CND Res.2(VII). Scientific research on narcotics

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Having considered the progress to date of the international programme of scientific research being carried on under Economic and Social Council resolutions 159 IIC(VII) and 246 F(IX) into the problem of determining the origin of opium seized from the illicit traffic and of assaying opium for morphine and codeine,

1. Decides to draw the Council's attention to the following considerations relating to the conduct of the research:
   
   (a) The governments of most States in which opium is produced have played an active part in the research programme by sending opium samples to the Secretariat's Opium Distribution Centre. In order, however, that the research may be continued and extended to cover all types of opium produced in the world, it would be desirable for the Council again to urge governments to supply such additional samples, including samples of seized opium, as may be requested by the Secretary-General from time to time;

   (b) The Commission considers that the tests for determining the origin of seized opium have now been sufficiently developed to allow for a beginning being made in putting them to practical use. It desires to propose that when seizures of opium from the illicit traffic are under investigation, the Secretariat should be authorized to examine samples of such opium by arrangement with the authorities making the seizure, and subsequently to notify the Commission of its laboratory findings. The Commission is of the opinion that the examination of seizures should not, however, be allowed to interfere with the fundamental research work which must at the present stage remain the chief objective of the international programme;

   (c) At the present time, the Secretariat has a very limited scientific staff available for opium research and uses laboratory space and facilities provided by the United States. The Commission understands that no extension of the Secretariat's laboratory work is possible under present conditions, and accordingly considers that measures to remedy this situation should be taken as soon as practicable. It further considers that means should be provided to enable the laboratory staff to visit the national institutions taking part in the international research programme;

   (d) The results of the present research programme have, in the Commission's view, already clearly demonstrated the value, for the control of narcotic drugs, of international scientific research undertaken and co-ordinated by the United Nations. The Commission foresees that the importance of this work will steadily increase and that, in addition to work on opium, a permanent United Nations narcotics laboratory could, for example, handle the important task of developing methods for the analysis of adulterated illicit narcotics, and for the identification of synthetic narcotics which may find their way into the illicit traffic. The Commission, accordingly, considers that the establishment of such a laboratory on a permanent basis should not be further delayed.

2. Suggests to the Council that in the event of its concurring in the Commission's views on those matters, the Secretary-General should be requested to prepare the draft of the resolution that will be required to put the Council's decisions into effect.