

**DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION ON DRUG CONTROL ABUSE AND
ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING IN AFRICA**

The features of the Plan of Action elaborated herewith comprise five sections - Section I, Declaration; Section II, Main Orientations; Section III, the Role of Regional Economic Communities; Section IV, The Organization of African Unity, Section V, Sources of Finance; and Section VI; Final Considerations.

SECTION 1: DECLARATION

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity,

Aware that a variety of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are in illicit traffic in the continent of Africa and that large quantities of psychotropic substances are diverted into the countries of Africa;

Aware that drug abuse and illicit trafficking have become worldwide phenomena;

Aware that Africa is targeted by drug traffickers who are taking advantage of the socio-economic and political difficulties besetting our different countries and who are converting the continent into an extension of their worldwide network and are in the process developing markets for drug consumption wherever possible, on the continent;

Aware that drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking have increased significantly in the countries of African and that these problems require to be urgently addressed to prevent their further spread;

Aware that the drug abuse problem is multifaceted and requires a disciplinary approach for its resolution;

Aware of the pervasiveness of drug abuse in many African countries and that abuse and misuse of drugs cut across social strata and that youth and school children are the most vulnerable members of our societies;

Aware that international cooperation and mutual assistance are veritable instruments in the fight against drug abuse and trafficking;

Aware that the international drug treaties are important instruments for effective drug control, that States should accede to these treaties as part of their commitment to effective international drug control efforts and that many States in Africa are yet to become parties to these international drug treaties;

Aware that sufficiently trained and motivated personnel are a prerequisite for introduction of effective drug control measures;

Aware that drug abuse and illicit trafficking constitute a major obstacle to the development of our societies to the fullest extent possible and that, furthermore, drug abuse and illicit trafficking affect the people of Africa by alienating human dignity and suppressing freedom of choice;

Recognizing that it is important for States that are parties to the international drug treaties to harmonize their drug laws with the international drug treaties and that States that are not parties to the international drug treaties are also required to harmonize their national drug laws with the international drug treaties in the interest of international drug control;

Recognizing that national drug laws are important instruments in the fight against illicit trafficking;

Recognizing that illicit drug trafficking is a crime against national and international drug laws and that there is a link between illicit drug trafficking and organized crime;

Recognizing that illicit drug traffic undermines civil authorities and governments and poses a threat to political stability;

Recognizing that preventive action against non-medical use, misuse and abuse of drugs is cost effective;

Concerned about the socio-economic consequences of drug abuse because of their particular burden on national development, productivity and social services as drug abuse affects the society, family and individual;

Concerned that the proceeds from illicit drug trafficking when allowed to flow into the national financial institutions can lead to a rapid increase in the money supply and thus put inflationary pressure on the economics of States;

Convinced that to address the suppression of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in the continent requires a joint and concerted effort by all Member States so as to avoid any weak links in our collective endeavour to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking;

Convinced that the successful control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances on the continent calls for a coordinated, comprehensive and integrated approach as well as the commitment of governments at the highest level possible;

Acknowledging our indebtedness to the efforts of Member States thus far in combating the drug problem and convinced that a more systematic and collective effort is required in this regard.

We hereby agree to focus on the following:

- (i) Ensuring coherence of our action in drug control at national, regional and continental levels;
- (ii) Fostering cooperation among countries sharing the same problems, preferably in the same region;
- (iii) Setting up appropriate institutions to address illicit drug trafficking and illicit drug demand in a balanced, integrated and timely manner;
- (iv) Assessing the drug problem in its two aspects of supply and demand of illicit drugs as well as ensuring the capacity of countries to address the problem;
- (v) Integrating drug demand reduction programmes into the national health and social policy and providing, where not available, infrastructures for treatment of drug addicts and their social integration;
- (vi) Adopting the international drug conventions and legal instruments to deal with the problem;
- (vii) Developing human resources;
- (viii) Evaluating periodically the programmes that are being implemented; and
- (ix) Mobilizing resources at national, regional, continental and international levels for carrying out the actions identified.

We also agree on the necessity to act on the basis of Plan of Action built around these key

elements and which is aimed at the establishment of a framework for eradicating drug abuse and illicit trafficking,

To identify in concrete terms priority actions that Governments can take to eradicate drug abuse and illicit trafficking,

To develop cooperation among African countries on those priority actions so that a concerted and comprehensive approach to drug control can be adopted,

To mobilize the community and non-governmental organizations in eradicating drug abuse and illicit trafficking in Africa,

To provide a framework for a coordinated, comprehensive and concerted international approach to eradicating drug abuse and illicit trafficking in Africa, and

To raise the commitment of Governments to addressing the drug problem.

SECTION 11. MAIN ORIENTATIONS

We shall take steps to carry out drug control activities having in mind the main orientations elaborated below.

(a) **Political Will and Commitment**

We shall translate our political will and commitment by the active integration of drug control into national policies by allocating adequate resources for drug control activities;

This will entail the development, adoption and review of the adequacy of the

administrative and regulatory mechanisms introduced for the prevention of drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

(b) Assessment of the Drug Problem

Mechanisms for the collection and analysis of the drug problem are introduced to improve formulation of policies. In addition, remedial measures are introduced to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking and to report adequately to the international organizations;

This will be achieved by collection and collation of data on drug seizures, drugs being abused, the extent of abuse, the trends in drug abuse and illicit trafficking and the profiles of illicit drug traffickers. The data obtained will be used in periodically reviewing measures that are introduced.

(c) Institution Building

National administrations or focal points for drug control are established or strengthened and given adequate resources and authority for control of drugs in an integrated and comprehensive manner.

This will be achieved by establishing or strengthening national administrations for drug control and, where not possible, establish or strengthen inter-ministerial committees for coordinating and monitoring drug control activities. The national administrations, where and when established, are required to be adequately staffed with knowledgeable, competent and committed personnel. Where more than one agency or department exists for drug control activities, they will be encouraged to promote and faster inter/agency/inter/departamental cooperation in the control of drugs nationally. National administrations for drug control will be adequately equipped.

(d) Human Resources Development

National administrations for drug control will be staffed by competent, committed and motivated staff. The national administrations will also have a reservoir of manpower for drug control activities.

This will be achieved by providing training for drug law enforcement officers to detect and interdict drugs in illicit traffic using up-to-date-techniques, where possible. In addition, personnel for drug demand reduction programmes will be trained in all aspects of drug demand reduction, while recognizing the need for specialization. Also, the judiciary will be offered training on the laws specific to control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Furthermore, regular in-service training will be provided to personnel for updating of skills, knowledge and exchange of experience. It is desirable that personnel of national drug administrations are regularly screened for commitment to the goals of the drug administrations.

(e) Suppression of Illicit Drug Traffic

Suppression of illicit drug trafficking is achieved through the adoption and enforcement of adequate national legal systems, providing adequate security throughout the country and establishment of adequately equipped forensic laboratory for identification of substances seized in illicit traffic.

Drug laws are enacted that are consistent with the international drug treaties, adequate number of personnel in drug law enforcement are employed, full time security coverage of ports, land borders and post offices are provided and the drug laws are enforced through arrests, prosecution of suspects and imposition of appropriate penal sanctions. The enhancement of the skills of drug law

enforcement officers and the provision of adequate facilities to detect and interdict narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in illicit traffic are considered a priority. In addition, the capacity of the judiciary to deal effectively with cases of illicit drug trafficking will be improved.

(f) Reducing Illicit Demand for Drugs

Promotion of rational medicinal use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; adoption of measures for preventing drug abuse and misuse and the provision of treatment and social reintegration to drug addicts are given priority consideration.

This will mean the promotion of regulated drug distribution channels by introducing appropriate legislation and enforcing the laws. In addition, preventive education will be promoted through appropriately educating the public by mass education campaigns and the introduction of preventive education into the school curricula. Facilities for early detection of drug addicts, treatment and social reintegration of drug addicts are established.

(g) International Cooperation

Faster improved cooperation among States and between States and relevant international and inter-governmental organizations.

Bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements are entered into with one another and with inter-governmental and international organizations as well as regional economic communities. Also, through cooperation agreements entered into technical assistance in respect of control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances can be sought.

(h) Community Mobilization

Mobilization of communities and non-governmental organizations in drug demand reduction programmes are achieved.

National non-governmental organizations are encouraged to become involved in drug demand reduction programmes and their capacities strengthened to complement Government programmes.

SECTION IV. ROLE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

The main orientations of the Plan of Action require to be translated into concrete actions. In this regard, Member States will need the support and cooperation of the OAU to achieve the desired goal, which is the reduction of vulnerability to the drug threat.

The OAU should take necessary steps to formally enlarge its mandate to include consideration of drug control activities in view of Article 72 (2)(9) of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, 1991, which states that the Community shall undertake to “harmonize their efforts to put an end to the illegal production, trafficking and use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and formulate sensitization and rehabilitation programmes in this field”. A focal point shall be established at the Secretariat for the coordination and monitoring of drug control activities at the continental level and promotion of accession to the international drug treaties by Member States.

This focal point should either function as an independent unit or as part of an existing unit such as the ESCAS Department. The focal point, which shall be staffed by competent personnel, should liaise with the Secretariats of other regional economic communities in respect of drug control activities. The focal point will also have the responsibility of preparing and presenting annual reports of current drug situation on the continent to the meetings of Foreign Affairs’ Ministers and Heads of State and

Government of the OAU. In addition, the focal point will be expected to review and make recommendations on the updating of plan of action for drug control.

The OAU Secretariat will be required to maintain an inventory of African experts in the field of drug control, collate information on institutions that provide relevant training in drug control and disseminate such information to Member States. In addition, it should promote the exchange of experts in drug control between Member States and whenever required, organize seminars/workshops for updating skills of personnel of Member States in drug control activities.

The OAU Secretariat should consider initiating discussions with international and inter-governmental organizations with a view to facilitate the exchange of information required for interdiction of drugs in illicit traffic on the Continent and for the arrest of suspected illicit drug traffickers.

The OAU will be expected to establish a forum for consultations by experts on drug demand reduction programmes as a way of improving knowledge and skills. The cooperation of international organizations such as the UNDCP, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO and the ILO may be required in this respect.

The OAU will consider using its facilities to promote international cooperation in the field of drug control. This can be achieved by the initiation and participation of the OAU at interregional and international meetings on drug control. The OAU can also promote cooperation for mutual assistance with other Member States, regional groupings outside Africa, and international and inter-governmental organizations. In addition, the OAU will be expected to cooperate and collaborate with the UNDCP, UNECA, UNAFRI and other UN Agencies. With respect to the UNDCP, the Organization of African Unity has signed a Memorandum of Understanding which laid down the grounds for collaboration and cooperation.

SECTION V. SOURCES OF FINANCING

Governments will make adequate budgetary allocation for controlling narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances to reflect the priority they place in devising programmes in support of the Plan of Action.

Governments, regional economic communities and the OAU should examine existing external sources of funding.

Governments should produce a suitable framework for drug control, in line with this Plan of Action to enable them to seek assistance from these external sources. Based on the framework, the regional economic communities and the OAU can play the catalytic role in this regard.

SECTION VI. FINAL CONSIDERATION

The present Plan of Action covers the period 1997 -2001. The Secretariat of OAU is given the responsibility of monitoring its implementation and to report to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. As provided for in paragraph 31, the report should, if necessary, contain proposals to update the Plan of Action based on the experience gained from its implementation.

By endorsing this Declaration and Plan of Action, a milestone has been reached in effectively addressing the drug problem in Africa.