

III. Analysis of the world situation

A. Africa

Major developments

238. Throughout Africa, cannabis cultivation, production, trafficking and abuse continue to be important drug control issues. Africa has remained a major supplier of cannabis to some countries outside the region. Illicitly grown cannabis is abused throughout the continent and has remained the main drug of abuse in most African countries, accounting for over 60 per cent of drug treatment demand in the region. A worrisome new development appears to be the increasing shift from cultivation of food crops to cannabis in some areas, resulting in food shortages. In view of the many problems related to cannabis abuse and trafficking in Africa, the Board calls on appropriate international institutions to prepare a comprehensive assessment of the impact of cannabis cultivation and trafficking on the economies of the countries in the region and the health and social conditions of their populations, including proposals for future action.

239. In addition to the abuse of cannabis, the abuse of psychotropic substances continues to be of concern in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa. Despite intensive law enforcement efforts aimed at interrupting the supply of methaqualone (Mandrax), the abuse of that substance continues unabated in countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, above all in South Africa. The abuse of opiates and cocaine has developed along the transit trafficking routes, mainly in Nigeria and South Africa and in some urban centres in other countries.

240. Illicit drug trafficking remains a major problem in the region. Information gathered from war-torn countries in Western and Central Africa, in particular in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, indicates that the arms and ammunitions used by rebel groups and criminal organizations to destabilize those subregions may have been partly procured with the proceeds of illicit drug trafficking. There have also been reports of widespread abuse of cannabis and other drugs by young insurgent combatants in the civil wars in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

241. The Board is concerned about the continued diversion of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances from licit distribution channels into parallel markets. The sale of such substances by street vendors and health-care providers, without medical prescription, especially to young people, continues to represent a major problem for many countries in Africa.

Treaty adherence

242. The Board welcomes the accession of Algeria to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention in March 2003.

243. Angola, the Congo and Equatorial Guinea have remained the only countries in Africa that are not yet parties to any of the three main international drug control treaties. In addition, Chad has not yet acceded to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention. Liberia is not yet a party to the 1971 Convention, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Liberia, Namibia and Somalia are not yet parties to the 1988 Convention.

244. The Board has noted with appreciation that the Government of the Congo presented to parliament draft legislation that, once enacted, would allow it to ratify the three international drug control treaties and deposit its instruments of accession with the Secretary-General.

Regional cooperation

245. Throughout Africa, collaboration targeting the drug problem continued within intergovernmental organizations, such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC).

246. The African Union remains committed to the implementation of the Plan of Action on Drug Control in Africa: 2002-2006. This plan commits African Union member States and African regional organizations to take concrete action in identified drug control priority sectors and to integrate those measures into development, as well as social and health programmes. The Board is pleased to note that a drug

control and crime prevention unit has recently been established within the African Union secretariat.

247. In Tunisia, Arab ministers of information and of the interior held a meeting in Tunis in January 2003 to discuss money-laundering, terrorism and organized crime and to coordinate policies among member countries of the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior. In the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, ministers of the interior of the western Mediterranean States coalition met in Tripoli in July 2003 to discuss their countries' cooperation in fighting terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime and other issues.⁴³

248. In Ghana, a regional workshop that brought together the coordinators of inter-ministerial drug committees, national project coordinators and non-governmental organization representatives of the ECOWAS member States⁴⁴ was held in Accra in May 2003.

249. In Kenya, at the third annual meeting of the East Africa Drug Information System, held in Nairobi in October 2003, national focal points reported on the drug situation in their countries and on progress made towards the development of national drug information systems. In 2003, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania ratified the EAC protocol on combating drug trafficking in East Africa, which is aimed at promoting cooperation in criminal and intelligence matters among the drug control units of Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

250. In view of the rapidly growing number of clandestine laboratories for the illicit manufacture of drugs, especially amphetamine-type stimulants and methaqualone, SADC is to convene a regional seminar on precursor chemical monitoring for SADC member States in Johannesburg, South Africa, in November 2003. The objective of the meeting is to set up a more effective system for controlling the movement of the chemicals used in the manufacturing processes in such clandestine laboratories and to create the necessary information networks to facilitate the seizure of more substances currently used in illicit drug manufacture or abuse in the subregion.

251. Throughout Africa, there is a need to improve national capacities to collect, analyse and publish substance abuse and drug-related data that can be used to formulate policy. The Board appreciates the work of the SADC Epidemiology Network on Drug Use, which

has laid the basis for the regular collation and provision of data on drug abuse to be used by law enforcement, health and welfare authorities.

252. The Board notes that over 330 judges, magistrates, investigators and prosecutors were trained in drug-related casework during the period 2001-2002 in the training programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for the judiciary in Southern and Eastern Africa. It is anticipated that about 720 judicial officials from 19 countries⁴⁵ will have been trained by the end of 2004. The Government of Uganda has also offered to host a training venue, in addition to those in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

National legislation, policy and action

253. After the enactment in 2002 of its first legislation against money-laundering,⁴⁶ the Government of Egypt is currently drafting related regulations to enhance the enforcement of the law. The Egyptian authorities are also strengthening their drug abuse prevention activities to complement the treatment services for drug abusers, including street children.

254. The Government of Ethiopia has introduced draft legislation against money-laundering and a bill updating the penal code in parliament. The updated bill would significantly increase the maximum sentence for drug trafficking. The Central Bank of Lesotho has recently issued a directive that any suspicious financial transactions must be reported to it by the banks. In 2002, legislation against money-laundering was enacted in Nigeria. The Government of that country also established an Anti-Terrorism, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to coordinate government efforts against money-laundering and financial crimes.

255. In February 2003, the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania adopted a revised drug control legislation transforming the Pharmacy Board into the autonomous Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority, thereby ensuring better continuity in the technical work of the regulatory authorities. In Uganda, new drug control legislation aimed at harmonizing national laws with the provisions of the three international drug control treaties is expected to be presented to Parliament before the end of 2003.

256. To complement its efforts to strengthen the national and legal institutional capacities, the

Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is in the process of improving existing procedures for drug law enforcement in international mail, including postal and courier systems.

257. The Board welcomes the steps taken by the Government of Morocco to conduct a comprehensive cannabis survey in 2003 to determine the extent, locations and patterns of cannabis cultivation in the northern part of the country. The Government intends to use the result of the survey to develop, implement and redirect action under the national development programme for the Northern Rif in order to achieve a lasting reduction of illicit cannabis cultivation. The Government has allocated a substantial amount of money to the national development programme, for lasting and sustainable development of the Rif area, the poorest and most underdeveloped area in Morocco.

258. The Board notes that, in South Africa, the joint police and customs container-profiling capacity, established at Johannesburg International Airport in April 2003, has been successful. It also notes that the demand reduction campaign “Ke Moja”, which began on a pilot basis in 2002, was launched nationwide in June 2003. The Board welcomes the implementation of legislation to combat money-laundering, and the establishment of a financial intelligence centre.

259. The Board notes with appreciation that the Government of the Sudan is developing a comprehensive multisectoral drug control programme with a view to building up a coordinated law enforcement programme, a demand reduction programme and a rural development programme for the illicit drug cultivation areas, with a view to promoting sustained alternative development.

260. The Board notes with appreciation that since 2002, drug control master plans have been adopted by Madagascar and Namibia. Furthermore, similar master plans are currently being drafted by the Governments of Algeria, Malawi and Mozambique.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

261. Cannabis continues to be the most widely grown, trafficked and abused drug on the African continent, accounting for approximately one quarter of global cannabis seizures in recent years, the bulk of the

cannabis being seized by South Africa. Large cannabis seizures have also been reported in Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria and the United Republic of Tanzania. Large-scale illicit cultivation of cannabis remains one of the prime concerns in Morocco. Morocco is one of the world’s leading cannabis producers and the source of 60-70 per cent of the cannabis resin seized in Europe. Estimates of the extent of the area under illicit cannabis cultivation vary considerably. There are indications that in recent years there have been increases in the number of hectares of illicit cannabis cultivation and in the yield due to favourable climatic conditions. It is suspected that the intensive illicit crop cultivation and illicit drug production, trafficking and smuggling activities are sustained by a fully developed system of networking among drug traffickers. Trafficking routes for Moroccan cannabis lead mainly through Spain to other European countries. Increased law enforcement activities on the Iberian peninsula have led to a diversification of trafficking routes for Moroccan cannabis resin through Algeria and, to a lesser extent, also Tunisia and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Trafficking routes also increasingly pass through other African countries south of the Sahara, in particular in Western Africa, in an attempt to disguise the origin of the illicit shipments. In Egypt, where cannabis continues to be illicitly cultivated in the northern part of the Sinai, seizures of cannabis herb rose from 7 tons in 1996 to 31 tons in 1998 and to over 59 tons in 2002. In the Sudan, there has been a shift from the cultivation of food crops to the cultivation of cannabis, resulting in a concomitant widespread shortage of food. Although cannabis eradication efforts resumed in 2001 and 2002, law enforcement authorities believe that tons of cannabis herb are smuggled across the Red Sea into Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries on the Arabian peninsula, and into Egypt and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

262. In Western and Central Africa, where there is a long tradition of cannabis cultivation for the limited local market, cannabis has become a significant economic crop following the downfall of prices of cash crops in international markets. Cannabis is produced on a large scale, in particular in Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. It is alleged that some proceeds of illicit trafficking in cannabis herb are used to finance activities of rebel groups and criminal organizations operating in the region. The economic and environ-

mental impact of cannabis cultivation, particularly the abandonment of traditional crops, as well as deforestation, are of great concern. Cannabis continues to be cultivated in most, if not all countries in Eastern Africa, where it not only fuels local demand but is also a significant commercial crop.

263. Southern Africa continues to be the major source of cannabis herb in Africa. The major producers are South Africa, Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique, in that order. Estimates of the crop size for these main producer countries vary. Considerable efforts are being made to eradicate cannabis crops and to intercept cannabis consignments. Large quantities of cannabis are seized by the police each year. Good quality cannabis is smuggled out of the region, mainly into Europe.

264. Cocaine originating in South America and shipped mainly from Brazil, continues to transit countries in Western and Southern Africa on its way to Europe. Angola, Nigeria and South Africa continue to be major drug transit countries for cocaine from South America destined for Europe. While there has been an increase in the number of seizures of cocaine reported in Nigeria and South Africa, similar seizures have been made in Algeria, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Togo and the United Republic of Tanzania. Many other countries have also reported transit cocaine trafficking. The abuse of cocaine in Africa is mostly limited to the spillover effects of drug trafficking. Cannabis and methaqualone (Mandrax) remain the primary and secondary illicit drugs of abuse in South Africa. Prevalence estimates among the general population show that cocaine is behind sedatives/tranquillizers and amphetamines. The increase in the demand for treatment for cocaine abuse of previous years has recently levelled off.

265. Illicit opium poppy cultivation continues on the Sinai peninsula in Egypt, but is limited and declining, as indicated by the fall in seizures and the number of crops eradicated. Opium is consumed locally, mostly in Upper Egypt. Since no heroin processing laboratories have been discovered in Egypt for over a decade, it is assumed that no illicit manufacture of heroin is taking place there.

266. Heroin from South-East and South-West Asia continues to be smuggled through countries in Eastern

and Western Africa to illicit markets in Europe, and to some extent, the United States of America. Some heroin is also smuggled into South Africa, where its abuse has increased, particularly among youth. Of particular concern is the increase in injecting drug abuse in the major urban areas of Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town. That trend is particularly worrisome, as the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is very high in sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, there is the potential risk for the transmission of HIV, hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases through the use of contaminated needles and syringes. While heroin abuse in Africa is low compared with other regions, abuse trends show an increase, particularly from the spillover effects of drug trafficking. In Eastern and Western Africa, there has also been a shift in the mode of administration towards drug abuse by injection.

Psychotropic substances

267. While the abuse of amphetamine and methamphetamine are reported in countries in Africa, most psychotropic substances continue to be diverted mainly from licit distribution channels. In countries in Western Africa, especially in the Sahelian countries, the abuse of amphetamine, ephedrine and pemoline is widespread, and some abuse of methylenedioxy-methamphetamine (MDMA, commonly known as Ecstasy) is reported in major cities and tourist sites in the subregion. One subject of major concern continues to be the abuse of pharmaceutical products that should be supplied on prescription but are sold over the counter or in the streets, particularly in several Western and Central African countries. The diversion of drugs intended for the licit market into illicit channels has also become an issue in South Africa lately. Furthermore, the illicit manufacture of amphetamines occurs in South Africa and, on a small scale, Egypt. Methcathinone ("cat") has appeared on illicit markets in South Africa. In 2002, the South African police uncovered 14 laboratories for processing methcathinone, and, by September 2003, another 16 clandestine laboratories had been dismantled (compared with only one laboratory in 2001). Dealers are claiming that methcathinone is a "safe" alternative stimulant to cocaine.

268. The abuse of methaqualone (Mandrax) continues to be a matter of concern in countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, in particular South Africa, where it has remained the second most commonly abused illicit

drug. Methaqualone continues to enter that country from India and China, frequently through Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, and from clandestine laboratories in Southern Africa. South African law enforcement authorities made a seizure of 4 tons of pure methaqualone powder, which originated in China, together with 100 million methaqualone (Mandrax) tablets, in June 2003 and arrested six persons. That seizure of methaqualone is the largest seizure ever made of the substance. Traffickers either set up laboratories themselves in the subregion or provide local residents with the necessary expertise and materials to do so. Large consignments of the required precursor chemicals, especially anthranilic acid, apparently destined for South Africa, have repeatedly been stopped or intercepted outside the country, in countries such as Mozambique and Swaziland.

269. The abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) occurs in Southern Africa, in particular in South Africa. A new trend appears to be the increasing local manufacture of MDMA. Police uncovered the first illicit MDMA laboratory in 1996 and have made regular finds in subsequent years, the highest seizure of six such laboratories being recorded in 2001.

Missions

270. In March 2003, the Government of Algeria ratified the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention, just before the visit of the Board's mission in April 2003. A party to all three international drug control treaties, the Government has enacted several laws to give effect to the provisions of the 1961 Convention and the 1971 Convention at the national level. Similar legislation in respect of the 1988 Convention, aimed at strengthening the control of precursor chemicals, allowing the tracing, seizing and ultimate confiscation of proceeds of drug-related crime and also facilitating international legal cooperation in the prosecution of drug-related offences, is still to be drafted.

271. Diversions of psychotropic substances, mainly benzodiazepines, appear to occur in Algeria after the substances have been licitly imported. The Board calls on the Government of Algeria to strengthen its control of the distribution of pharmaceutical products. The Board strongly encourages the Government to request

the drug law enforcement agencies to investigate the nature and source of such illicit trafficking.

272. The Board also encourages the Government of Algeria to undertake a proper assessment of the extent of drug abuse in the country. The Board acknowledges the efforts made by non-governmental organizations in Algeria to increase the awareness of drug abuse in the country.

273. In March 2003, a mission of the Board visited Mali and found that various drugs, mainly diverted from licit distribution channels and humanitarian aid, were being sold in street markets. Cannabis and heroin are trafficked through Mali but the abuse of those drugs has so far remained limited. The Board notes with appreciation that despite limited technical, logistical and human resources, both the police and customs have made important seizures of various drugs in the illicit traffic in Mali.

274. The Board encourages the Government of Mali to empower the inter-ministerial commission, set up in 1996, to promote efficient cooperation and the sharing of information between the various drug control authorities. The Board welcomes the adoption in 2001 of the specific law for the control of drugs and precursors and urges the Ministry of Justice to develop and draft the appropriate implementing decree as soon as possible.

275. The Board has reviewed action taken by the Government of Senegal pursuant to recommendations made by the Board after its mission in September 2000. The Government has strengthened control over narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and is in a position to resume its submission of some of the reports required under the international drug control treaties. The Government has put in place mechanisms for curtailing the supply of psychotropic substances to street markets and for increasing its capacity in controlling precursors. There are currently no indications that precursor chemicals are being trafficked in the country for use in illicit drug manufacture. The Government has also taken action against the cultivation of cannabis on its territory.

276. In Senegal, however, coordination of drug control activities at the national level remains in need of further improvement. The inter-ministerial committee on drug control continues to be seriously hampered in its work as a result of a lack of cooperation from

several of the authorities that make up the committee. That has resulted in the absence of effective drug control policy measures. The Board therefore again calls on the Government of Senegal to improve inter-ministerial coordination, particularly among the drug law enforcement services but also with the Ministry of Health.

B. Americas

Central America and the Caribbean

Major developments

277. Drug trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean continues to involve mostly cannabis and cocaine, although heroin seizures have increased to unprecedented levels. Drug trafficking in the region takes place by land, air and sea (both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean). Arms trafficking continues to be reported in Central American countries; it is suspected that the arms shipments are mainly destined for armed groups in South America that abet drug trafficking. Drug trafficking and related crimes continue to have the potential to threaten political, social and economic development, especially on the smaller islands of the Caribbean.

278. The Central American and Mexican corridor and the Caribbean continue to be the transit route used for smuggling cocaine and heroin from Colombia into North America. The smuggling of cocaine through the Caribbean and into Europe appears to have been on the increase, while the smuggling of drugs into North America appears to have remained at approximately the same level since the mid-1990s.

279. Drug trafficking has contributed to the increase in drug abuse in Central America and the Caribbean. While sufficient up-to-date epidemiological data do not seem to be available, new drugs and methods of abuse are being detected sporadically, such as GHB, heroin, MDMA (Ecstasy), flunitrazepam and combinations of cocaine and cannabis or of cocaine and heroin.

280. The Board welcomes the increased attention being given to demand reduction in Central America and the Caribbean. Countries in the region have included more initiatives related to demand reduction in their national drug control strategies, have increased budget allocations to that end, have started to conduct

surveys in order to assess perception of risk and prevalence related to the abuse of drugs in certain segments of the population and have created more prevention programmes. Shortcomings remain in the level of financial support for treatment and rehabilitation and in the availability of relevant infrastructure.

Treaty adherence

281. All States in Central America and the Caribbean are parties to the 1961 Convention and the 1988 Convention. The Board calls once again on Haiti, Honduras and Saint Lucia to accede to the 1971 Convention and on Nicaragua to ratify the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention.

Regional cooperation

282. The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States continues to be the main forum of overall regional cooperation and exchange of information for Central American and Caribbean countries, which, together with other countries in the Americas, participate actively in the CICAD Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism. Cooperation in areas such as judicial cooperation, law enforcement operations, and border control is usually in the form of bilateral agreements between countries. A number of Central American countries have agreements of this kind with Colombia and Mexico. The United States remains the single most important bilateral partner in drug control matters for most countries and territories, providing much needed assistance in the interdiction of drug trafficking.

283. The Board welcomes the fact that the issue of drug trafficking and money-laundering through the postal system was addressed in a workshop held in Barbados in November 2002. While most other modes of drug trafficking in the Caribbean have been targeted by law enforcement, this is a new regional effort to address drug trafficking through the mail system.

284. Several successes have been achieved in maritime drug law enforcement operations in the Caribbean through cooperation at the regional level and cooperation with authorities in Colombia and in countries in Europe and North America. In view of further economic integration of the Caribbean countries and the increasingly significant large-scale