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Commission on Narcotic Drugs

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Agenda item 5 (d)

Implementation of the international drug control treaties: international cooperation to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes while preventing their diversion

**Belgium,* Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Norway:
revised draft resolution**

Promoting awareness-raising, education, training and data collection as part of a comprehensive approach to ensuring access to and the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, including for the treatment of children, and ensuring their rational use

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Recalling the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol,¹ in which the parties recognized that the medical use of narcotic drugs continued to be indispensable for the relief of pain and suffering and that adequate provision must be made to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs for such purposes,

Recalling also the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971,² in which it is recognized that the use of psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes is indispensable and that their availability for such purposes should not be unduly restricted,

Recalling further the commitments made in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem³ of 2009, the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action⁴ and the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, held in 2016, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union.

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 976, No. 14152.

² Ibid., vol. 1019, No. 14956.

³ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 8 (E/2009/28)*, chap. I, sect. C.

⁴ Ibid., 2014, *Supplement No. 8 (E/2014/28)*, chap. I, sect. C.



drug problem”,⁵ to ensure access to and the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while concurrently preventing their diversion into illicit channels, pursuant to the international drug control conventions,

Recalling the Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of Our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem,⁶ adopted at its sixty-second session, in 2019, in which Member States reiterated their resolve to ensure access to and the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, including for the relief of pain and suffering, and address existing barriers in that regard, including affordability,

Reiterating that efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing, and more specifically that efforts to increase access to internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes contribute to the achievement of target 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which is focused on access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,⁷ article 25 of which provides that all children are entitled to special care and assistance, and recalling the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁸ in particular article 24, in which its States parties recognized the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health,

Recalling also its resolution 63/3 of 6 March 2020 on promoting awareness-raising, education and training as part of a comprehensive approach to ensuring access to and the availability of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes and improving their rational use,

Recognizing the importance of appropriately mainstreaming gender and age perspectives in drug-related policies and programmes,

Recognizing also that the treatment of children involves unique challenges, including with regard to appropriate dosage forms and formulations and the monitoring of safety and efficacy in particular age ranges, and that the data required to adequately monitor access to age-appropriate paediatric medicines are insufficient,

Recognizing further the significance of developing and utilizing scientific evidence-based practices and domestic clinical guidelines relating to the medical needs and care of children, as well as the importance of the international exchange of best practices in this regard,

Concerned about the lack of access to quality, safe, effective and affordable medicines for children in appropriate dosage forms and formulations and the problems associated with ensuring the rational use of children’s medicines in many countries,

Expressing concern about the persistent disparities in progress made with regard to the availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, and emphasizing the need to address affordability, at the national and international levels, as part of a comprehensive approach in order to be able to ensure quality, safe and effective controlled medicines for all patients in need,

Bearing in mind the necessity of enhancing the availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes while preventing their diversion into illicit channels and non-medical use,

⁵ General Assembly resolution S-30/1, annex.

⁶ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2019, Supplement No. 8 (E/2019/28)*, chap. I, sect. B.

⁷ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

⁸ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

Taking note of the supplement to the *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2022* entitled *No Patient Left Behind: Progress in Ensuring Adequate Access to Internationally Controlled Substances for Medical and Scientific Purposes*,⁹ in which the Board reported that the lack of training and awareness among health-care professionals in some Member States remained one of the major obstacles,

Emphasizing the important role of the scientific community, non-governmental organizations, health-care professionals and civil society in improving access to and the availability of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes,

Bearing in mind the important work and concerns of the World Health Assembly with regard to improving access to and the availability of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, particularly for the relief of pain and suffering, and, in particular, on strengthening palliative care as a component of comprehensive care throughout the life course, on addressing the shortage of global medicines and vaccines and on cancer prevention and control in the context of an integrated approach,

Acknowledging the expertise and support provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Narcotics Control Board and the World Health Organization, within their respective mandates, in this area,

Noting with appreciation the joint global programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization and the Union for International Cancer Control on access to controlled drugs for medical purposes, while preventing diversion and abuse, and the global learning project implemented by the International Narcotics Control Board on improving the implementation of the international drug control conventions through strengthening capacity for the control of illicit activities related to narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals,

Welcoming the “Access and availability” initiative, led by the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its sixty-fifth session, with the stated objective of ensuring that no patient is left behind, and emphasizing the need for accelerated global action following the joint call to action on scaling up the implementation of international drug policy commitments on improving the availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes at the sixty-fifth session of the Commission,

1. *Reaffirms* all relevant international drug policy commitments, in particular those related to ensuring the availability of and access to controlled substances exclusively for medical and scientific purposes while preventing their diversion into illicit channels and non-medical use;

2. *Calls upon* Member States, within their means, to increase the availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, particularly for children, in a comprehensive manner, including by addressing issues related to affordability, as well as other existing barriers in this regard, such as legislation, regulatory systems, health-care systems, the training of health-care professionals, education, awareness-raising, estimates, assessments and reporting, benchmarks for the consumption of substances under control, and international cooperation and coordination;

3. *Urges* Member States to take into account the specific needs of children when assessing, developing and implementing domestic policies to improve access to and the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes;

4. *Calls upon* Member States to establish, strengthen and use data and information systems, as appropriate and within their means, for collecting disaggregated data on access to controlled substances for medical and scientific

⁹ E/INCB/2022/1/Supp.1.

purposes throughout all levels of their health-care systems and, where appropriate, encompassing data on availability, usage and pricing;

5. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and invites the International Narcotics Control Board, the World Health Organization and other relevant United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, within existing resources and their respective mandates, to assist Member States, upon their request, in strengthening and developing their capacity to collect high-quality data on access and availability;

6. *Encourages* Member States, in accordance with their domestic laws, to include tailored education and training on the rational use of controlled substances for medical purposes in the curricula of all education programmes for health-care professionals, such as those for physicians, pharmacists and nurses, as well as in continuing medical education programmes, taking into consideration such factors as age and gender, as appropriate, with specific attention on the needs and circumstances of children, in order to address misconceptions related to pain, promote non-stigmatizing attitudes towards the rational use of controlled substances for medical purposes, and respond to relevant health conditions, including mental health needs;

7. *Also encourages* Member States to develop and use scientific evidence-based practices and domestic clinical guidelines relating to the medical needs and care of children, to support paediatricians and other health professionals in delivering appropriate and essential health care to children, and to promote the exchange of best practices between Member States in this regard;

8. *Further encourages* Member States to promote the active engagement and participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector, such as the scientific community, academia, non-governmental organizations, civil society, health-care professionals and community-led organizations, in improving access to and availability of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, including, where appropriate and in accordance with domestic legislation, in raising awareness of and improving the acceptance and understanding of the rational use of controlled substances for scientific and medical purposes, including for children, as well as to promote non-stigmatizing attitudes towards the rational use of controlled substances, including for children;

9. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and invites the International Narcotics Control Board, the World Health Organization and other relevant United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to develop technical guidance, and requests the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to support the World Health Organization, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, in developing and updating guidelines for the rational use of controlled substances, with attention to the specific needs of children, in order to equip health-care professionals with the knowledge, skills and confidence that they need to prescribe controlled substances when clinically indicated;

10. *Also requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and invites the International Narcotics Control Board, to collaborate with the World Health Organization and other relevant United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, to continue to strengthen and improve their inter-agency cooperation in this area and, within their respective mandates, to continue to provide multidisciplinary support to Member States, in particular with regard to education, training and awareness-raising, including the provision of objective information, on the essential role and rational use of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, with attention to the needs of children;

11. *Calls upon* Member States to continue to work through the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to enhance, within their means, access to and the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, in line with all their

relevant international drug policy commitments, and to accelerate implementation in this regard;

12. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to report to the Commission at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the work of and including the collaboration of the Office with the International Narcotics Control Board and the World Health Organization, within existing reporting obligations;

13. *Invites* Member States and other donors to provide extrabudgetary resources for these purposes, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations.
