



## Factsheet 2

### IN FOCUS: AFGHANISTAN, URUGUAY

#### Afghanistan

Illicit opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan continues to increase unabated and in 2014 set another record, with 224,000 hectares cultivated, compared with 209,000 hectares in 2013, matching an area nearly the size of Luxembourg. Afghanistan accounts for an estimated 80 per cent of the estimated global illicit production of opium and more than half of the country's provinces are now actively engaged in illicit opium poppy cultivation in addition to significant cultivation of cannabis.

Annual eradication of opium poppy over the past five years amounted to just 4 per cent of the cultivated area and has yielded no tangible effect on opium production, estimated to be a record 6,400 tons in 2014, an increase of more than 17 per cent over the previous year. There is also evidence that as drug production increased, so too did the number of heroin trafficking routes leading out of Afghanistan. Additionally, alternative livelihood assistance is not available to all farmers, as this is only possible where adequate security and stability can be ensured. With little chance of illicit crops being eradicated and limited alternatives, the benefits of illicit cultivation are perceived by many farmers to far outweigh any risk to their investments.

Increasing production of opium in Afghanistan has also resulted in greater abuse of opiates in the country and in neighbouring countries. One in ten urban households surveyed in Afghanistan had a person who tested positive for drugs, most commonly for potent opiates such as heroin. While a new national drug demand reduction policy aims to prevent vulnerable groups, such as children and adolescents, from becoming drug-dependent, treatment capacity is available for just 6 per cent of the estimated number of opiate-addicted persons.

According to the INCB Report, the lack of security is also closely linked to increased illicit opium poppy cultivation, opium and heroin production and ultimately, drug abuse and trafficking. As the International Security Assistance Force mission has drawn to a close, INCB is concerned that a worsening in the security situation could result in further increases in illicit crop cultivation and could threaten to reverse the limited progress made in Afghanistan.

#### Uruguay

Uruguay has become the first State party to the 1961 Convention to legalize the production, distribution, sale and consumption of cannabis and its derivatives for purposes other than medical and scientific. The relevant law adopted by Uruguay in December 2013 is inconsistent with the provisions of the 1961 Convention, under which cannabis is controlled and which requires States parties to limit its use to medical and scientific purposes.

Cannabis is under strict control in Schedules I and IV of the 1961 Convention and is internationally recognized as a dangerous drug that has serious consequences for human health. The international drug control conventions recognize the health dimensions of drug use, and under article 38 of the



1961 Convention, States parties are required to “give special attention to and take all practicable measures for the prevention of abuse of drugs and for the early identification, treatment, education, after-care, rehabilitation and social reintegration of the persons involved”.

The Board will continue its dialogue with the Government of Uruguay with a view to promoting the country’s compliance with the international drug control treaties.