

Resolution 55/6

Developing an international electronic import and export authorization system for licit trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Recalling its resolution 50/7 of 16 March 2007, in which it urged Member States to pay particular attention to security measures concerning import and export documents relating to substances under international control,

Recalling also article 31 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol¹ and article 12 of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971,² which require the issuance of import and export authorizations for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances,

Noting that there has been an increased volume of international trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances over the past decade, which has increased the workload of competent national authorities with respect to administering the system of import and export authorization for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances foreseen in the above-mentioned Conventions,

Reaffirming that ensuring access to controlled narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes is one of the fundamental objectives of the international drug control conventions,

Recalling the publication entitled *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board on the Availability of Internationally Controlled Drugs: Ensuring Adequate Access for Medical and Scientific Purposes*,³ a supplement to the report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2010,⁴ which highlighted the fact that the consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in many countries has been below the levels required to ensure the adequate availability of those narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and/or scientific purposes and provided recommendations on how to increase access to those substances while preventing their diversion for illicit purposes,

Recognizing that some Governments have followed the recommendations contained in the above-mentioned publication and taken measures to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes, which will lead to further increases in international trade in those substances and subsequently increase the workload of competent national

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

² *Ibid.*, vol. 1019, No. 14956.

³ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.11.XI.7.

⁴ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2010* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.11.XI.1).

authorities with respect to issuing import and export authorizations for those substances,

Welcoming the fact that technological advancements have enabled some Governments to develop or utilize national systems for issuing import and export authorizations electronically, including the National Drug Control System developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and that those national systems have significantly improved the efficiency of workflow,

Noting that, under the current international agreements, none of those national systems of competent national authorities may directly transmit notifications of authorizations to, or receive them from, their counterparts in other countries and that such notifications of import and export authorizations are still sent in the form of hard-copy printouts,

Concerned that the exchange of paper documents not only increases the risk of forgery, but also increases the workload of receiving authorities and may delay legitimate transactions, as the authorities must verify the authenticity of import or export authorizations,

Reaffirming the need to strengthen security and safety measures concerning import and export authorizations in order to avoid forgery of those authorizations and prevent trafficking in controlled substances,

Welcoming the consideration of the initiative of the International Narcotics Control Board to develop an international electronic import and export authorization system for substances under international control, which would complement existing national electronic systems and facilitate the exchange of import and export authorizations between importing and exporting countries,

Noting that the initiative also represents an opportunity for competent national authorities to exchange information in real time about transactions that need further processing,

Acknowledging that the International Narcotics Control Board, in its report for 2011,⁵ drew the attention of Governments to the positive results of preliminary research and consultations carried out by interested Governments, the Board and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the technical requirements of an international electronic import and export authorization system,

Taking note of the fact that the further development of such an authorization system would rely on voluntary contributions from Member States,

1. *Encourages* Member States to provide the fullest possible financial and political support for developing, maintaining and administering an international electronic import and export authorization system for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

⁵ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2011* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.12.XI.5).

under international control, in accordance with the requirements of the international drug control conventions;

2. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to undertake the development and maintenance of the authorization system, in consultation with interested Governments and the International Narcotics Control Board;

3. *Also requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to consider taking into account domestic requirements while developing the proposed system;

4. *Further requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to assist, upon request, Member States that have not established electronic import and export authorization systems;

5. *Invites* the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board, in carrying out its mandate, to administer the authorization system during the start-up phase in the current biennium, in line with the international drug control conventions, and to report orally on the progress made during the next session of the Commission;

6. *Invites* Member States and other donors to provide extrabudgetary contributions for those purposes, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations.

*9th Plenary Meeting
16 March 2012*