general direction of action needed, priorities and dependencies, such as gender, culture, high-risk groups etc. and finally there was,

(III) an omnibus resolution on Measures to Enhance International Co-operation to Counter the World Drug Problem that comprises five separate parts:

- (I) Action plan against Illicit Manufacture, Trafficking and Abuse of Amphetamine-type Stimulants and their Precursors.** The Action Plan on amphetamines sets 2003 as the target date for the establishment or strengthening of national legislation and programmes against the illicit manufacture, trafficking and abuse of amphetamine-type

stimulants and their precursors and calls for action to raise awareness of the problem, to reduce demand, to provide information, to limit the supply, and to strengthen the control system for them.

- (II) **The control of precursors.** Measures to prevent the illicit manufacture, import, export, trafficking and distribution of precursors used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances include calling for the adoption, implementation and review of control instruments, the exchange of information among States on the movement of precursor chemicals, improved data collection, and systematic reporting to the International Narcotics Control Board.
- (III) **Measures to promote judicial cooperation** include recommendations on extradition, mutual legal assistance, the transfer of proceedings, other forms of cooperation and training, controlled delivery and illicit traffic by sea.
- (IV) The text on **Countering money-laundering** calls upon all States to implement the provisions of the 1988 Convention and other international instruments by establishing appropriate legislative frameworks and effective financial and regulatory regimes.
- (V) **Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development**

UNDCP is a small decentralized organisation with a total of 180 professional staffs worldwide at its 22 Field Offices, its Headquarters Vienna and its Liaison Offices in New York and here in Brussels. It operates in close coordination with the UN Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP) and the other UN agencies and Programmes which have complementary mandates in the areas of human rights, governance, sustainable development, public health and social affairs.

If we look at how UNDCP spends its money, approximately 13% of the resources allocated in the 2000-2001 budget will go to policy, support, legislation and advocacy, 25% is allocated for prevention and reduction of drug abuse, almost 30% is for suppression of illicit trafficking and finally, close to 32% will be spent on programmes to eliminate illicit crops through alternative development.

These figures are available in the background information by UNDCP [**available from HNN**].

Due to time constraints, I will today elaborate only on what we have done to implement the decisions from the Special Session that concern the prevention and reduction of drug abuse and programmes to eliminate illicit crops through alternative development.

3. The Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction: a helmsman for the world drug prevention policies

The Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction advocates that responses to drug abuse should be based on a **regular assessment of the drug problem**. Those responses should also build on knowledge acquired from research as well as lessons derived from past programmes, the so-called **best practices**. It is primarily in those two areas that UNDCP is concentrating its efforts to advise and assist Member States in their implementation of the Declaration.

3.1 The global programme for assessing the magnitude of drug abuse is the single most important tool to assess world drug trends

Therefore UNDCP has developed the global programme for assessing the magnitude of drug abuse which was launched in 1999. It will assist approximately 100 countries to develop know-how and institutional capacity for drug abuse data collection. The assistance, which will be delivered through a network of regionally based epidemiology advisors, will range from advice on how to analyse and report on available data to scientific and financial support for conducting drug abuse epidemiological research. With better data the countries will be able to more efficiently plan their national demand reduction policies. With a view to ensuring that data sets are compatible, the global programme for assessing the magnitude of drug abuse will seek consensus with other relevant organisations, such as for instance the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, on common sets of indicators, definitions and measures.

This 5-year programme has a budget of US\$22 million. The pace at which the assistance will be delivered is, however, contingent upon the availability of funds. No EU contribution to this global endeavour has been announced so far.

4. The Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development is already obtaining promising results

Another decision from the UN Special Session, which I would like to elaborate on is the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development where Member States agreed to eliminate or significantly reduce narcotic crops by 2008. The content addresses the monitoring of illicit crops as well as alternative development projects.

4.1 The global illicit crops monitoring programme will finally make available an independent monitoring tool on drug production

It is difficult to determine the impact of the work that we all do, nationally and internationally, if we do not have accurate benchmarks. Currently we are creating a fresh pool of ideas by incorporating available new technology. Satellites, the Internet and new areas of research have revolutionised international drug control and have developed the global illicit crops monitoring programme. It

currently focuses on Afghanistan, Bolivia, Colombia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Peru. Through a partnership arrangement with the European Space Agency, UNDCP carried out several assessment and programming missions in 1999 in the six priority countries to identify their technical assistance needs for the establishment of national monitoring mechanisms. Consequently, with our help, many countries will soon be able to make their own estimates of narcotic crop cultivation and UNDCP is spearheading the process by putting national data into global cultivation estimates. The European Space Agency has been a committed and enthusiast partner in this joint venture. Support from the EU and the EC is expected, though not yet certain.

4.2 Alternative development is the wave of the future

Twenty-five years of experience has taught us that it is the best approach to breaking economic dependence of farmers growing illicit crops. We no longer talk of crop substitution as the simple solution. Alternative development is a more comprehensive approach. It is about whole communities lifting themselves up by their own bootstraps. We can help by providing access to markets by building new roads, better hospitals and schools - the diversification of economies.

Two decades ago there were a band of opium poppy producing countries stretching from the Middle East to East Asia. In country after country, the model worked. There are spectacular results in Northern Thailand, in the Swat and Dir Districts of Pakistan, in Turkey, in Vietnam, in the Chapare region of Bolivia, and in Peru. By the way, I have observed two weeks ago the bare facts of alternative development policies in Northern Thailand. The reality is there, more impressive than any possible optimism. It is not a slogan: illicit crop elimination can be done, it has been done, it works, people are happy with it. But the conditions of success are not optional: leadership, people's participation, sizeable financing must be provided.

In the regions I have mentioned, the areas of illicit crops have been integrated into the mainstream of national economies. In achieving this several donors and international organisations and NGOs have played a role. The development process opened up benefits to a greater number of people. Illicit cultivation is now almost non-existent in these countries. Therefore, the solutions are now in hand to break the economic cycle behind illegal cultivation. But there is a need for full support of the international community to complete the task.

4.3 Reducing opium production: the remaining task is the most difficult.

Where does that leave us? Illicit cultivation of opium poppies is now concentrated almost entirely in two countries, Afghanistan and Myanmar. In both cases, we are unable to fully apply the alternative development strategy for other merely political reasons. But the problem has now been isolated. We are convinced that alternative development could work if the conditions were ripe.

The results of our latest Opium Poppy Survey in Afghanistan are not as positive as hoped. Ideal weather conditions and an increase in the acreage under cultivation have resulted in a record harvest in 1999. The 4.600 metric tonnes of raw opium was 70 per cent higher than 1998's harvest. Afghanistan alone now accounts for more than 75 per cent of the world's opium production. Such record output is cause for great concern in the international community. It is however due to the political and security situation in the country not at the moment possible to have a major impact in the country.

But we cannot just sit on our hands. We don't have the luxury of shrugging our shoulders and waiting for the situation to change. And, therefore, we are making, in collaboration with various member States, every effort to contain the problem. I am very pleased with the work we are doing with the Central Asian republics and there we are currently strengthening our cooperation with the European Commission. For example, we are working with Tajikistan to increase drug law enforcement capabilities. More seizures of opium at the Tajik or Iranian border means less heroin in Dushanbe, Amsterdam and Chicago. A security belt, consisting of the seven countries bordering on Afghanistan, will prevent the spillover of opium cultivation and heroin production to neighbouring countries. I urge the international community to support a political position that will zero in on the seriousness of the Afghan drug situation.

The second largest opium production is in Myanmar. One thousand two hundred (1.200) metric tonnes is estimated to be produced in the areas of the border with China and Thailand. While UNDCP has been engaged in effective alternative development programmes in cooperation with the Wa people, all the other partners has suspended any form of assistance to all Burmese counterparts, be they the Junta or the hill tribes and other peoples living in border areas. I am convinced that there is need of talk and listening towards their expectations. If the international community does not wish to listen, neither the Burmese will.

4.4 Reducing cocaine production is a credible success story

Turning to cocaine production. The Andean countries have developed business plans using alternative development as a tool to break cocaine's economic dependence. Peru and Bolivia are already achieving remarkable results with the assistance of international donors. In 1999 Bolivia eliminated 14.000 hectares, surpassing its own record. Bolivia started the new millennium with barely 12.000 hectares of illicit coca. Less than one-sixth of the area under cultivation ten years ago. This is an unprecedented achievement and deserves worldwide recognition. Similarly, coca cultivation in Peru has decreased from a peak of 129.000 hectares in 1992 to 51.000 hectares in 1998.

If not for the current situation inside Colombia, I am confident that we would have seen the same kind o results there. President Pastrana and his government are committed to a peaceful solution of the civil conflict. Three months ago in the European Parliament, President Pastrana made a call for strong international support to the consultations that might end violence and production of illicit drugs. And I know that ridding the country of coca and opium is a top priority. But international

support, financial and political, for alternative development in the Andean countries is more essential than ever. We urge that a fully cooperative strategic partnership be developed. We must continue to push for a balanced approach to the problems, while insisting on respect for human rights and the Rule of Law. Breaking the economic dependence of drugs is the best guarantee that replanting will not occur.

5. Also other initiatives are equally important

The Special Session is having an impact. We can point to some real and significant action growing out of the consensus that was reached. As a matter of fact, there is much more than time allows me to cover in detail, but for the sake of variety, I would like to mention that new initiatives have also been launched in the area of **money laundering**, precursor control and the vital **area of legislation**. In addition, numerous activities are of course being done at the level of our Member States themselves, bilaterally or through cooperation in regional governmental organisations like the EU, the OAS or SADC.

6. Conclusions and recommendations: let us build an effective global alliance of the willing

In conclusion, the UN Special Session put an end to the finger pointed and buried once and for all the myths that drugs are produced in some parts of the world and consumed elsewhere. The highest rates of abuse for some drugs are now found in developing countries while Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) are largely produced in industrialized countries. We are now moving from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. And we know that even the costliest policy of prevention is far cheaper, in lives and in resources, than law enforcement.

UNDCP continues to play an important role in giving technical assistance to governments in this area and in taking the lead in research and advocacy. And it is indeed essential that the approach is global. Drug trafficking and all the related criminal activities, often called 'uncivil forces', continue to threaten the democratic and economic development in a number of countries around the world. These problems do not accept and know no borders. According to UNDP figures from 1999, the illegal drug trade, supplying 200 million customers, is worth around \$400 billion, or 8% of the world trade, that is roughly the same as textiles (7.5%) and gas and oil (8.6%). And as much as 80% of the organized crime worldwide is estimated to be linked to drug trafficking.

In Europe citizens are aware of the transnational nature of the drug problem and they have expressed their concern. In the public opinion poll, Eurobarometer number 50, EU citizens rank the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking in terms of priority areas. As many as 89% believe that it should be a priority for the European Union. This places fight against organised crime and drug trafficking as the second most important issue - only superseded by the fight against unemployment which scores at 92% in terms of being an issue that EU should pay attention to. There is a note on this survey in the background information provided by UNDCP.

The United Nations Special Session on the World Drug Problem was indeed an extraordinary event and, as I have mentioned, many European countries played a leading role in this exercise. However, for all of us to reach the target dates established for 2003 and 2008, continued commitment both at the political and financial level is a prerequisite.

In terms of political support, the new EU Action Plan to Combat Drugs 2000-2004 has reiterated its continued dedication to the principles agreed at the UN Special Session. And also the Tampere Conclusions, a recent report by the Economic and Social Committee and, last but not least, the European Parliament has, in its recent report by Mrs. Giannakou-Koutsikou, repeated the commitment to the UN Special Session Political Declaration.

The European Parliament, in its report, however, states (in para. C) that:

"...it is not instruments, programmes, or structures which are most lacking, but rather strong overtly unambiguous political resolve in areas such as external policy, the coordination and strict monitoring agreed efforts and a sizeable budgetary commitment, where as, inter alia, the resources earmarked in the Community budget for the fight against drugs, some Euro 31 million for social measures and barely Euro 24 million for all cooperation measures in the 1998 budget, according to the data presented in this action plan, are woefully inadequate in comparison with the challenges faced."

This represents only 0.06% of EU budget for that year (Euro 55 million of a total 1998 budget of Euro 91.012.987.786). Even though many activities are implemented at the level of EU Member States and not as Union policies, this is still a very small figure, especially when taking into account that the citizens of Europe rank the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking as the second most important issue.

In its report, the European Parliament also calls for:

"the EU development cooperation policy to be revised as to bring it in line with the Special Session principles" (para P);

and it calls on:

"the Union and Member States to cooperate constructively with the United Nations and UNDCP in particular to apply the special session decisions" (para 22)

This wording cannot be misunderstood: the support is solid, but many more challenges are to be faced in the next years where the EU and EC must be protagonists.

Finally, the European Parliament:

"considers that the EU Action Plan 2000-2004 paints an overly optimistic picture of commitment and performance of the Union and its Member States in combating drugs" (para 1).

The international community, the UN and UNDCP management share most of the same concerns.

In the biennium 1998-99, the EC contribution to the multilateral fight against drugs to implement the UNGASS Plan of Action did not reach Euros 7 million, approximately 5% of the total funding required to execute the Global Plan of Action. For the biennium 2000-2001, the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) has committed a further increase of the budget required, to reach a US\$156 million. Therefore the EC contribution might drop below 2% of the global commitment unless correcting political and administrative decisions are taken.

Approximately 90% of all contributions to UNDCP are voluntary contributions mostly from governments, which enable us to carry out some of the tasks that were assigned to us at the Special Session. IN the background material provided, you will se a table over the financial contributions to UNDCP over the years. The 1988 Convention recommended that a portion of the assets forfeited as a result of convictions in drug-related criminal cases should be turned over to the international fight against drugs. So far, only Luxembourg has followed the suggested plan of using such money to make a positive difference at the international level. We hope that other governments and parliaments will also give serious consideration to that good example.

UNDCP strongly supports and appreciates events like the present conference conducted in the spirit of the Special Session. Rhetoric about the gravity of the situation has its place as a means of alerting people to the risk we face. But as parliamentarians and senior government officials, we have a responsibility to go beyond rhetoric. It is we who establish the policies and assign the resources. We therefore hope that this conference would reiterate the full commitment to the Political Declaration and the resolutions of the Special Session and encourage all EU bodies to strengthen their efforts to build a fully cooperative and strategic partnership with the United Nations as well as other international bodies in international drug control and contributing to making adequate resources available.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the beginning of the 21st century the world faces two fundamental challenges: the first is the elimination of poverty, the second is the putting on check the dark side of globalisation which is now the most important threat to development, peace and democracy. These two agendas may be seen as the two sides of the same coin. A drug-free world, the rule of law, development, peace and

participatory democracy will be achieved all together or will not be achieved. And honestly, the task is so big that the two largest international institutions in the world should work hand in hand to achieve it.

Thank you.

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