



PUBLICATION

New York Times

DATE

June 11

World AIDS Fight Is Urged in Venice

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Special to The New York Times

VENICE, June 10 — Leaders at a seven-nation economic summit meeting today declared AIDS "one of the biggest potential health problems in the world," and they called for international cooperation against it through the World Health Organization.

They also adopted a statement pledging the seven nations to "continue their fight against illegal production and distribution of drugs," and in their final declaration they welcomed study of the "ethical implications of developments in the life sciences."

Drugs, biotechnology and acquired immune deficiency syndrome were among many topics discussed by the leaders, but their inclusion in final statements reflected growing concern about their potential for social and economic disruption.

The statements on drugs and AIDS were not included in the group's formal declaration, but in separate statements issued by the Italian Prime Minister, Amintore Fanfani, the conference chairman. Such statements reflecting the leaders' views are often used to address topics not strictly economic.

'Full Support' Promised

The leaders called for broad international cooperation in studying means to prevent and treat AIDS, pledging themselves to a maximum effort to strengthen "existing organizations by giving them full political support and by providing them with the necessary financial, personnel and administrative resources."

"The World Health Organization is the best forum for drawing together international efforts on a worldwide level to combat AIDS, and all countries should be encouraged fully to cooperate with the W.H.O. and support its special program of AIDS-related activities," the statement said.

The leaders welcomed a British proposal for an international conference on public education about the disease. But they also cautioned that measures to curb the spread of AIDS be "in accordance with the principles of human rights," and welcomed a French proposal to create an international committee to deal with ethical issues raised by the disease.

The leaders discussed AIDS at a time when experts are expressing growing concern about its social and economic effects on developing regions such as Africa, which is perhaps hardest hit by the disease.

"In places like sub-Saharan Africa, the disease knows no genders and no economic stratification," an American official said.

The statement, adopted at the urging of all the nations, said, "In the absence of a vaccine or cure, the best hope for the combat and prevention of aids rests on a strategy based on educating the public about the seriousness of the AIDS epidemic, the ways the AIDS virus is transmitted, and the practical steps each person can take to avoid ac-

quiring or spreading it."

It urged broader exchange of information about national education campaigns.

Drug-Dependent Countries Cited

The statement on drugs also reflected concern about the potential for economic disruption in countries whose economies are dependent on the export of narcotics, particularly at a time of agricultural changes, a major topic on the summit agenda.

The statement called for the eradication of drug crops and their "replacement with other types of production, which will further the aims of social and economic development."

Italian officials said President Reagan, in his first meeting with Prime Minister Fanfani on Monday, stressed the need for countries reliant on drug exports to shift from "drugs to flowers."

Mr. Fanfani reportedly replied that programs used in the past to wean economies such as Turkey's from drugs, could be applied in Latin American nations like Bolivia, whose economies are under similar dependency.

Concerning biotechnology, the leaders have sponsored conferences on the ethical implications of research into genetic engineering since 1984, when a first such gathering was held in Japan.