

III. Analysis of the world situation

A. Africa

Major developments

222. Cannabis remains the major drug of concern throughout Africa. In addition, trafficking in and abuse of cocaine, heroin and amphetamine-type stimulants are increasing in many countries in the region. The practice of injecting drug use, which is spreading in a number of African countries, could exacerbate by other means the already severe HIV/AIDS crisis in Africa. The abuse of psychotropic substances is facilitated by the absence of adequate licit control measures in most African countries. That inadequate drug control, together with activities involving organized crime, is hindering development efforts in Africa. The Board therefore welcomes the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (General Assembly resolution 55/25, annex J) and the United Nations Convention against Corruption (Assembly resolution 58/4, annex) and encourages all States to make use of those international instruments in their efforts to counter drug trafficking.

223. The limited institutional and technical capacity of African countries to deal with the drug issue in an effective and comprehensive manner has had a negative impact on national drug control strategies. There are not sufficient mechanisms or skilled human resources to control and prevent drug trafficking in many countries in Africa, and the provision of counselling, treatment and rehabilitation facilities for drug abusers is inadequate. While Governments of African countries are investing increasing resources to deal with those problems, the investment appears to be inadequate and the continent remains a very weak link in international drug control. The Board therefore calls upon the international community to provide appropriate assistance and support to States in the region to enhance their efforts to combat drug trafficking and abuse.

224. In many countries in Africa that are emerging from conflict and civil strife, drug abuse continues, in particular among child soldiers. The Board encourages the Governments concerned to make an assessment of the nature and extent of the drug abuse situation in

their countries and to put in place appropriate mechanisms to deal with the problem.

225. The uncontrolled sale (without appropriate prescription) in licensed pharmacies of prescription drugs containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the proliferation of illegal retail pharmaceutical outlets and the diversion from licit distribution channels of such products into street markets are all problems that continue to persist in many countries in Africa. The Board calls on the Governments concerned to establish and/or enhance the capacity of their national drug regulatory authorities to enforce the licensing, distribution and inspection of and trade in pharmaceutical products.

226. Most countries in Africa have no adequate legislative framework and lack the necessary administrative mechanisms for the control of precursor chemicals. Such a situation may lead to serious problems in the international monitoring of trade in such chemicals; consequently, African countries are increasingly being targeted by traffickers attempting to obtain the chemicals they need for illicit drug manufacture. The Board therefore urges those Governments to establish, as a matter of urgency, appropriate mechanisms for the monitoring and control of precursor chemicals in order to prevent their diversion.

Treaty adherence

227. The Board welcomes the accession in March 2004 of the Congo to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. The Board notes that Gabon has approved legislation that will allow the Government to ratify the 1988 Convention and to deposit its instrument of accession with the Secretary-General.

228. Angola and Equatorial Guinea remain the only countries in Africa that are not yet parties to any of the three main international drug control treaties. Chad has not yet acceded to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention. Liberia has not yet become party to the 1971 Convention, and the Democratic Republic of

the Congo, Gabon, Liberia, Namibia and Somalia have not yet become parties to the 1988 Convention.

Regional cooperation

229. The Board notes with appreciation the continuing commitment of the African Union to drug control. At its second Ministerial Conference on Drug Control in Africa, to be held in Grande Baie, Mauritius, in December 2004, participants will review the progress made at the national and regional levels in the implementation of the Plan of Action on Drug Control in Africa: 2002-2006. The Board also notes the steps being taken to create a sustainable drug control coordination and advisory capacity within the African Union and a system to review and monitor the progress made in drug control throughout Africa.

230. The Fourteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa, was held in Cairo from 30 May to 3 June 2004. The Meeting, which was attended by 27 African States,³⁷ made recommendations on the interdiction of drug trafficking in countries emerging from conflict; the development of a common strategy to combat illicit cannabis cultivation, production, trafficking and abuse; and effective control over licit pharmaceutical medicines and precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

231. The regional training academy for drug control at Jos, Nigeria, held its first international training session in April 2004 for participants from Cape Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. The academy is to provide training to drug law enforcement officers from Nigeria and other Western African countries and to promote cooperation among drug law enforcement agencies in the subregion.

232. A training seminar on licit drug control for Eastern African countries was organized jointly by the Board and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Nairobi in January 2004 to enable the national drug regulatory authorities in Eastern Africa to more effectively monitor and exercise control over the supply and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances while ensuring their availability for legitimate medical and scientific purposes.

233. The Board notes the continuing efforts of African countries to enhance regional collaboration in drug control through regular meetings of law enforcement

authorities, such as the fifteenth operational meeting on drugs for Eastern African heads of criminal investigation departments and anti-narcotic units, held in Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania, in March 2004 and the sixth Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization meeting held on Mahé Island, Seychelles, in September 2004. Cooperation among the law enforcement authorities of the countries participating in the West African Joint Operations Initiative led to the seizure of over 140 kg of cocaine in Cotonou, Benin, in April 2004 (see also para. 246 below).

234. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) organized a seminar on the monitoring of precursors for SADC member States in Johannesburg, South Africa, in November 2003. The participants set up a more effective system for controlling the movement of precursors and established information networks to facilitate the seizure of precursors in the illicit traffic in Southern Africa.

235. Activities against money-laundering have also been initiated in some subregions in Africa. Following a preparatory meeting held in Abuja in November 2003, the statutory meeting of the Groupe intergouvernemental d'action contre le blanchiment d'argent en Afrique de l'Ouest (GIABA) was held in Dakar from 22 to 25 June 2004. Mauritania and all member States of the Economic Community of West African States except Liberia, as well as numerous international organizations and financial institutions, were represented at the statutory meeting, which approved the formal establishment of the GIABA secretariat and its work plan for the period 2004-2006. The secretariat of GIABA was subsequently granted observer status with the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) at a meeting of the Task Force held in Paris in June 2004. The countries in Central Africa officially inaugurated the Action Group against Money-Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC) in Bangui in March 2004. The Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG)³⁸ held a meeting in Cape Town in May 2004 to assist its member States in the drafting and finalization of national plans to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism; the draft plans were discussed during an ESAAMLG meeting held in Grande Baie, Mauritius, in August 2004 and will be finalized in March 2005.

National legislation, policy and action

236. A new penal code passed by the Parliament of Ethiopia increases the severity of the penalties for offences ranging from illicit drug manufacture to trafficking and organized crime to a minimum sentence of 10 years of imprisonment and a maximum sentence of 15 years of imprisonment.

237. In a number of African countries, including Algeria, Cape Verde, Madagascar and Mauritius, steps have been taken to establish and implement national drug control master plans. South Africa is in the process of drafting a new five-year master plan that will take into account experiences gained from the implementation of the master plan for the period 1999-2004.

238. The Board notes the progress made by the Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in strengthening the national and legal institutional capacities for the control of licit drugs, as well as drug law enforcement.

239. The Government of Morocco has proposed new legislation against money-laundering that conforms with international standards and takes into account the FATF recommendations; the Board calls upon the Government to enact the draft legislation without further delay. The Board notes that, in 2004, the Niger and Senegal adopted national laws modelled after standardized legislation against money-laundering developed by the West African Economic and Monetary Union in 2002. In the remaining member States of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, such legislation is limited or non-existent. Legislation against money-laundering that meets international standards is also in place in Cape Verde, the Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria. In Eastern Africa, Madagascar has adopted a new law against money-laundering. The Board advises States that have not adopted legislation against money-laundering to do so as soon as possible.

240. The Board notes with appreciation that the Government of Zambia has intensified its interdiction efforts. In 2003, 182 tons of cannabis were seized, compared with a total of 30 tons seized in 2001 and 2002.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

241. Africa continues to be a major source of the cannabis found in illicit markets in the region or smuggled out of the region, mainly into Europe. Production of and trafficking in cannabis have been reported in practically all countries in Africa, while the production of cannabis resin is concentrated mainly in Morocco.

242. According to a joint survey carried out by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Government of Morocco in 2003, the total area under cannabis cultivation in Morocco was estimated at 134,000 hectares; the survey estimated that 47,000 tons of cannabis plant material was produced, representing approximately 3,000 tons of cannabis resin. In the same survey, it was estimated that Morocco accounted for approximately 40 per cent of global cannabis resin production. About 60 per cent of the cannabis resin seized in the world continues to be of Moroccan origin; most of the Moroccan cannabis is seized in Western Europe. Cannabis resin from Morocco is smuggled into other African subregions for local consumption and for re-routing to illicit markets elsewhere.

243. There is an urgent need in Morocco for new legislation in support of the national drug control strategy and institutions monitoring drugs. The Board therefore urges the Government of Morocco to develop such legislation; the legislation should provide for the use of eradication measures and the sanctions envisaged in the 1988 Convention, permit the use of investigative techniques such as controlled delivery and facilitate the development of effective international cooperation through, for example, extradition, the confiscation of illicit drug consignments in other countries, mutual legal assistance and the interception of illicit drug consignments in transit.

244. Cannabis herb has remained the most abused illicit drug in most African countries. Several African countries are major sources of cannabis. In some of those countries, the cultivation of cannabis for commercial purposes is reportedly increasing as a result of declining prices for other agricultural products. In Eastern Africa, in particular in the Comoros, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, cannabis constitutes a

significant commercial crop. The country in Southern Africa in which cannabis cultivation is most common is South Africa, followed by Malawi. There is evidence to suggest that some of the many civil conflicts in Africa are partly funded by profits from cannabis trafficking.

245. Weak control measures at seaports, airports and land borders, inadequate drug control legislation and an increasing number of important airline hubs continue to contribute to the growing drug trafficking problem in Eastern Africa. Over the years, Western Africa, in particular Nigeria, has become a major transit area for drug trafficking.

246. Cocaine originating in South America continues to enter Southern and Western Africa before continuing on its way to Europe and North America. For 2003, several countries in Africa reported increased seizures of cocaine. While previously the largest cocaine seizures were reported in Nigeria and South Africa, the year 2004 saw some record seizures in the Gulf of Guinea: in January, about 600 kg of cocaine destined for the United Kingdom were seized and an international drugs cartel was dismantled in Ghana; and in July, some 450 kg of cocaine were seized off the coast of Togo in a joint operation conducted by French and Togolese officials acting on intelligence provided by Spain. Also in July 2004, the authorities of Cape Verde seized 200 kg of cocaine and arrested 10 persons in connection with that seizure. Those cases clearly corroborate an increasing trend in drug trafficking by sea, especially in Western Africa. It is believed that drug traffickers have moved their operations to the coast of Western Africa as a result of effective law enforcement measures off the coast of Portugal and Spain. According to information provided by the Sudanese authorities, there has also been a noticeable increase in the smuggling of drugs, in particular cocaine, from West Africa through the Sudan to countries in the area of the Persian Gulf, including Saudi Arabia. There is relatively little abuse of cocaine in Africa; the abuse of that drug in the region seems to be confined mainly to Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa, as well as transit countries, notably Cape Verde.

247. Heroin originating in South-East Asia and South-West Asia continues to be smuggled into countries in Eastern and Western Africa, the ultimate destination being Europe and, to a lesser extent, North America.

While the quantities involved are small compared with heroin trafficking in other regions, there is a clear upward trend in such trafficking. (Africa accounts for only 0.5 per cent of all the heroin seized in the world.) Countries in Western Africa account for most of the seizures. Seizures of heroin continue to be made at the international airport at Nairobi, as well as in Addis Ababa. A number of African countries are reporting growing abuse of heroin, albeit at a low level; those countries include Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania. While most heroin is smoked, its use by injection is being increasingly reported in countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, a development that will have serious ramifications for the spread of HIV/AIDS. In South Africa, the large increase in demand for treatment for heroin abuse, which had been observed for a few years, appears to have levelled off.

Psychotropic substances

248. The abuse of pharmaceutical products, in particular preparations containing psychotropic substances, that are increasingly being sold over the counter and without medical prescription continues to be a subject of major concern in Africa. Ephedrine and diazepam are often sold by street vendors or in neighbourhood shops in several Western and Central African countries. Particularly worrying is the fact that some young people in Eastern Africa have access to such diverted drugs. In South Africa, the recent rapid increase in the abuse in the Cape Town area of methamphetamine hydrochloride (commonly called "ice"), which apparently is smuggled into the country from China, and the growing availability of methcathinone (commonly called "cat"), which is clandestinely manufactured in the country, have become a cause for concern for the authorities.

249. The abuse of methaqualone continues to be a matter of concern in South Africa, as well as in other countries in Southern Africa. Methaqualone is usually smoked in combination with cannabis (a combination commonly called "white pipe"). Methaqualone continues to enter South Africa from India and China, and some shipments of the substances pass through Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe and Eastern African ports and airports. Methaqualone has also been manufactured in clandestine laboratories in countries in Southern Africa. The Board notes that the South

African law enforcement authorities have, on several occasions, been very successful in intercepting some of the methaqualone smuggled into their country. In mid-2004, three major seizures of methaqualone powder (totalling 12 tons and apparently originating in China) were made in Southern Africa: two of them in Durban, South Africa, and one in Maputo.

250. The abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) seems to be largely confined to South Africa. Most of the substance is smuggled into South Africa, but some MDMA is also manufactured locally. The first clandestine laboratory manufacturing MDMA was identified and dismantled in 1996; since then, the police have been making seizures of MDMA on a regular basis.

251. While the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants has remained limited to a few cases in Egypt, amphetamine and methamphetamine tablets are smuggled from West Africa, via the Sudan, to Saudi Arabia and other countries in the area of the Persian Gulf.

Others

252. Khat, which is not under international control, continues to be cultivated in Ethiopia and Kenya, as well as in the Comoros, Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania. Khat is abused mainly in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia. Though khat consumption is associated with health-risk and detrimental social consequences, it is only prohibited in some countries, such as Eritrea and the United Republic of Tanzania. Khat is currently under critical review by the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence.

Missions

253. The Board reviewed action taken by the Government of Egypt to implement the recommendations made by the Board following its mission to that country in May 2001. Those recommendations included the systematic conducting of studies on the extent of drug abuse in Egypt and the further development of prevention and treatment services; the strengthening of legal provisions against money-laundering; and the implementation of effective measures in Egypt to prevent controlled psychotropic substances from being made available without the required prescription.

254. The Board, while acknowledging some measures taken by the Ministry of Health and Population of Egypt with regard to the control of licit activities related to psychotropic substances and precursors, notes with concern that recommendations covering other issues of drug control either have not been attended to or have not been adequately addressed. The Board urges the Government to take the necessary steps to ensure that other recommendations of the Board are fully implemented in a more effective and coordinated manner without further delay.

255. The Board sent a mission to Madagascar in June 2004. The Board notes with appreciation that the mission was received by government officials at the highest political level, including the Prime Minister and members of the Cabinet, who clearly expressed the firm political will of the Government to fight the drug problem. Madagascar adopted in 1997 legislation that is in line with the international drug control treaties and has recently enacted provisions against money-laundering.

256. The Board notes with appreciation that a comprehensive national master plan for drug control, including measures to deal with licit control, was adopted in 2003 by the Government of Madagascar but regrets that its implementation has been delayed due to financial constraints. As the interministerial commission for drug control coordination plays a relevant role in all drug control activities in Madagascar, the Board encourages the Government to assign sufficient technical and financial resources to the secretariat of the Commission to enable it to implement the plan and perform its functions effectively.

257. The Board is aware that Madagascar, because of its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, is at risk of being targeted by drug traffickers. In Madagascar, the extensive coastline, the development of tourist resorts in the north of the country and on nearby islands and the shortage of financial and technical resources make it difficult to combat drug abuse and trafficking. The Board notes the importance attached by the Government to improving the current network for the collection of data on drug abuse and trafficking, which will be used as a tool to realign government priorities on prevention measures for the general population, in particular the younger members of the population. The Board recommends that donor countries and relevant

international organizations provide technical and financial assistance to the Government in developing drug prevention programmes, intelligence services and modern detection methods, including law enforcement and laboratory detection techniques, that will enhance the capacity of law enforcement authorities to intercept illicit drug consignments.

258. During a joint technical visit by the secretariat of the Board and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to Mauritania in June 2004, the action taken by the Government pursuant to the recommendations made by the Board after its mission to that country in March 1999 was discussed. Consultations with the authorities of Mauritania are continuing with regard to the improvement of the reporting obligations of Mauritania, as required under the international drug control treaties.

259. The Board notes the various difficulties encountered by the Government of Mauritania in complying with its treaty obligations. However, the Board appreciates the efforts of the Government to rectify the situation and notes with satisfaction the measures taken by the authorities to strengthen the current national drug control legislation. The Board looks forward to the development of a comprehensive national drug control system and hopes that the new draft legislation will soon be adopted, thus providing for better control of the distribution of pharmaceutical products, including internationally controlled substances.

260. The Board notes with appreciation that, despite limited technical and human resources, the national office for the fight against the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is regularly making seizures of illicit consignments of cannabis and psychotropic substances in Mauritania. However, the Board notes that better coordination between the different bodies involved in the fight against drug trafficking and abuse is required if sustained drug control is to be achieved in the country. Therefore, the Board strongly encourages the Government of Mauritania to reinforce the interministerial commission for drug control coordination in order to enable it to carry out its functions of coordination and promotion of efficient cooperation and the sharing of information between the various drug control authorities.

261. In June 2004, the Board sent a mission to South Africa to assess the progress made by the Government

in implementing the recommendations made by the Board following its 1993 mission to that country. While the mission did not have the opportunity to make full assessment of the drug control situation in the country, the Board appreciates the commitment of the Government to international drug control. The legal framework for drug control in South Africa is comprehensive and in compliance with the provisions of the 1961 Convention, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention. Sufficient controls are being exercised over licit narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals. However, implementation is hampered by lack of coordination.

262. The Board notes that the Government of South Africa is currently in the process of developing a new national drug control master plan, based on an evaluation of the results achieved under the master plan for the period 1999-2004. The Board urges the Government to ensure improved coordination and cooperation among the regulatory and law enforcement institutions and agencies responsible for drug control issues. The Board looks forward to the implementation of the new master plan, including at the local level, particularly in the areas of prevention and treatment of drug abuse. The Board also looks forward to the Government of South Africa providing rural communities with programmes for sustainable development that discourage cannabis cultivation.

263. The Board notes the active role played by the Government of South Africa in fostering cooperation in the field of drug control at the international and regional levels, in particular among the countries in Southern Africa within the framework provided by SADC. The Board also notes the continued support provided by the Government to the three international operations launched by the Board for preventing the diversion of key chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of heroin, cocaine and amphetamine-type stimulants.

B. Americas

264. The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States remains the main regional forum for coordinating drug control issues in the Americas. Under its aegis, the third evaluation round of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism was launched in

December 2003. A total of 34 countries participated in that round, the main aim of which is to assess the implementation of previous recommendations. The information gathered from participating countries is to be compiled and evaluated at intergovernmental meetings, one of which is to be held in January 2005.

265. Intergovernmental working groups held a meeting under the auspices of CICAD in November 2003. One of the working groups presented a report on maritime drug trafficking. According to the report, 90 per cent of the cocaine manufactured in South America—590 tons out of an estimated total of 655 tons in 2003—is trafficked by sea, mainly through the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico; moreover, in many States in the region, there is insufficient funding and a lack of human and material resources and none of the required mechanisms for coordination at the national and regional levels to deal with the situation in an effective manner. The working group recommended the establishment within CICAD of an expert group on maritime control to draft model maritime control legislation and regulations and to develop best practices and strategies for maritime drug control in CICAD member States.

266. A second intergovernmental working group reviewed the control over precursors in the Americas and concluded that there was a need for several States to strengthen their existing legislation and regulations in that area.

Central America and the Caribbean

Major developments

267. The region of Central America and the Caribbean continues to be affected by large-scale cocaine trafficking and abuse; serious drug abuse problems have emerged in countries in the region. In the past year, law enforcement agencies in several countries reported increased seizures of cocaine, as well as stricter controls over precursor chemicals. There are, however, indications that drug trafficking organizations are adapting their methods in order to overcome law enforcement efforts.

268. In countries in Central America, many youth gangs have been involved in violent crime and drug trafficking. Though there is no agreement on the number of persons involved in such gangs, it is

estimated that at least 70,000 persons are members of youth gangs. The majority of them are in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Stringent measures have been adopted against youth gangs in several countries, including El Salvador, where new legislation penalizing membership in a youth gang has been widely criticized. At a summit held in March 2004, the heads of government of Central American countries agreed to cooperate in the fight against youth gangs.

269. A new Government was formed in Haiti, following upheaval and armed conflict in early 2004. The drug control situation in Haiti has for many years been characterized by ineffective law enforcement and widespread corruption, resulting in the country becoming a key drug trafficking hub in Central America and the Caribbean. The Board urges the new Government of Haiti, with the assistance of the international community and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), to ensure that drug control is a priority in its national reconstruction programme and to take the measures necessary to combat drug trafficking and the increasing drug abuse in the country.

Treaty adherence

270. All States in Central America and the Caribbean are parties to the 1961 Convention, the 1988 Convention and, with the exception of Haiti and Honduras, the 1971 Convention. The Board calls on Haiti and Honduras to accede to the 1971 Convention and to implement the provisions in that convention without delay. The Board also calls on Nicaragua to ratify the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention without delay, as it remains the only State in the region that has not yet done so.

Regional cooperation

271. Cooperation between law enforcement agencies in countries in Central America and the Caribbean and elsewhere in the Americas has resulted in the arrest of major drug traffickers. For example, in March 2004, the leader of a major drug trafficking organization in the Dominican Republic was arrested. According to the United States Government, the organization had moved shipments containing several hundred kilograms of cocaine into Puerto Rico and the United States from the British Virgin Islands, the Dominican Republic and unspecified countries in South America.

272. In April 2004, approximately 30 persons were arrested in several countries as a result of cooperative efforts between the law enforcement agencies of Colombia, the Netherlands Antilles and the United States. According to the law enforcement officials involved, the arrests were the result of unprecedented coordinated efforts between the countries involved, including joint activities enabling law enforcement officials to track down persons involved in all stages of the drug trafficking operation, from the sources of supply to the wholesale and retail dealers.

National legislation, policy and action

273. During the past year, steps were taken in several countries in Central America and the Caribbean to strengthen the control of precursors. In January 2004, the Government of Panama recorded a major seizure of ephedrine at the international airport in that country. Given the importance of Panama as a trans-shipment point, the Board encourages the Government of that country to pursue its efforts in strengthening precursor control, in cooperation with other Governments in the region.

274. In Guatemala, the Government adopted new regulations on the control of precursors and established a new inter-ministerial committee to coordinate its action in that area. In Honduras, the Government started to implement the national action plan to strengthen precursor control. In Jamaica, the Government is implementing stricter controls over the shipment of controlled chemical substances at authorized ports of entry, including airports and container freight stations; however, the Government faces serious difficulties in pursuing such operations, including a lack of financial and other resources.

275. In nearly all countries in Central America and the Caribbean, national drug control plans have been adopted in recent years. The Board notes with satisfaction that the Government of the Bahamas has adopted a national drug control plan covering the period 2003-2008, which the Board called for in its report for 2003.³⁹ The Board also notes that, as part of that plan, the Government is in the process of establishing a national drug observatory and is creating minimum standards of care for the treatment of drug addicts. The national drug control plan adopted by Costa Rica provides for institutional restructuring to strengthen efforts in drug control. In El Salvador, a

newly adopted drug control law strengthens penalties for a wide range of drug-related offences.

276. In February 2004, a select committee of the Parliament of Jamaica recommended that national legislation be amended so that the possession and abuse of cannabis in small quantities in private would be minor offences, subject to a moderate fine. The committee recommended that cannabis abuse in public spaces remain subject to criminal sanctions. The committee also recommended that other measures be taken to reduce the abuse of cannabis, including an intensive demand reduction campaign directed at young persons and the strengthening of efforts to eradicate the illicit cultivation of cannabis. The recommendations of the committee were sent to the Parliament for adoption.

277. The Board wishes to stress that cannabis is a harmful drug, requiring strong control under the 1961 Convention. The Board urges the Government of Jamaica to ensure that a clear and correct message is sent to the public regarding the dangers of cannabis abuse.

278. The Government of Belize has developed a national programme for alternative sentencing, whereby, in cases involving drug abuse, first-time and juvenile offenders are given sentences of community service in conjunction with drug treatment or counselling.

279. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has recently conducted a national survey of drug abuse in schools and is currently in the process of analysing the results. A similar survey in Guatemala indicated that abuse of illicit drugs, including cannabis and cocaine, had increased over the previous five years. Such surveys have also been conducted in Costa Rica and Panama.

280. A national survey conducted on drug abuse in El Salvador was completed in June 2004. The survey indicated that 16 per cent of the population had abused an illicit drug at least once and 7 per cent had done so in the previous year. The survey also showed that the age of initial use of crack and cannabis was approximately 13 years, which indicated a need to ensure adequate drug abuse prevention programmes for children 12 years old and younger.

281. Concrete information on drug abuse in many countries in Central America and the Caribbean

remains scarce. The Board encourages Governments of countries in the region to continue their efforts to collect and analyse data in that area.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

282. Cocaine is trafficked in large quantities throughout Central America and the Caribbean. The authorities of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba seized almost 5,000 kg of cocaine in 2003, an increase from approximately 2,000 kg in 2002. There are indications that drug trafficking organizations in the Netherlands Antilles are increasingly paying individual drug carriers ("mules") not in cash but in MDMA or cocaine, thereby increasing the level of drug abuse and drug-related crime and exacerbating the adverse social situation in the territory.

283. In Honduras, the total amount of cocaine seized increased from an average annual level of approximately 1,500 kg in the period 1997-2000 to over 5,000 kg in 2003. In August 2004, a truck containing 1,600 kg of cocaine was seized by the authorities in Nicaragua near the border of that country with Honduras.

284. In 2003, the Government of Bahamas seized a total of over 4,000 kg of cocaine, the highest level recorded since 1997. The amount of cocaine seized in Guatemala totalled over 9,000 kg in 2003, reaching previous high levels of 1998 and 1999. The Government of Costa Rica seized a total of 2,900 kg of cocaine in 2002, 4,200 kg in 2003 and 4,300 kg in the first six months of 2004 alone.

285. In response to rigorous efforts by law enforcement agencies, drug trafficking organizations in some countries are changing their modus operandi. In Honduras, there appears to have been an increase in the use of air and sea routes for drug trafficking. In Jamaica, drug traffickers are increasingly using small boats to transport illicit consignments, and drug trafficking organizations were making reconnaissance flights with small aircraft to ensure that sea lanes were clear before dispatching their boats.

286. Cocaine abuse appears to be increasing in Central America and the Caribbean. In Panama, the annual prevalence rate is 1.4 per cent, though that figure is based on data collected in 1997. Barbados, Guatemala,

Nicaragua and Saint Lucia are all estimated to have an annual prevalence rate of 1 per cent. In the Dominican Republic and Haiti, cocaine abuse, though still minimal, is also increasing.

287. Cannabis cultivation takes place in most countries in Central America and the Caribbean; most of the cannabis produced is abused locally or smuggled into neighbouring countries. Governments in the subregion have continued their cannabis eradication programmes.

288. Jamaica has reported considerable success in the elimination of illicit cannabis cultivation, the total area under such cultivation in that country having fallen from 900 hectares in 1999 to 400 hectares in 2003. The total amount of cannabis seized by the authorities in Jamaica in the same period fell from 74,000 to 36,000 kg. Despite those successes, Jamaica continues to be a major source of cannabis in the region. The Board encourages Jamaica to continue its efforts, including the collection of data to assist in monitoring the situation. The Board calls on Jamaica's partners to support those efforts through financial and technical assistance.

289. Heroin abuse in Central America and the Caribbean is relatively low, but the situation is changing as drug trafficking throughout the region is increasing. An increase in heroin abuse has been reported in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador.

290. Females account for an increasing proportion of drug abusers in Central America and the Caribbean. The Board urges Governments in the region to ensure that, in efforts to combat drug abuse, adequate programmes are in place to ensure that special attention is given to female drug abusers.

Psychotropic substances

291. Surveys indicate that the abuse of pharmaceutical medications containing psychotropic substances is at a high level in certain countries in Central America and the Caribbean. One study shows that psychotropic substances, in particular flunitrazepam and diazepam, are the main drugs of abuse among street children in Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti. Those substances are diverted from the licit market or international donations or are smuggled from Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, the Netherlands Antilles, Panama and Venezuela. CICAD has noted that the control of

psychotropic substances remains problematic in several countries in Central America and the Caribbean. The Board urges Governments of countries in the region to ensure that adequate controls are in place for pharmaceutical medications, in accordance with the provisions of the international drug control treaties.

North America

Major developments

292. The North American region is, collectively, the largest market in the world for illicit drugs. Large-scale trafficking and illicit manufacture of drugs are also a grave concern, and the abuse or misuse of prescription drugs appears to be a growing phenomenon. At the same time, the countries in the region devote a large amount of resources to deal with their drug problems, both within and beyond their individual countries. Collaboration between the countries of the region, in particular in the field of law enforcement, is excellent.

293. The first national survey on drug abuse since 1994 was launched in Canada in December 2003. The survey represents the first step in ensuring that comprehensive data on current trends are available, as recommended by the Board. Debate continued in Canada regarding proposed legislation that would reduce the sanctions for possession of small amounts of cannabis from criminal prosecution to a fine.

294. The Government of Mexico continued its law enforcement efforts against drug trafficking, recording several major successes, including the arrest of high-ranking members of drug trafficking organizations. Mexico also acted as host to the High-level Political Conference for the Purpose of Signing the United Nations Convention against Corruption, held in Merida in December 2003.

295. The United States, the world's largest single market for illicit drugs, continued to be a major partner in international drug control efforts, in particular in the area of law enforcement. As a result of law enforcement efforts, including joint operations involving the United States and other countries, eight major international drug trafficking organizations were dismantled during the past year and seven others were severely disrupted. The United States also continued its efforts to address the high level of drug abuse on its territory; consequently, there was a significant decline

in drug abuse among secondary-school students. However, the abuse of some pharmaceutical medications containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances appears to be an increasing problem in the country.

Treaty adherence

296. All three States in North America are parties to the three international drug control treaties.

Regional cooperation

297. The three countries in North America continued their excellent cooperation in the area of law enforcement and achieved a number of successes against international drug trafficking organizations. In March 2004, Canada and the United States dismantled an organization that had been engaged in illicit drug manufacture and trafficking on a large-scale; as a result of that operation, more than 130 persons in the United States and 50 persons in Canada were arrested. In May 2004, the authorities of Canada, Colombia, the United Kingdom and the United States dismantled a large-scale money-laundering ring, which had laundered millions of United States dollars of proceeds from the sale of Colombian cocaine.

298. A large number of high-ranking members of drug trafficking organizations were also arrested in Mexico, often as a result of joint operations and the sharing of intelligence with other countries in Central America and/or North America. Mexico extradited 31 persons to the United States, 19 of whom had been charged with drug-related offences. Prosecutors in Mexico and the United States participated in a cooperation programme to identify practical methods to improve extradition procedures.

299. All three States in North America are members of CICAD and participate in the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism. The thirty-fourth regular session of CICAD was held in Montreal, Canada, in November 2003 and the thirty-fifth regular session was held in Washington, D.C., in April 2004. The Board encourages the three States in North America to continue their active participation in that regional forum.

National legislation, policy and action

300. The Board welcomes that, pursuant to its recommendation, in December 2003, the Government

of Canada commenced the first national survey on drug abuse since 1994. Until the current survey, information on drug abuse in Canada had been incomplete. The Board hopes the findings of the survey will be utilized by the Government of Canada in developing programmes to combat drug abuse in that country.

301. The Board notes that legislation proposed by the Government of Canada to revise penalties for cannabis-related offences remains the subject of debate. While, under the proposed legislation, the possession of cannabis would remain a criminal offence, the possession of small amounts of that substance would not result in a criminal record. The Board is concerned that any revision should not contribute to the mistaken perception that cannabis is a harmless substance. The proposed legislation would also increase penalties for the production of cannabis in certain cases.

302. Mexican law enforcement authorities arrested high-ranking members of major drug trafficking organizations in the past year. For example, in April 2004, members of the Mexican police force arrested a Guatemalan national alleged to have been the head of one of the largest drug trafficking organizations in Central America and, in August 2004, Mexican authorities arrested the leader of an organization alleged to be responsible for having trafficked approximately half of the cocaine entering the United States from Mexico. The Government of Mexico also continued its efforts against corruption, which in many cases was connected to drug trafficking. For example, in April 2004, the Government took action in a state in central Mexico against a large number of police officers who had been accused of transporting cocaine in police vehicles.

303. In July 2004, the Government of Mexico indicated that some of the main drug trafficking organizations had been significantly weakened. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts against drug trafficking, especially as there are indications that drug trafficking organizations are becoming more decentralized, with a larger number of smaller organizations.

304. The Board notes that cannabis and opium poppy illicitly cultivated in Mexico, though not on a large scale, have posed problems in North America for some years. As part of its demand reduction efforts, the Government of Mexico continued to establish

municipal committees against drug addiction. The Board notes that the large amount of drugs trafficked through Mexico leaves the country vulnerable to the spillover effect, which has already taken place in other countries. In addition, the Board notes that there are high rates of abuse for some drugs in the northern part of the country. The Board encourages the Government to continue strengthening its efforts in demand reduction, and it hopes that the municipal committees will prove to be a useful tool in combating drug abuse.

305. The Government of the United States continued to give top priority to combating drug trafficking and drug abuse. Besides its efforts on its own territory, the United States is also a major partner in international drug control, having allocated US\$ 731 million for the year 2005 to support drug control efforts in countries in South America, including support for law enforcement, the eradication of illicitly cultivated crops, institution-building, alternative development and demand reduction programmes. The Government also plays a leading role in Project Prism, a global operation initiated by the Board in 2002 to address the diversion of precursors used in the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

306. Though recent official data show that the rate of drug abuse among the general population of the United States has remained stable since 2002, there has been a significant decrease in the abuse of illicit drugs among secondary-school children, the first such decline in more than a decade. The perception of the risks involved in the abuse of drugs, in particular cannabis, among young persons also appears to have increased—a development that may be attributed in part to the effectiveness of media campaigns.

307. The Board notes with concern that, despite the above-mentioned positive developments, the rate of drug abuse in the United States remains disturbingly high: the prevalence of illicit drug abuse in the past month is 8.2 per cent. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts in drug abuse prevention. The Board notes that the rate of drug abuse varies widely among the major ethnic groups in the country, and it encourages the Government to take those differences into account in formulating and implementing demand reduction programmes.

308. The Board notes that experience in several countries and jurisdictions has shown that drug courts

may be effective in ensuring that non-violent drug offenders undergo treatment, and it encourages countries to continue exploring that option in addressing drug abuse and related problems. The Board welcomes the significant increase in the funding available for drug courts in the United States, which was announced by the Government. The Board also notes the efforts by the Government to establish mandatory minimum standards for drug addiction treatment in the country and encourages it to continue those efforts.

309. In July 2004, law enforcement authorities in the United States closed down several web sites that had been used to sell controlled psychotropic substances. The web sites had made it possible for such drugs to be sold to thousands of customers worldwide. The Board has repeatedly expressed concern about the growing phenomenon of the sale of controlled substances over the Internet, and it urges Governments to take adequate measures to ensure compliance with the international drug control treaties. The Board convened an expert meeting on the subject in October 2004, the major conclusions and recommendations of which are reflected in paragraphs 170-184 above.

310. A panel of experts convened by the Government of the United States concluded in February 2004 that the increase in methadone-related emergency room visits and deaths in the period 1995-2002 had not been attributable to any diversion from methadone substitution treatment but had been associated mainly with the use of methadone as medication prescribed for pain.

Cultivation, production, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

311. Cannabis remains the most abused drug in North America and is produced in significant amounts in all three countries in the region. The Government of the United States estimates that approximately 2,500 tons of cannabis is produced in that country; over 3.3 million cannabis plants were eradicated by the Government in 2002, which represents a slight increase over the level of the previous year.

312. Law enforcement agencies in all provinces of Canada report that illicit cannabis cultivation is one of their main drug law enforcement problems; in several provinces, such cultivation has reached levels that could be deemed epidemic. Despite some reports

regarding the widespread cultivation of high-potency cannabis in Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police points to research indicating that the potency of cannabis cultivated in Canada remains stable. As noted in paragraph 317 above, the Government of Mexico is currently establishing a mechanism for the estimation of illicit drug crop cultivation on its territory.

313. Cocaine is trafficked in large quantities throughout North America; that is largely a result of the fact that the United States is by far the world's largest market for the drug. The abuse of cocaine also takes place in Canada and, to a lesser extent, Mexico. According to the assessment of the Government of Canada, much of the cocaine entering the country from the United States appears to be connected to the smuggling of Canadian cannabis into the United States, indicating that drug trafficking organizations are engaging in a form of barter trade.

314. The total amount of cocaine seized by the Government of Mexico increased significantly, from 12,600 kg in 2002 to approximately 21,000 kg in 2003. There are indications that drug trafficking organizations are using Mexico as a transit point for cocaine destined for Europe. The Board urges the Government of Mexico, in cooperation with other Governments, to make every effort to deal with that new development. The Board is also concerned about recent indications that drug trafficking organizations are beginning to change their methods in Mexico, perhaps targeting the country as an emerging market. That is perhaps evidenced by the recent seizure of a large amount of stored cocaine and the dismantling of a large laboratory for cocaine manufacture, both in Mexico City.

315. A recently published national household survey shows that the rate of cocaine abuse in Mexico, which is concentrated mainly in the states in the northern part of the country, decreased slightly in the period 1998-2002, after having increased for roughly a decade. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts in demand reduction.

316. In the United States, cocaine (in powder or crack form) continues to be regarded as the drug that poses as the greatest threat and that most contributes to violent crime.

317. The Government of Mexico estimates that opium poppy cultivation has remained stable in 2003.

According to estimates of the Government of the United States, 4,800 hectares of illicit opium poppy were cultivated in Mexico in 2003. The Board notes that the Government of Mexico is in the process of establishing a system for estimating the quantity of drugs illicitly produced in Mexico. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts to obtain an accurate estimate of the scope of illicit crop cultivation on its territory.

318. Data released in 2004 in the United States show an increasing problem involving the abuse or misuse of some prescription drugs under international control, including oxycodone and hydrocodone. Those drugs, which are used for pain treatment, are also abused by young persons. The majority of prescription drugs abused in the country are diverted from the licit market and obtained through Internet pharmacies.

319. Recent research indicates that drug abuse in Mexico is increasing at a faster pace among women than among men: while there were 13 male drug abusers for every female drug abuser in 1998, there were four male drug abusers for every female drug abuser in 2002.

Psychotropic substances

320. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in North America has continued on a large scale and appears to be increasing. In 2003, over 9,000 clandestine laboratories used for methamphetamine manufacture were dismantled in the United States—more than in any other country in the region; in the same year, 37 such laboratories were dismantled in Canada and 20 were dismantled in Mexico.

321. The abuse of methamphetamine remains at a high level in the United States, though recent research indicates a gradual decline in the abuse of this drug among young people. In Canada, the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants, including MDMA (Ecstasy) and methamphetamine, is increasing among young people. There are also indications of increasing use of those drugs among adults. The total amount of MDMA (Ecstasy) seized by Canadian authorities has increased dramatically in recent years, and the number of clandestine MDMA (Ecstasy) laboratories dismantled by the Government has also increased.

South America

Major developments

322. Significant positive developments have occurred in South America during the past year. Drug control in South America continues to be an issue of considerable political importance, not only to the region itself, but also to the rest of the world. That is evidenced by the ongoing discussion on how to maintain the assistance provided by the United States for alternative development and to strengthen institutions and develop social infrastructure in countries in the Andean subregion. Those issues were addressed at the sixth high-level meeting of countries in Latin America and the European Union, held in Dublin in May 2004; at the meeting, Peru was elected President of the coordination and cooperation mechanism in drug matters between the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean. In South America, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation was reduced during 2003 for the third consecutive year. The Governments of several countries in the region have had considerable success against drug trafficking networks, as evidenced by, among other things, increased drug seizures. Strengthened regional and bilateral cooperation in interdiction efforts have contributed to that success. Most notably, in June 2004, as a result of a joint operation involving national law enforcement agencies and the United States and other countries outside of the region, the head of one of the largest drug cartels in Colombia was arrested (see para. 330 below). In Colombia, the Government has made progress in combating drug trafficking and guerrilla and paramilitary groups involved in drug trafficking.

323. At the same time, heightened social disturbances and violence related to illegal drugs have continued, particularly in Peru in the first half of 2004. Although there are numerous effective alternative development schemes currently under way, there are still far too many coca bush farmers in Bolivia and Peru who are dependent on income from such illicit cultivation. Insufficient support and implementation of sustainable alternative development programmes in some coca bush cultivation areas might have contributed to this. Drug trafficking, and the money-laundering and corruption associated with it, continues to endanger stability in the region. As in the recent past, drug traffickers have attempted to intimidate public prosecutors, demonstrating once again the close links

between drug trafficking and organized crime. Drug traffickers have responded to interdiction efforts by using different trafficking routes, by entering into new strategic alliances with trafficking organizations from other regions (such as the alliance involving Colombian and Moroccan organizations) and by merging organizations previously concentrating only on either cocaine or heroin.

324. Open clashes between farmers who cultivate coca bush and the Government, which has made an effort to reduce such cultivation, continue in Bolivia; in Peru, the frequency and the level of violence of such clashes have increased. In Peru, where, in 2003, 40 per cent of the reduction in coca bush cultivation was undertaken voluntarily, some federations of coca bush growers are demanding new legislation that would make such cultivation completely legal and would contain no more provisions for drug crop eradication or alternative development. The Government of Peru has found such demands to be unacceptable. The Board urges the Governments of Bolivia and Peru to ensure that the provisions of the 1961 Convention concerning illicit crop cultivation and illicit drug production and trafficking are fully implemented in their countries.

325. The Board is concerned about recent developments in the cultivation of coca bush and the manufacture of cocaine, since a reduction in the total area under cultivation might be offset by increasing yields in most producing countries. At the same time, coca bush cultivation is being moved to areas previously not affected. The increasing seizures of cocaine in and outside the region and the diversification of trafficking routes indicate that there is no shortage of that drug in illicit markets, despite the significant reduction in coca bush cultivation and other achievements of interdiction efforts.

326. Since coca bush cultivation is often found in areas where poverty prevails, the Board is convinced that measures to alleviate poverty are extremely important to achieve a continuous reduction in the production of coca leaf and other narcotic drugs in South America.

Treaty adherence

327. All States in South America are parties to the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention.

Regional cooperation

328. In South America, countries continue to participate actively in multilateral cooperation mechanisms of CICAD. For example, in a pilot project in South America undertaken by CICAD, Uruguay has been chosen to develop activities related to a programme on estimating the human, social and economic costs of illicit drugs in America (see also para. 336 below). In addition, many States with common geographical characteristics or shared borders have entered into bilateral or multilateral agreements and have continued to adhere to those agreements; for instance, the third meeting of the Executive Committee of the Andean Cooperation Plan for the Control of Illegal Drugs and Related Offences was held in Cuenca, Ecuador, in April 2004. Other examples include the cooperation between Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Peru and Uruguay in a subregional system for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse. In February 2004, the military forces of Brazil, Colombia and Peru signed an agreement aimed at suppressing drug trafficking and arms smuggling; it was the first agreement of its kind and involved three countries in the Amazon area.

329. At the Thirteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Salvador, Brazil, in October 2003, representatives expressed their Governments' concern over the increased manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants, in particular methamphetamine, and the increasing abuse of such stimulants in the region. The Meeting noted that the use of postal and courier services in drug trafficking had been increasing. The Meeting agreed that Governments should strengthen cooperation with postal and courier services to facilitate the detection and prevention of the use of the postal system for drug trafficking and, where appropriate, to facilitate controlled delivery operations.

330. In June 2004, a joint operation involving the law enforcement agencies of the Bahamas, Canada, Colombia, Jamaica, Panama and the United States led to the arrest of the head of one of the largest drug cartels in Colombia, as well as over 50 members of the cartel. The operation also resulted in the seizure of 6,539 kg of cocaine, 1,209 kg of cannabis and more than US\$ 25 million in currency and seized assets.

331. The United States and countries in Europe continue to provide resources for drug control in South America through bilateral and multilateral agreements in various fields, such as law enforcement, criminal and fiscal investigation and judiciary matters, alternative development and educational programmes for drug abuse prevention.

National legislation, policy and action

332. In Bolivia, the integrated strategy to fight drug trafficking for the period 2004-2008 was approved by the Government in September 2004. The strategy includes promotion of sustainable alternative development, eradication of illicit crop cultivation and control of precursor chemicals, prevention of the diversion of coca leaf into illicit channels, prevention of illicit drug manufacture and trafficking and prevention of laundering of proceeds obtained from illicit activities involving drugs. The strategy also introduces a new focus on the prevention of drug abuse and the treatment and social reintegration of addicts. The national plan for alternative development for the period 2004-2008, which is based on the principles of sustainability, integrity and social participation, was approved by the Government of Bolivia in May 2004. In Peru, the national drug control strategy for the period 2002-2007 was approved in January 2004. In Ecuador, the new decree on the national policy to fight drugs strengthens the role of the competent authority, the Consejo Nacional de Control de Sustancias Estupefacientes y Psicótropicas, and provides for a balanced approach between activities aimed at reducing the demand for and supply of illicit drugs.

333. In Colombia, a reform of the criminal procedure code will enter into force on 1 January 2005 as part of the overall reform of the criminal justice system; during 2003, an updated law on controlled substances, covering narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors, was issued and judges were trained in legislative measures relevant to their work in the prevention of trafficking in drugs and precursors. In Brazil, a new law amending Act No. 6.368 of 21 October 1976 is currently awaiting adoption by the Federal Senate; if adopted, the new law would remove mandatory prison sentences for drug abuse offences, directing addicts to treatment, and would increase penalties for drug trafficking. The Board trusts that the new law will be in line with the provisions of the international drug control treaties.

334. With regard to action taken to prevent money-laundering, the Board notes that, in Chile, Law No. 19.913 on money-laundering was enacted in 2003, establishing a financial intelligence unit and replacing or strengthening laws against money-laundering dating back to 1995. In Colombia, according to the Government, stricter measures to facilitate forfeiture of property originating from illegal activities have resulted in a significant increase in such forfeitures since mid-2002. The Government of Paraguay reported law enforcement successes vis-à-vis illegal foreign exchange providers and in strengthening judicial and fiscal units; a draft law against money-laundering is still being examined by the parliament. In Peru, the parliament adopted a law strengthening the role of the newly created financial intelligence unit in July 2004. A national strategy to combat money-laundering was adopted in Brazil in January 2004.

335. For precursor control, activities aimed at controlling and combating the use of chemicals for the manufacture of cocaine and heroin continued under Operation Seis Fronteras, a regional initiative involving Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, as well as the United States. Governments also cooperated in Operation Purple, the international tracking programme for prevention of the diversion of potassium permanganate (used for the illicit manufacture of cocaine) and Operation Topaz, the international tracking programme for prevention of the diversion of acetic anhydride (used for the illicit manufacture of heroin). In Peru, a new precursor law was adopted in July 2004, strengthening controls and providing for stricter sanctions in the event of non-compliance.

336. Programmes for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, including relevant training, are coordinated among countries of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay). Those programmes include giving special attention to raising awareness about the risks of injecting drug abuse, which might result in the spread of HIV/AIDS, and drug abuse by pregnant women. In Chile, an interim report on the implementation of the national strategy covering the period 2003-2008 shows that prevention programmes have been carried out according to plan in schools, public enterprises, places of work, large communities and the armed forces. The Board notes that the Government of Uruguay is undertaking a survey on drug abuse among persons detained by the police; in

addition, drug abuse prevention activities at schools and correction centres are being evaluated with a view to developing a new consolidated prevention strategy for the country.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

337. Illicit cultivation of cannabis mainly to be used locally or in other countries in South America continues to be detected in most countries in the region and appears to be increasing in several of those countries. For example, cannabis is cultivated in the north-eastern part of Brazil. In Paraguay, more than 5,500 hectares are under cannabis cultivation, and most of the cannabis produced is destined for the Brazilian market. Operation Aliança, a campaign to eradicate illicit cannabis cultivation in the border area between Brazil and Paraguay, is carried out jointly by those two countries on a yearly basis. The eradication of cannabis cultivation has also been reported in Ecuador. Seizures of cannabis have increased in the region.

338. In 2003, the total area under coca bush cultivation in Bolivia, Colombia and Peru decreased by 11 per cent compared with 2002, to 154,000 hectares, the lowest level in a decade. However, as stated in paragraph 325 above, recent developments in coca bush cultivation indicate that reduction in the total area under cultivation in South America appears to be offset by increasing agricultural yields. Although the total area under coca bush cultivation decreased more in Colombia than elsewhere in the region, from 102,000 hectares in 2002 to 86,000 hectares in 2003, such cultivation actually increased in certain parts of that country and is no longer confined to remote areas with no infrastructure. In addition, a shift towards smaller plots has been identified, possibly in an attempt to make it more difficult to carry out eradication efforts involving crop spraying. Moreover, it appears that high-yield varieties of coca bush have been introduced in Colombia.

339. In Peru, it has been found that the reduction of the area under coca bush cultivation in 2003 by 5 per cent compared with 2002, to 44,200 hectares, was at least partly offset by higher yields resulting from improved farming techniques such as increased plant density and the use of fertilizers. According to estimates by the United Nations Office on Drugs and

Crime, there were 23,600 hectares under coca bush cultivation in Bolivia in 2003 and there are worrying signs that such cultivation might have increased during that year. The use of irrigation and fertilizers to cultivate coca bush is now common in Bolivia; for that reason, the agricultural yield of coca leaf in that country was also higher in 2003 than in previous years.

340. In addition, illicit coca bush cultivation continues to be reported in Ecuador and in Venezuela, close to those countries' borders with Colombia; however, the extent of coca bush cultivation in those countries is small compared with that of the major producing countries. In Venezuela, such cultivation is reportedly partly attributable to farmers who leave Colombia as a result of conflict in that country. The Board reiterates its appeal to all States in South America to cooperate with each other in order to prevent the displacement of illicit crop cultivation.

341. In all the above-mentioned countries in South America, illicit coca bush cultivation is being eradicated, mostly manually; only in Colombia is it being eradicated mainly through crop spraying. In Colombia, the reduction in illicit coca bush cultivation is believed to be mainly due to strict law enforcement and crop spraying, since in 2003 spraying activities reached a record high level, although bad weather impeded crop spraying at the end of 2003. In contrast, in Bolivia and Peru, such eradication is carried out, to a great extent, voluntarily. The Board wishes to re-emphasize that continued reduction of illicit coca bush cultivation, either on a voluntary basis or as a result of interdiction efforts, will depend on the ability to offer sustainable alternative livelihood to farmers in the producing countries. It is therefore essential for the international community to continue to support and expand alternative development initiatives in those countries.

342. Based on the estimated cultivation of coca bush, the potential total manufacture of cocaine in South America in 2003 was estimated at 655 tons, compared with 800 tons in 2002. It should be noted that the figure for 2003 has been calculated according to past agricultural yields, which may no longer be valid at times of increasing agricultural yields. In addition, there are indications that cocaine manufacture from coca leaf has also become more effective, since traffickers have begun using better methods for extracting cocaine from coca leaf and have become

more experienced in the use of precursors. The bulk of the cocaine continues to be manufactured in Colombia, but illicit manufacture of cocaine is known to take place or to have taken place in recent years also in all other countries in South America except Paraguay and Uruguay. In Colombia, strengthened law enforcement efforts during 2003 and 2004 resulted in increased detection and dismantling of clandestine laboratories used for cocaine manufacture.

343. Seizures of coca leaf, predominantly reported in the countries in South America where illicit coca leaf production exists, doubled in 2003 compared with 2002, due to strengthened interdiction efforts. Cocaine trafficking in the region continues to consist mainly of transit trafficking: the transport of cocaine consignments destined for the United States or, increasingly, Europe. Brazil, Ecuador and Venezuela are the countries in South America most affected by cocaine trafficking, although transit trafficking has increased in other countries in the region, such as Argentina and Chile. Increasing amounts of cocaine from Brazil and Colombia are smuggled through Portugal into Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, primarily Angola and Mozambique, and into South Africa. There are also reports that cocaine from South America is being trans-shipped via several African countries to Europe. During 2003 and the first half of 2004, seizures of cocaine increased or remained stable in most countries in South America; increased cocaine seizures were reported in a number of countries in the region, in particular, in Colombia and Venezuela. In Suriname, 341 kg of cocaine were seized from a clandestine airstrip in November 2003.

344. In the recent past, the low level of oxidation of the cocaine seized was evidence of the success of Operation Purple, the international tracking programme for the prevention of the diversion of potassium permanganate. Governments of countries participating in that operation were identifying the legitimacy of end-users and determining the actual requirements of those companies, in order to ensure that no diversion from domestic distribution channels was taking place. In 2003, as in 2002, clandestine laboratories used for the manufacture of potassium permanganate continued to be detected and dismantled in Colombia, indicating that traffickers had found other ways to obtain the chemical in the quantities that they needed. It is not surprising that an increase in the purity of seized cocaine has been reported in Colombia

and Paraguay, although the purity level is not yet comparable to the levels attained in the mid-1990s.

345. While possible methodologies for making sound estimates of the illicit cultivation of opium poppy and the illicit production of opium in South America are still being explored, the Government of Colombia believes that around 4,000 hectares were used for that purpose in 2003, based, inter alia, on the total area of opium poppy eradicated, which amounted to almost 3,000 hectares. It is assumed that the total area under opium poppy cultivation has not changed much in recent years, despite eradication efforts involving crop spraying. Eradication efforts targeting illicit opium poppy cultivation also continue to take place in Peru and Venezuela.

346. Heroin manufacture continues to take place in South America, mainly in Colombia; the majority of the heroin manufactured is destined for the United States. Seizures of heroin in the region have been increasing; the country most commonly reported to be the source of the heroin seized is Colombia. While, in 2003, Colombia continued to report the highest level of heroin seizures in South America, the level of such seizures in Venezuela increased significantly in 2002 and has remained high since then, which may be an indication that that country is on one of the main transit routes used for smuggling heroin out of the region.

347. According to the Government of Colombia, more than 95 per cent of the chemicals used in illicit drug manufacture in that country have been smuggled into the country and only 5 per cent have been diverted from domestic licit distribution; that highlights the need for neighbouring countries to remain vigilant and prevent the smuggling of those chemicals into Colombia. The Governments of many countries in South America, including that of Colombia, indicated that in 2003 they had effected an increased number of seizures of such chemicals and in 2003 and 2004 had dismantled several clandestine laboratories used in illicit drug manufacture. The Board is greatly concerned that Colombia did not submit to it information on seizures of such chemicals or any information related to the origin or destination of the chemicals in question. The Board wishes to re-emphasize that seizures of precursors should be investigated with a view to identifying the trafficking routes used. The results of such investigations should

then be shared with the Board, in order to alert other Governments, where necessary.

348. Although cannabis herb and resin are widely abused in South America, they are not necessarily the primary drugs of abuse. In Venezuela, for example, cannabis abuse is reported to be second only to cocaine abuse, whereas in Brazil cannabis abuse ranks second after the abuse of benzodiazepines. Cannabis and cocaine, in that order, were identified as the main drugs of abuse in a national survey on drug abuse conducted in Uruguay in 2003. While several countries in the region have reported increasing drug abuse, in Chile the prevalence of drug abuse continues to be decreasing or stable, as indicated by a national survey on secondary-school students undertaken during 2003 and a study conducted during 2002. According to data collected by CICAD for a comparative study of the use of illicit drugs in selected countries in Latin America, there are considerable differences in the perceived accessibility of such drugs among the selected countries; the accessibility of such drugs is considered to be more difficult in Ecuador and Uruguay than in Paraguay and Venezuela.

Psychotropic substances

349. There is limited illicit manufacture of psychotropic substances in South America. In 2003, clandestine laboratories used to manufacture MDMA (Ecstasy) were dismantled in Argentina and Suriname; illicit manufacture of MDMA (Ecstasy) has also been reported in Venezuela. Seizures of stimulants, mainly smuggled out of Europe, continue to be effected in countries in the region. The diversion and over-prescription of a variety of psychotropic substances continue, reflecting the need for Governments to strengthen control over the prescription of controlled pharmaceuticals and to inspect records relating to the sales of such pharmaceuticals, as requested repeatedly by the Board.⁴⁰ Seizures of diverted pharmaceuticals were reported for 2003 only by Brazil and Chile, indicating that law enforcement authorities in other countries in the region may have to pay more attention to that area.

Missions

350. The Board sent a mission to Brazil in December 2003 and found that the Government had made efforts to implement the provisions of the international drug

control treaties. At the same time, the mission found a number of areas of concern about the current status of the government policies on countering drug abuse and trafficking. The Board encourages the Government to continue to attach high priority to drug control issues and, in particular, to ensure that all bodies involved in drug-related issues have adequate resources to enable them to carry out their functions.

351. The most recent epidemiological study on drug abuse undertaken in Brazil shows that prescription medicines such as benzodiazepines or medications containing codeine are frequently abused in Brazil. In order to learn more about that problem and to be in a position to address it properly, the Board strongly encourages the Government to monitor and analyse prescription patterns more closely in order to establish the reasons behind that high rate of abuse of such drugs. The Board recommends that a nationwide initiative be launched to educate members of the medical profession, as well as the public, on the rational use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and to promote sound medical prescription practices.

352. While efforts have been made to strengthen control of chemicals that are often used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, the competent authorities for precursor control have not established a working relationship and there is no coordination or exchange of information between those entities. The Board wishes to emphasize that an effective system for precursor control requires active cooperation and a good working relationship between the different regulatory and enforcement authorities involved. The Board therefore urges the Government to ensure cooperation between the regulatory and law enforcement authorities involved in the control of precursors and to request all those authorities to establish functioning channels for exchanging information on a regular basis.

353. The Board notes both the efforts made by Brazil to fight drug trafficking and the recent increase in cocaine seizures in that country. Nevertheless, the absence of cooperation between federal and state police forces seriously limits the effectiveness of those efforts. The Board therefore encourages Brazil to continue to intensify cooperation and exchange of information between state and federal police forces, in order to be able to address drug trafficking in a more coordinated and effective manner.

C. Asia

East and South-East Asia

Major developments

354. In South-East Asia illicit opium poppy production continued to decline. In 2004, illicit opium poppy cultivation was significantly reduced in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. The average yield of illicit opium production was also reduced. Thailand is no longer a major source of illicit opium and heroin. Some small-scale opium poppy cultivation took place in the remote and mountainous areas in the northern part of Thailand. There was no opium production reported in Viet Nam.

355. The illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants, especially methamphetamine, remain a major concern in East and South-East Asia. Large quantities of crystallized methamphetamine were seized in Japan, Myanmar and the Philippines. Thailand also reported large seizures of methamphetamine, mainly in the form of tablets. The majority of countries in the region reported a significant increase in seizures of MDMA (Ecstasy) in 2003.

356. In several countries in East and South-East Asia, namely Cambodia, China, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, the abuse of opiates appears to have shifted away from opium and towards heroin. In Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, data on admissions to drug abuse treatment centres show that heroin is the primary reason that drug abusers are receiving treatment. Heroin is also the main drug used by injecting drug abusers, raising concern about HIV/AIDS transmission in many countries in the region.

357. Injecting drug abusers who share syringes continue to account for the largest percentage of new HIV/AIDS cases in China and Viet Nam. The rate for sharing syringes has been reported to be as high as 50 per cent in parts of Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand. The Board notes with satisfaction that Governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations have shown a sustained commitment to addressing the issue. The XV International AIDS Conference was held in Bangkok from 11 to 16 July 2004. The theme of the

Conference was access to education, information and medication for all infected and affected groups. The Board encourages the relevant countries to continue to strengthen their efforts to deal with the double epidemic of injecting drug abuse and HIV/AIDS.

Treaty adherence

358. In East and South-East Asia, Cambodia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have not yet become parties to any of the international drug control treaties. The Board calls on those States to ratify the treaties without further delay. The Board also encourages Timor-Leste to ratify the treaties as soon as possible.

359. The Board welcomes the accession of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the 1988 Convention in October 2004. The Board calls on that State to become a party to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention without further delay.

Regional cooperation

360. The Board notes that a number of regional meetings on precursor control have recently been held in Thailand. The first Senior Officials Meeting and first Ministerial Meeting of Pentalateral Cooperation on Drug Control among China, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand were held in Chiang Rai, Thailand, in July 2003, and the Second Senior Officials Meeting of Pentalateral Cooperation on Drug Control among China, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand was held in Pattaya, Thailand, in April 2004.

361. The Board welcomes the continued cooperation of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China under the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD) Plan of Action. In January 2004, a memorandum of understanding was signed by ASEAN and China to develop practical strategies for combating transnational crime, including drug trafficking, terrorism and money-laundering. Under the memorandum of understanding, the States agreed to exchange information, conduct personnel exchange and training, cooperate in the field of law enforcement and conduct joint research. They also agreed to hold an annual meeting to review the implementation of the memorandum of understanding and discuss future plans. At the first ASEAN Plus Three (ASEAN plus

China, Japan and the Republic of Korea) Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, held in Bangkok on 19 January 2004, views were exchanged on joint efforts to tackle regional political and security issues such as terrorism, which has been associated with other forms of transnational crime such as drug trafficking and money-laundering.

362. The Board notes that the annual meeting of senior officials of the signatories of the 1993 memorandum of understanding on drug control between the countries in the Mekong area (Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam) was held in Krabi, Thailand, from 17 to 19 May 2004. The meeting agreed to continue strengthening regional cooperation and establishing institutional links in order to share innovative approaches and best practices in the areas of community-based alternative development and the elimination of illicit opium poppy cultivation. The meeting also endorsed stronger measures to deal with the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants and HIV vulnerability in custodial and community settings, as well as judicial and prosecutorial capacity-building. The Board commends the signatory States of the memorandum of understanding for contributing financially to the project "Support for MOU partnership in East Asia".

363. The Board commends the various bilateral efforts in East and South-East Asia to combat illicit drug production and trafficking.

National legislation, policy and action

364. In April 2004, China launched a five-month campaign against drug trafficking, focusing mainly on Yunnan Province, from where it is suspected that most of the drugs from the Golden Triangle are smuggled into the country. Over the past three years, seizures in Yunnan Province of heroin reportedly originating in Myanmar have accounted for 80 per cent of all seizures of heroin in China. A total of 8,000 kg of heroin was seized in Yunnan Province in 2003. Following the success of its first five-year drug elimination plan, covering the period 1999-2004 Myanmar has launched a second five-year drug elimination plan, covering the period 2004-2009. The Board notes the progress made in Myanmar thus far and encourages the Government to continue its efforts.

365. The Board notes with concern that Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines remain on the list of countries and territories considered by FATF to be "non-cooperative" in efforts to counter money-laundering or having critical deficiencies in their systems for countering money-laundering. However, the Board notes the progress made in those countries in addressing weaknesses in their systems and encourages them to continue their efforts. The Board reiterates that it is important for each country to implement relevant legislation to prevent money-laundering as an integral part of the fight against drug trafficking.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

366. Cannabis continued to be cultivated throughout East and South-East Asia. Most countries and areas in the region, namely the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar and the Republic of Korea, reported a large decrease in seizures of cannabis in 2003 compared with the previous year. However, a significant increase in such seizures was reported by a few countries, including Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Malaysia.

367. Cannabis continues to be abused in many countries in East and South-East Asia, namely Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea.

368. As in the previous year, a significant reduction in illicit opium poppy production was seen in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar in 2004. As a result of continued government efforts to eliminate opium poppy production in the Lao People's Democratic Republic the total area under such cultivation in the country declined by a further 45 per cent, from 12,000 hectares in 2003 to 6,600 hectares in 2004. In Myanmar, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation was reduced by 28 per cent, from 62,200 hectares in 2003 to 44,200 hectares in 2004. Compared with the previous year, total production of raw opium in 2004 was reduced by approximately 64 per cent in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and by 54 per cent in Myanmar.

369. Seizures of opium were reported in several countries in East and South-East Asia, including Japan,

the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Republic of Korea and Viet Nam. In 2003, seven clandestine heroin laboratories were dismantled in Myanmar and three were dismantled in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China.

370. Opiates are the most often abused drugs in East and South-East Asia. The highest prevalence of abuse of opiates has been reported in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Malaysia and the Republic of Korea reported increased abuse of opium in 2003. In the same year, 70 per cent of registered drug addicts in China were registered for heroin abuse. Cambodia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam have reported increased abuse of heroin.

371. Increased cocaine abuse has been reported in a few countries in East and South-East Asia; in the region as a whole, however, cocaine trafficking and abuse continue to be limited.

Psychotropic substances

372. A significant amount of amphetamine-type stimulants appears to be illicitly manufactured in the border areas of Myanmar; the chemicals required to manufacture those synthetic drugs are being smuggled into Myanmar from its neighbouring countries. The Board encourages the Governments concerned to continue their close cross-border cooperation and strengthened control on precursors in those areas.

373. Most of the countries in East and South-East Asia, including China, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea, reported a significant increase in the total amount of amphetamine-type stimulants seized in 2003, compared with 2002. In 2003, 11 clandestine laboratories used to manufacture amphetamine-type stimulants were dismantled in the Philippines and 6 were dismantled in Indonesia. Although a total of 490 kg of amphetamine-type stimulants were seized in Japan in 2003, a figure slightly higher than in the previous year, when 446 kg were seized, seizures of such stimulants have generally been declining in that country since 1999.

374. Asia accounts for over two thirds of the world's amphetamine abusers, and East and South-East Asia accounts for approximately 95 per cent of the

amphetamine abusers in Asia. In East and South-East Asia, only opiates are abused more than amphetamine-type stimulants. The highest prevalence of abuse of such stimulants was reported in Thailand, followed by the Philippines and the Macao Special Administrative Region of China. In 2003, Viet Nam reported a large increase in the total amount of amphetamine-type stimulants seized and in the abuse of such stimulants.

375. The Lao People's Democratic Republic is emerging as an important transit country for traffickers of amphetamine-type stimulants illicitly manufactured in the border areas of Myanmar and destined for Thailand. Cambodia is also increasingly being used as a transit country by traffickers of drugs illicitly manufactured in East and South-East Asia.

376. Methamphetamine continues to be illicitly manufactured in China, Myanmar and, to a lesser extent, the Philippines.

377. Nearly 90 per cent of all methamphetamine seizures in the world take place in East and South-East Asia. In 2002, a total of 13,760 kg of methamphetamine were seized in the region. China seized 5,830 kg of crystallized methamphetamine in 2003, considerably more than in 2002, when 3,190 kg of that substance were seized. In February 2004, police in Japan seized a large amount of crystallized methamphetamine that had been smuggled out of Taiwan Province of China. While methamphetamine illicitly manufactured in Myanmar is mostly in tablet form, one clandestine laboratory manufacturing crystallized methamphetamine was also dismantled in that country in 2003.

378. Several countries in East and South-East Asia appear to be major sources of 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone and safrole, two precursors used in the illicit manufacture of MDMA (Ecstasy).

379. A significant increase in the total amount of MDMA (Ecstasy) seized was reported in the majority of countries and areas in East and South-East Asia in 2003, including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Indonesia, Japan and Malaysia. One clandestine MDMA (Ecstasy) laboratory was reported to have been dismantled in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China in 2003.

380. While the prevalence of abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) has remained relatively low compared with that of methamphetamine, increased abuse of MDMA

(Ecstasy) has been reported in several countries in East and South-East Asia, namely Cambodia, China, Thailand and Viet Nam.

381. The abuse of ketamine, especially among youth, which is a recent phenomenon in East and South-East Asia, has remained low. Its abuse has been reported in a few countries and areas in the region, namely Cambodia, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

382. Authorities in South-East Asia have made notable progress in addressing the trafficking in ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in the region, where the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine is of major concern. More importantly, analysis of seizure data indicates that Governments are now working in a coordinated manner to seek practical solutions to the common problem of chemical diversion. Successes have been noted in South-East Asia, where, during the past few years, illicit methamphetamine manufacture in Myanmar has been fuelled by ephedrine diverted from domestic distribution channels in China and subsequently smuggled into Myanmar. In addition to the control mechanisms that China has in place to prevent diversions from domestic distribution channels, regional efforts have helped the Governments concerned to identify practical working mechanisms for preventing cross-border trafficking in precursors. The Board trusts that those Governments will continue with their working-level tripartite meetings and that further successes will be reported in those regions.

383. A decrease in the total amount of precursors seized in 2003 was reported in most countries in East and South-East Asia, including China and Myanmar; the exception was the Philippines, which reported a major increase in the amount of precursors seized. The precursor of amphetamine-type stimulants most often seized in the region continued to be ephedrine, followed by phenylacetic acid. In 2003, 300 kg of ephedrine were seized in Myanmar. In China, the amount of ephedrine seized has been increasing over the past few years; that trend continued in 2003, when 5,800 kg of ephedrine were seized in that country. In 2004, 5,650 kg of ephedrine and 1,500 kg of pseudoephedrine were seized in three clandestine laboratories in the Philippines. In April 2004, over 400,000 tablets of pseudoephedrine, another precursor

of amphetamine-type stimulants, were seized in Australia; the tablets had been transported from Malaysia. In response to more effective controls over ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, traffickers are attempting to divert other chemicals for use in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants, with phenylacetic acid and 1-phenyl-2-propanone being the chemicals of choice. The Board therefore notes with satisfaction that Governments of countries in South-East Asia have introduced appropriate control mechanisms for those substances and, as a result, have identified attempts to divert phenylacetic acid from China to India, as well as attempts to divert 1-phenyl-2-propanone from China, via the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, to Viet Nam in 2004.

Missions

384. A mission of the Board visited Indonesia in March 2004. The Board notes with appreciation the commitment of the Government of Indonesia to tackling drug abuse and trafficking and welcomes the special measures taken by the authorities to strengthen the current legal framework for the control of precursors. The Board trusts that taking the adequate legislative and administrative measures will enable the authorities to better comply with the provisions of the 1988 Convention.

385. However, the Board notes that the continued lack of reporting by Indonesia on issues related to the seizure of illicit drugs may be the result of a lack of coordination between the National Narcotics Board and the National Agency for Food and Drug Control of Indonesia. The Board is of the opinion that the Government should initiate, as soon as possible, consultations among relevant departments involved in drug control activities, in particular the National Narcotics Board and the National Agency for Food and Drug Control, with a view to introducing the necessary revisions in the current working mechanisms, clearly defining the respective functions and establishing and/or reinforcing the necessary links between those departments. The Board believes that, by doing so, the Government will ensure that in future, internal coordination will be improved, its reports to the Board will be as complete as possible and that all the necessary information will be included.

386. While drug abuse and trafficking have increased in Indonesia, the Government has taken significant

measures to reinforce facilities for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers; the Board appreciates, in particular, the considerable efforts being made by the Indonesian authorities to combat the alarming incidence of HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users.

387. Finally, the Board notes that the Government of Indonesia is taking measures to comply with international money-laundering standards. The Board welcomes the establishment of the Indonesian Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre. The Board encourages the Government to provide the Centre with the resources necessary for it to achieve the expected results.

388. The Board sent a mission to Thailand in May 2004, mainly to assess the efforts of the Government during the “war on drugs”, an ongoing nationwide campaign against drug trafficking and abuse. In particular, the Board had noted reports that killings had taken place during the “war on drugs” and it wished to gather comprehensive information regarding the campaign and the measures and action that had subsequently been taken. The mission received detailed information from the Government regarding special committees established to investigate those cases and was informed that certain cases had already been the subject of judicial procedures. In addition, the mission was informed that criminal proceedings had been initiated against a significant number of government officials accused of corruption. The Board appreciates those efforts and trusts that the Government will continue to provide information to it regarding the progress of those investigations.

389. The Board was also informed that, subsequent to the “war on drugs”, the problem of methamphetamine abuse had been reduced. The Board received detailed information on the treatment of drug addicts in Thailand. The Board notes the efforts of the Government and urges it to undertake sustainable measures to address the drug abuse problem in Thailand.

390. The Board also received information from the Government of Thailand regarding the growing problem of ketamine abuse in the country. The Board shares the concern of the Government regarding that development; the Board notes that increasing ketamine abuse can be observed elsewhere, both within and outside the region of East and South-East Asia. The Board encourages the international community to give

serious consideration to initiating the procedure, outlined in the 1971 Convention, for placing ketamine under international control.

391. In March 2004, the Board made a technical visit to Timor-Leste, which is not yet a party to any of the three international drug control treaties. The objective of the technical visit was to introduce the Board and its work in promoting the implementation of the international drug control treaties and to obtain information on the drug control situation in Timor-Leste, assessing existing mechanisms and structures for the prevention of drug trafficking.

392. The Board is concerned that the geographical situation of Timor-Leste and the insufficient protection of its borders and coasts could lead to it being regarded by drug traffickers as an ideal transit country. The authorities have acknowledged that drug abuse and trafficking exist in Timor-Leste but on a very low scale. While the current situation in Timor-Leste with regard to drug trafficking and abuse may not be comparable to that of its neighbouring countries, little else is known about that situation; therefore, the Board encourages the authorities of Timor-Leste to consider initiating a national survey to evaluate the extent of drug abuse and trafficking and to consider preventive action.

393. The Board notes with satisfaction that the authorities of Timor-Leste are initiating the drafting of comprehensive legislation for the control of medical supplies, including narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and encourages the authorities to draft such regulations in accordance with the provisions of the international drug control treaties.

394. Finally, the Board notes the efforts of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET) in providing assistance to core administrative structures and assist in the development of various services in Timor-Leste.

South Asia

Major developments

395. South Asia continues to experience increased drug availability and abuse because of its proximity to the major opiate production areas, the Golden Crescent and the Golden Triangle, widespread domestic

cultivation of cannabis and increasing diversion of pharmaceutical products.

396. The flow of heroin from Afghanistan, the world's largest illicit opium producer and heroin manufacturer, towards South Asian countries continues to increase. One concern of Indian law enforcement officials has been the recent discovery of areas under illicit opium poppy cultivation in the south of India, close to the heroin trafficking routes leading to Maldives, Sri Lanka and countries in West Asia. Licitly manufactured but diverted pharmaceutical preparations containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are smuggled out of India and into Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Maritime drug trafficking routes leading from India to Sri Lanka and from Pakistan to India have been partially replaced by air and land routes.

397. The Board notes that India carried out its first national survey on the extent, patterns and trends of drug abuse. In the survey, the high rate of abuse of opiates and, in particular, the increasing popularity of injecting drug use were identified as major areas of concern. The survey also revealed an increase in the abuse of various pharmaceutical products, ranging from codeine-based cough syrups to anxiolytics in tablet form and injectable analgesics.

398. HIV infection associated with injecting drug use is increasing as a result of a shift from opium abuse to heroin abuse, most notably in India and Nepal, and the increasing abuse of injectable analgesics such as buprenorphine and propoxyphene. Indian authorities have noted with concern the re-emergence of illicit manufacture of and trafficking in methaqualone and, quite recently, limited abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy).

Treaty adherence

399. All six States in South Asia are parties to the 1988 Convention. Bhutan is not yet a party to the 1961 Convention and the 1971 Convention, and Nepal is not yet a party to the 1971 Convention. The Board urges both of those States to take speedy action to remedy the situation.

Regional cooperation

400. The "Roadmap for Peace" outlined by the Government of India calls for renewed cooperation and dialogue between India and Pakistan on terrorism and

other forms of cross-border crime such as trafficking in narcotic drugs. To that end, the authorities of India and Pakistan have identified focal points for sharing information and operational intelligence on drug trafficking. Senior-level customs officers from India and Sri Lanka have adopted operational-level strategies to combat drug smuggling. As part of activities undertaken within the framework of a bilateral agreement on customs cooperation between India and Maldives, senior-level customs officials from both of those countries held a meeting in Male in May 2004. The officials at the meeting decided to establish contact points for law enforcement activities to prevent various types of crime, including drug smuggling. The customs authorities of India also agreed to assist their counterparts in Maldives in drug law enforcement training.

401. At its twenty-fourth session, held in Islamabad in January 2004, the Council of Ministers of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) established high-level working groups, one of which relates to health and population activities, including drug-related matters. In May 2004, a memorandum of understanding between SAARC and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was signed to support South Asian countries in HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. The Board welcomes the initiative to enable the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk in the regional precursor control project for SAARC member States to play a more active role in the management of information relating to precursor control in South Asia. The Board notes with appreciation the strengthened cooperation between Bhutan and the Drug Advisory Programme of the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific, especially in drug prevention activities. A workshop on drug abuse prevention, organized with the support of the Government of Bhutan, recommended the development of policies and programmes aimed at schools, health care, the workplace, the community, law enforcement and other relevant areas.

National legislation, policy and action

402. In Sri Lanka, draft legislation that would allow limited and controlled cultivation of cannabis for use by the estimated 16,000 locally registered Ayurvedic practitioners is currently under discussion. At present, the practitioners use powdered cannabis processed

from seized cannabis and sold to them by the Ayurvedic Drugs Corporation. As the use of powdered cannabis does not conform to traditional methods, the proposed legislation would allow the Commissioner of Ayurveda of the Department of Ayurveda of Sri Lanka to grow cannabis in one central location, after having estimated the quantities required and taking into account the necessary protection and control measures. The Board trusts that, if the draft legislation is adopted, all provisions of the 1961 Convention (including those of articles 23 and 28) will be fully adhered to.

403. The National Assembly of Bhutan is considering the introduction of draft legislation that would include a listing of drugs termed “illicit” and would determine sanctions for the abuse of and trafficking in those drugs. In addition, the Assembly has recommended the identification of a central focal point to coordinate drug control activities.

404. From the reports submitted by India it is clear that control over imports and exports of internationally controlled substances is well implemented. However, controls over the licit manufacture of, trade in and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in India have been found to be inadequate, as evidenced by the Government’s incomplete reporting to the Board and the diversion of pharmaceutical products manufactured in India. The control of domestic distribution channels for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances needs to be strengthened as controlled drugs are easily available in India. The Board calls on the Government of India to step up its law enforcement activities, especially at the retail level, and to carry out education and information campaigns to increase the awareness of pharmacists and the general public regarding the abuse liability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The Government’s plan to include information on drug abuse in the school curriculum, in addition to existing awareness-raising programmes conducted by non-governmental organizations on the prevention of drug abuse, is a positive development.

405. In Sri Lanka, a national volunteer project aimed at formulating a long-term action plan for the prevention of substance abuse and the rehabilitation of substance abusers has been set up under the government programme for the control of crime and drug-related offences. Under the project, officials from civil society and the Government will participate in

prevention activities and awareness-raising programmes. The officials include representatives from the police, government departments, schools, health-care institutes (including doctors and nurses), Grama Niladharis (government officials familiar with certain village areas and people), Samurdhi officials (officials responsible for alleviating poverty by promoting prosperity) and religious dignitaries.

406. In Maldives, the first national awareness-raising campaign was launched in April 2004. In addition, teachers and members of clubs are trained in order to provide awareness-raising programmes for students and youths.

407. The Governments of a number of countries in South Asia are paying more attention to the treatment of drug addicts. The national survey carried out in India has revealed that enrolment in drug abuse treatment facilities is low because of the poor quality of the treatment services and the paucity of information on the services available. The Government of India has developed minimum service standards for programmes for the prevention of alcoholism and substance abuse. The standards are to serve as guidelines for improving the quality of services delivered by non-governmental organizations. The Government has also established the National Centre for Drug Abuse Prevention and eight regional resource training centres to enhance the technical capabilities of service providers in the area of drug demand reduction.

408. In Nepal, a project office established by the Government implements the sectoral plans for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts and other demand reduction activities envisaged in the national master plan for drug abuse control. The Government of Maldives has established a scheme for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts facing trial because of substance abuse.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

409. Cannabis continues to be produced and abused in large quantities in South Asia. Bangladesh and India are important source countries for cannabis herb. Nepal is a major source country for cannabis resin, which is smuggled into countries in Asia and the Pacific and Europe, as well as to the United States. The largest

seizures of cannabis resin from Nepal have been reported in India; cannabis resin in India is sold locally on the illicit market or smuggled into Europe.

410. In India, certain quantities of licitly produced opium continue to be diverted into illicit channels despite intensified law enforcement activities. Most seizures of opium are made within the opium poppy cultivation and opium production areas. The diverted opium is abused locally or processed into heroin in clandestine laboratories, to be sold on illicit markets outside the production areas. The Board is pleased to note that a survey of licit opium poppy cultivation was undertaken jointly by the Governments of India and the United States; the results of the survey are to be used to determine the minimum-qualifying yield, a measure to support the efforts required from the government to eliminate diversion of licitly produced opium.

411. Indian officials have continued to detect and destroy illicitly produced opium, as well as to prosecute those engaged in illicit opium production in northern and north-eastern states.

412. In India, opium is processed into heroin in clandestine laboratories; the laboratories generally produce a low-quality heroin base known as "brown sugar" that is sold locally on the illicit market or smuggled into Maldives and Sri Lanka. The total amount of heroin seized in India has been decreasing since 2001, averaging less than 1 ton per year.

413. The international airports at Mumbai, New Delhi, Trivandrum, Cochin and Chennai continue to be used by trafficking groups to ship heroin to countries in Eastern and Western Africa, West Asia and Europe, as well as to Sri Lanka. However, in recent years there has been a decrease in heroin trafficking along the air route from India to Sri Lanka; the majority of the heroin seizures are now made along the sea route leading from southern India to Sri Lanka. Heroin from Pakistan is smuggled into Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

414. There is widespread trafficking in pharmaceuticals containing narcotic drugs in South Asia. In Bangladesh, the number of seizures of codeine-based cough syrups from India is equal to the number of seizures of cannabis herb. An individual seizure often consists of several hundreds of litres of such cough syrup. The abuse of pharmaceuticals containing narcotic drugs, such as codeine, remains widespread in

the region. In addition, because of its lower price and easy availability, the abuse of propoxyphene by injection in India is as prevalent as heroin abuse by injection.

415. India's large chemical industry manufactures a wide variety of precursors and essential chemicals, including acetic anhydride and potassium permanganate. In India, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Regulation of Controlled Substances) Order, 1993, provide for stringent controls over notified precursors and essential chemicals. Acetic anhydride as well as methyl ethyl ketone and potassium permanganate, are subject to import-export controls. India also follows a policy of sending pre-export notifications with regard to the export of all the 23 chemicals scheduled in the 1988 Convention.

416. There are 11 manufacturers of acetic anhydride in India with an annual output of 30,000 to 40,000 tons for various industrial and pharmaceutical uses. Acetic anhydride is subject to a special customs regime, according to which its storage and transportation within 100 km of the Indo-Myanmar border and 50 km of the Indo-Pakistan border are subject to special controls. Traffickers have tried alternative methods such as exporting acetic anhydride in misdeclared sea cargo consignments using Dubai as a trans-shipment point. Acetic anhydride has continued to be seized by local law enforcement authorities. The acetic anhydride seized had been intended for use mainly in the illicit manufacture of low-grade heroin in India.

Psychotropic substances

417. Pharmaceutical preparations containing psychotropic substances, notably benzodiazepines and analgesics, are diverted from licit distribution channels, transported through South Asia and smuggled into countries outside the region, such as the Russian Federation and Scandinavian countries. Pharmacies in India are identified as supply sources for such trafficking and for their local abuse. The abuse of analgesics, anxiolytics and sedative hypnotics has increased in the region. Because of the lower price and easy availability of pharmaceutical preparations and needles and syringes, the abuse of buprenorphine in injectable form has increased significantly in India.

418. There are indications of the abuse of and trafficking in MDMA (Ecstasy) in an emerging “rave” culture in New Delhi.

419. India is the world’s largest illicit manufacturer of methaqualone (Mandrax); South Africa is the principal destination of the methaqualone illicitly manufactured in India. Illicit manufacture of and trafficking in methaqualone had become less significant following a series of successful law enforcement operations. Recently, however, the methaqualone problem has re-emerged. Illicit drug manufacturing units are controlled and funded by criminal groups based outside of India.

420. India manufactures a wide variety of precursor chemicals, including ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, *N*-acetylanthranilic acid, ergotomine, methylendioxy-phenyl-2-propanone and phenyl acetone. So far *N*-acetylanthranilic acid, ephedrine, pseudoephedrine and anthranilic acid have been placed under special controls under the NDPS Act.

421. Laboratories illicitly manufacturing methaqualone are also used for the illicit manufacture of other psychotropic substances, notably MDMA (Ecstasy) and amphetamines. Small consignments of amphetamine enter India through its border with Myanmar.

422. Almost all ephedrine seized in India is destined to be smuggled across the Indo-Myanmar border to Myanmar, where significant illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants occurs. Arrangements already exist for cooperation between drug law enforcement agencies in India and Myanmar at various levels. The Board encourages these quick exchanges of information, coordinated enforcement action and coordinated joint investigations as an efficient means to curb illicit drug manufacture in the region.

Substances not under international control

423. The abuse of ketamine, an anaesthetic, has been noted in India in the tourist area of Goa. Although ketamine should be sold only with a prescription, it has been bought freely in Goa at pharmacies and, reportedly, in beach bars. Indian authorities have actively tried to curb this illicit trade in Goa by raiding unauthorized suppliers and searching European tourists. The abuse of inhalants by the poorer segments of society and street children is widespread in the region.

West Asia

Major developments

424. Opium production in Afghanistan and its impact on peace and security remain the central elements of the drug situation in West Asia. In Afghanistan itself, illicit drug production and related activities reached an unprecedented level in 2004 and are threatening the stability of the country. In other countries in the region, drug trafficking and abuse are rapidly increasing, undermining social and economic stability. In Central Asia, injecting drug abuse is becoming the main factor contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS.

425. Despite efforts made by the Government of Afghanistan, with the assistance of the international community, the drug control situation in Afghanistan continued to deteriorate in 2004. Widespread cultivation of opium poppy and the processing of and trafficking in opiates have transformed Afghanistan into a country in which the economy, the culture and the political life are dominated by the illicit drug trade, which is threatening reconstruction efforts and undermining legitimate economic activities and the establishment of the rule of law. The Board calls upon the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to continue to accord drug control the highest priority and to strengthen efforts to address the drug problem in a comprehensive manner, within the framework of overall development plans and programmes to establish law and order throughout the country and make alternative development in areas under drug crop cultivation more effective. The Board notes that the President-elect of Afghanistan has expressed his strong commitment to the implementation of drug control measures.

426. In Central Asia, concerns continue to be raised over trafficking in and abuse of Afghan opiates, as well as the illicit movement of acetic anhydride, a chemical used in the manufacture of heroin. It is estimated that one third of Afghanistan’s opium crop in 2004 will pass through countries in the region, in particular Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. The large quantities of Afghan heroin being transported towards the Russian Federation and other countries in Europe are rapidly escalating the illicit drug problems in that subregion.

427. Countries on the Arabian peninsula are more frequently used as transit points for heroin and cannabis destined for Europe, while precursors are

smuggled in the opposite direction. The abuse of opiates, especially heroin, is increasing, as is the already widespread abuse of synthetic drugs.

428. The Board is concerned that the drug situation in Iraq may deteriorate further because of the disintegration of the drug control structure in the country, given its geographical location and the current political and economic instability in the country. The complex interlinkage of terrorism, organized crime, corruption and drug trafficking poses an unprecedented threat, raising concerns that the overall situation may worsen.

Treaty adherence

429. All of the 24 States in West Asia are parties to the 1961 Convention, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention. As for the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention, Afghanistan remains the only State that has not yet become a party to that instrument. The Board encourages the authorities of Afghanistan to take appropriate action to accede to the 1972 Protocol.

Regional cooperation

430. During the past year, numerous agreements, cooperative mechanisms and joint law enforcement operations were among the activities undertaken or approved by Governments of countries in West Asia to promote regional cooperation efforts to fight drug trafficking and related criminal activities. The Board welcomes those initiatives and encourages all countries in the region to participate in future cooperative efforts.

431. At the Berlin Conference on Afghanistan, held on 31 March and 1 April 2004, the Transitional Authority of Afghanistan and its six neighbouring countries, namely China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, adopted the Berlin Declaration on Counter-Narcotics within the Framework of the Kabul Declaration on Good-Neighbourly Relations, which provided, among other things, for increased collaboration in the fight against narcotics and the establishment of a security belt around Afghanistan. In particular, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan proposed to train Afghan experts in countering trafficking in narcotic drugs.

432. In April 2004, senior law enforcement officers from Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran,

Kuwait, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates at the Regional Gulf Cooperation Meeting held in Pakistan agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the fight against criminal organizations engaged in illicit drug trafficking and cross-border organized crime. The countries decided to nominate national focal points and exchange operational staff with a view to improve the sharing of information and joint operations.

433. In July 2004, representatives of Afghanistan participated for the first time in the Intergovernmental Technical Committee meeting, a forum for the exchange of drug law enforcement information in the region. The meeting, held in Islamabad, was also attended by representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. The Committee agreed to revise the existing memorandum of understanding, in order to admit Afghanistan as a regular member of the Intergovernmental Technical Committee meetings and to establish a committee for the analysis of intelligence and the exchange of information on narcotics that would meet every six months.

434. On 3 and 4 August 2004, the Government of Pakistan hosted a seminar in Islamabad for SAARC member States to review progress made towards achieving the goals related to precursor control set in 1988 by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session. The participants shared information with regard to legislative developments in precursor control and agreed to facilitate the rapid exchange of information on precursor transactions and monitoring measures (see para. 401 above).

435. Two workshops organized under the auspices of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) to discuss drug supply reduction issues were held in Dushanbe in August 2004 and in Ankara in February 2004. In addition, a network of drug demand reduction experts was established to promote regular exchange of information among ECO member States. Furthermore, at a conference held in Kish, Islamic Republic of Iran, in October 2004, all ECO member States except Turkmenistan exchanged information on the consequences of drug abuse, evidenced-based strategies for the reduction of illicit drug demand and harm reduction practices.

436. Officials from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan held a meeting in

Antalya, Turkey, from 23 to 25 February 2004 to discuss measures to promote international cooperation against terrorism and transnational organized crime. Participants stressed the need to share information and exchange governmental experts in order to share experiences in the development of legislation and the implementation of activities against terrorism and transnational organized crime.

437. The consultative mechanism known as the Paris Pact,⁴¹ initiated in 2003 for countries affected by trafficking in opiates originating in Afghanistan, held several expert round-table meetings at the regional level in 2003 and 2004 to discuss the situation regarding drug trafficking through Central Asian countries, the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Balkan countries. A meeting of the Paris Pact policy group was held in Vienna in October 2004 to discuss the outcome of previous regional meetings. The Board notes that the meeting recommended the establishment of a task force on precursors. The Board wishes to encourage the group to take full advantage of the task forces with similar objectives that are currently operating under Operation Topaz, Operation Purple and Project Prism. Those task forces, whose members include countries participating in the Paris Pact, are functioning well. The Board urges the group to make full use of existing task forces in order to make the best use of resources and avoid duplication of efforts. The Board notes the pivotal role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as catalyst of the Paris Pact initiative and encourages the countries involved in that consultative mechanism to continue their cooperation aimed at the elimination of the threat posed by Afghan opiates.

438. The Board notes with satisfaction that all countries neighbouring Afghanistan, including Turkmenistan, are now participating in Operation Topaz, an international operation to prevent diversions of acetic anhydride. The Board trusts that the Government of Turkmenistan will take vigorous action against drug trafficking through Turkmen territory and will give high priority to participating actively in other international events aimed at promoting regional cooperation in drug and precursor control.

439. Within the framework of the Organization of Central Asian Cooperation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Southern Caucasus Anti-Drug

Programme (a joint project of the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of Azerbaijan), bilateral and multilateral agreements were adopted by the Governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, with a view to intensifying cooperation between national drug control agencies, promoting joint law enforcement operations, harmonizing national drug control legislation and building capacities.

440. Central Asian States continue to receive international assistance to combat illicit drug trafficking and abuse. In 2004, international assistance was directed towards local and regional initiatives to strengthen border controls, improving the collection and sharing of data and addressing the health consequences of injecting drug use. One beneficiary of international assistance was the Drug Control Agency of Kyrgyzstan. In another development, the Board notes that cooperation involving the deployment in Tajikistan of border guards from the Russian Federation, which has proved to be a success, will cease in 2005. The Board urges the Governments of countries in the region to work out mutually beneficial arrangements that guarantee effective border control in countries in Central Asia.

441. At a seminar on precursor control organized jointly by the Board and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Amman from 29 to 31 August 2004, representatives of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates agreed to set up a network for the exchange of information and to promote inter-agency cooperation, in order to prevent the diversion of precursors. It was the first time that representatives of most of the countries on the Arabian peninsula discussed precursor control at the regional level.

442. In June 2004, the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan signed a regional cooperation agreement aimed at preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS in the region. Countries agreed on joint activities, including activities aimed at raising awareness of drug abuse and HIV/AIDS.

National legislation, policy and action

443. The Board continues to be concerned about the unstable political situation in Afghanistan, which

hampered efforts by the Government to secure power throughout the country. The lack of control, especially at the provincial level, has been a major obstacle to implementing country-wide drug control regulations. The drug control situation in the country has further deteriorated, despite efforts made by the Afghan authorities with the support of the international community. The United Kingdom continues to hold the coordination role for counter-narcotics in Afghanistan, and other donor countries and international organizations have also become involved in providing support in drug control matters. The Board calls upon all parties involved to continue their cooperation and provision of technical and financial support in a well-coordinated manner, in order to establish law and order throughout the country and find sustainable solutions for drug control in Afghanistan. In view of the magnitude of the problem, greater determination is necessary to make a significant impact on efforts targeting illicit crop cultivation and illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse.

444. The Board notes that there have been a number of developments in Afghanistan to improve drug control capacities. Based on the national drug control strategy, which was approved by the Government in 2003, activities have been initiated in the areas of institution-building and advocacy, judicial reform, law enforcement, alternative livelihoods and demand reduction.

445. In continuing efforts at institution-building, the Counter-Narcotics Steering Group, chaired by the National Security Adviser and run by the Counter-Narcotics Directorate, the national drug control coordinating body, was established in May 2004. To implement law enforcement operations, several bodies were created. The Central Eradication Planning Cell and the Central Poppy Eradication Force were established in 2004 within the Ministry of the Interior to plan and launch opium poppy eradication campaigns. Based on targeted and uncompensated eradication, the campaigns were only marginally effective (see para. 455 below). The establishment of the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan and the Special Narcotics Force, responsible for conducting interdiction operations, have resulted in the destruction of clandestine laboratories and the seizure of opiates and cannabis resin. Progress has also been made in the development of the judicial system in Afghanistan. To facilitate the implementation of the drug control law

approved in 2003, legal workshops were conducted in May 2004 with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Board. Consultations resulted in the classification of drugs and the establishment of a framework for licit drug control, as well as the definition of penal provisions and procedures. The law does not yet cover money-laundering offences. However, the preparation of new legislation against money-laundering has been initiated.

446. The development of alternative livelihoods in opium-producing areas in Afghanistan continues to lack long-term and sustainable solutions. The Board emphasizes the need to address that situation in a comprehensive manner, with support from the international community, providing alternative development in opium-producing areas and mainstreaming drug control issues into overall development assistance. The implementation of demand reduction activities has been initiated in some provinces and there are plans to expand those activities to include other provinces. Programmes have focused on the provision of resources and training to partner agencies and organizations involved in health care, education and social services. Activities have continued in the area of monitoring opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. The annual opium poppy survey was conducted with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the results have been published, providing data on the extent and location of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and monitoring the expansion of cultivation into new areas. The collection of additional drug-related statistics has also started. Though information remains fragmented, some data have become available on the illicit drug supply, including data on seizures, arrests, prices and the destruction of clandestine drug laboratories, as well as on the illicit drug demand, including data on drug abuse among certain population groups.

447. Pakistan, which has built up a comprehensive law enforcement system in recent years, has continued its narcotics control activities. Legislation against money-laundering, drafted in 2003, has been presented to the relevant authorities for approval. The drug control master plan for the period ending in 2003 is being extended to 2007, providing an operational framework for drug control activities. To counteract the resurgence of illicit opium poppy cultivation in Pakistan in 2003, intensive eradication efforts were made in 2004. The

Board notes the commitment by the Government to eradicate opium poppy cultivation and appreciates the activities carried out in the fight against drug trafficking. However, the Board continues to be concerned about the lack of control for prohibited goods entering Pakistan via the port of Karachi and passing through the country towards Afghanistan.

448. Demand reduction activities in Pakistan are the responsibility of the Anti-Narcotics Force, the coordinating body for drug law enforcement. According to government authorities, the success of community-based awareness-raising campaigns and far-reaching drug abuse prevention programmes is reflected in the decreased level of heroin abuse in the country. In addition, 73 drug treatment centres have been set up throughout the country in recent years, many of which are run through a network in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations. The decentralization of demand reduction activities to the district level is, for the most part, working well. With regard to the collection of data on drug abuse, the Board encourages the Government of Pakistan to ensure the continuation of the monitoring mechanism set up pursuant to the national survey carried out in 2000.

449. The Islamic Republic of Iran remains a major transit country for drugs originating in Afghanistan and continues to be committed to combating the illicit drug transit traffic and drug trafficking in general. It also has increasingly recognized the dangers posed by domestic consumption. In addition to the intensified efforts made in the area of drug law enforcement, demand reduction activities have recently been initiated, including the assessment of drug abuse trends and the establishment of a national institute for drug abuse research and training. Furthermore, on the basis of studies undertaken in recent years, amendments on controlled delivery, mutual judicial cooperation and extradition have been proposed. The list of illicit drugs and other controlled substances has also been reviewed and updated in the draft amendment, taking into account the relevant provisions of the international instruments and the latest available scientific data. In addition, a bill against money-laundering has been prepared and is awaiting final approval. The Board welcomes those initiatives and stresses the need to continue to enhance activities in the field of demand reduction, with particular emphasis on strengthening cooperation with non-governmental organizations. It is

hoped that comprehensive legislation against money-laundering will be adopted and institutional structures will be established to counter money-laundering effectively.

450. Drug control activities in Turkey focus on combating illicit drug transit traffic and drug trafficking in general. Law enforcement training conducted by the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC) continued. TADOC, established in 2000 with the cooperation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, has conducted more than 50 training courses related to drug control at the national level and about 20 at the regional level. The findings of a national drug abuse assessment study, carried out in 2003, were published in a report⁴² in 2004 (see para. 486 below).

451. A number of countries in West Asia, including Israel, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, have continued their efforts to combat money-laundering. Recent initiatives in this area include the development of a system for monitoring and following up money transactions, the introduction of a regulatory structure for the system of informal overseas money transfers known as *hawala*, the establishment of special financial intelligence units and the introduction of new laws against the financing of terrorism. The Board encourages the Governments of all countries in the region that have not yet done so to ensure the adoption of comprehensive legislation against money-laundering that fully complies with international standards and norms and to put in place the necessary institutional framework and mechanisms for its implementation.

452. While the system of law enforcement has been well developed in many countries in West Asia over the past decade, the Board appreciates the increased attention given by some Governments to drug abuse and demand reduction in recent years. The knowledge and information about the nature and extent of drug abuse, though still fragmented, has improved in several countries as a result of a number of surveys and assessment studies conducted in recent years. In addition, efforts have been made in some countries to introduce drug abuse prevention programmes and establish drug abuse treatment facilities. The Board strongly encourages all countries in the region to strengthen their efforts to develop drug abuse monitoring systems and to expand their demand

reduction activities. It is noted that the adoption of relevant legislation, the allocation of sufficient resources and the participation of local communities, as well as cooperation with non-governmental organizations, continue to be lacking in many countries in the region.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

453. Cannabis continues to be the most widely available drug in West Asia. Cannabis is illicitly cultivated in several countries in the region; however, cannabis also continues to grow wild in some countries, including Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan. Cannabis continues to be widely abused in West Asia. Given the widespread growth of cannabis with a high THC content in Kazakhstan, the Government of that country has continued to develop new strategies to deal with the issue of preventing the illegal harvesting of cannabis, including the massive industrial use of wild-growing hemp from the Chu valley.

454. The Board notes with great concern that in Afghanistan the illicit cultivation of opium poppy continues unabated. In 2003, Afghanistan experienced its second largest opium harvest since 1999, estimated at 3,600 tons of opium, accounting for more than three quarters of the world's illicit opium production. Despite efforts made to counter the trend, opium production in 2004 reached 4,200 tons. The total area under opium poppy cultivation increased from 80,000 hectares in 2003 to over 130,000 hectares in 2004. Illicit opium poppy cultivation has spread to inaccessible areas. Opium prices in Afghanistan decreased considerably during 2003 and 2004, which is seen as a positive development in terms of providing less incentive for farmers to grow opium poppy. However, prices for opium are still above US\$ 100 per kilogram, compared with an average range of about US\$ 50-70 per kilogram during the late 1990s. In addition, prices for opiates in neighbouring countries remained stable, thus increasing the profit margin for traffickers.

455. Opium poppy eradication in Afghanistan, which was planned by the Central Eradication Planning Cell within the Ministry of the Interior, was initially implemented through provincial governors but with

limited success. When the Central Poppy Eradication Force joined those activities, much of the opium poppy had already been harvested. Thus, the eradication remained limited; it took place in only one province. The Board urges the Government of Afghanistan to enforce the ban on opium poppy cultivation and ensure the effectiveness of eradication efforts, in coordination with alternative development activities.

456. The Board is concerned about the fact that illicit cultivation of opium poppy continued in Pakistan throughout 2004. Illicit opium poppy cultivation had been reduced to almost nil during the late 1990s, when it had been eradicated from the last traditional poppy-growing areas of the Dir district and other districts in the North-West Frontier Province. However, opium poppy cultivation re-emerged in Pakistan in 2003 and continued in 2004. The total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation has been estimated at approximately 6,700 hectares. Most of the illicit opium poppy cultivation occurred in non-traditional growing areas, such as the Khyber Agency within the North-West Frontier Province and in Baluchistan Province. Both provinces are on Pakistan's border with Afghanistan. About 78 per cent of the illicit opium poppy cultivation in Pakistan was eradicated in 2004.

457. Though small-scale cultivation of opium poppy is also taking place in Central Asia, annual eradication campaigns have virtually eliminated the risk of such cultivation proliferating in the subregion. The Board encourages the Governments of Central Asian countries to continue their efforts aimed at identifying and eradicating illicitly cultivated drugs.

458. The processing of opium into heroin has continued on a large scale in many countries in West Asia, including, to an increasingly large extent, in Afghanistan, the main producer country. Large quantities of the precursor acetic anhydride are smuggled into Afghanistan from East and South Asia, as well as from Europe. A number of countries in West Asia have recorded seizures of acetic anhydride in recent years. Pakistan, however, reported that no significant seizures of acetic anhydride have been made since 1999 and no laboratories for heroin manufacture have been found in that country since the late 1990s. Nevertheless, it is assumed that precursor chemicals are smuggled into Pakistan via the seaport of Karachi, to be transported into Afghanistan. Although countries in Central Asia have not reported any

detection of illicit manufacturing activities in their territories, precursors reportedly continue to be smuggled through that subregion in large quantities. Furthermore, Turkey has regularly reported the detection of clandestine heroin laboratories in recent years. Law enforcement authorities in West Asian countries need to address the flow of precursors, in particular acetic anhydride, which is used for processing opium into heroin. The Board is concerned about the extent of precursor smuggling in West Asia and stresses the importance of international cooperation initiatives such as Operation Topaz.

459. Trafficking in opiates from Afghanistan, as well as cannabis resin originating in various countries in West Asia, to (or through) other countries in the region and to Europe, continues on a large scale. Synthetic drugs and precursors are frequently smuggled in the opposite direction. The main transit countries continue to be the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. The use of the southern border area between Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan (in particular, Baluchistan Province), which has always been used as a major transit area for illicit drug consignments, has intensified further. Another route, which has been increasingly used in recent years, is through countries in Central Asia. Tajikistan, for example, ranks third in global heroin seizures. In addition, countries in the area of the Persian Gulf, namely Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, are being used more frequently as transit countries for drug trafficking. Furthermore, Turkey continues to be used as a transit country because it is situated between Western Europe and South-West Asia.

460. Drug seizures continue to reflect trafficking routes and patterns. In Pakistan, opium seizures have been decreasing in recent years, while seizures of morphine and heroin have been increasing considerably. That is related to the increasing manufacturing capacities in Afghanistan, which allows traffickers to smuggle morphine or heroin instead of larger quantities of opium, thus limiting the risks. The Islamic Republic of Iran continues to record enormous seizures of opiates, though its seizure figures in recent years have been lower than during the late 1990s, particularly the figures for opium and morphine seizures. Those trends may also be related partly to increased manufacturing activities in Afghanistan and partly to the shift in trafficking routes through Central Asia. However, since 2003, seizures in the Islamic

Republic of Iran have been rising again. Afghanistan has submitted seizure data since 2003, but the quantities of drugs seized in that country continue to be much lower than those reported by its neighbouring countries. Some countries on the Arabian peninsula that are increasingly being used as drug trafficking hubs have reported an increase in seizures of cannabis resin, heroin and amphetamine-type stimulants.

461. Seizures of opium, heroin and cannabis resin in Central Asia reflect a deteriorating situation with respect to illicit drug trafficking. Partly due to improved interdiction capacities, seizures of opium in Tajikistan increased in 2003 by 45 per cent, grew 14-fold in Kazakhstan and doubled in Uzbekistan. Seizures of cannabis resin also grew significantly. Similar increases were observed with respect to heroin seizures, which increased by 44 per cent in Tajikistan, 29 per cent in Uzbekistan and more than four times in Kazakhstan. That trend continued in 2004. The Board urges the Governments concerned to reinforce their border control and interdiction capacity, especially along the borders with Afghanistan and the Russian Federation.

462. Drug abuse has become a serious concern in many countries in West Asia. For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran reported an increase in heroin consumption, including injecting drug use; opium remains the most widely used drug in that country. Pakistan continues to have one of the highest prevalence rates for heroin abuse in the world, though the trend has reportedly been decreasing recently. Cannabis continues to be widely abused in Pakistan. Both countries also reported an increase in HIV/AIDS among drug users. Drug abuse has also risen in Afghanistan in recent years, where an increase has also been noted in injecting drug use among heroin abusers.

463. The recently published national assessment on drug abuse, conducted in 2003 and based on studies conducted in six major cities, confirmed that the prevalence of drug abuse in Turkey is lower than in other countries in West Asia, though an increasing trend was noted. Cannabis and inhalants are the most commonly abused substances. In addition, heroin and MDMA are increasingly being abused. The results further suggest a relatively young population of drug users. A sizeable percentage of drug abusers also reported having recently injected drugs. Heroin was the main substance associated with injecting drug use.

Furthermore, countries in the eastern Mediterranean area and on the Arabian peninsula have experienced an increase in the abuse of opiates, especially heroin, in addition to widespread abuse of synthetic drugs.

464. As a consequence of large quantities of illicit drugs being trafficked throughout Central Asia, there has been a rising incidence of drug abuse in recent years. The abuse of heroin, opium and cannabis is a serious problem in the subregion, and it is growing in importance. The number of registered drug users in Kazakhstan stood at almost 50,000 people at the start of 2004, which represents an increase of 6 per cent over the previous year. A similar rate of increase was reported in Uzbekistan, with about 22,000 individuals, mostly heroin addicts, registered in treatment and prevention institutions in 2004. In Kyrgyzstan, the number of officially registered drug users (of which 65 per cent were heroin and opium addicts) totalled 5,600 in 2003, an increase of 10 per cent compared with 2002.

465. In Central Asia, the number of HIV/AIDS-infected people continues to increase, fuelled by injecting drug use. The latest estimates of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime suggest a total of 46,000 injecting drug users in this subregion, of whom over 9,000 are HIV-infected. While approximately 10 per cent of HIV/AIDS infections worldwide are caused by injecting drug use, this mode of transmission accounts for 60-90 per cent of new HIV/AIDS cases in Central Asia. In 2004, HIV/AIDS prevalence was highest in Kazakhstan (4,000 persons, or 2.5 per cent of all injecting drug abusers, were reported to be HIV-positive), followed by Kyrgyzstan (1.9 per cent). During the past two years, the number of HIV cases has doubled in Uzbekistan, bringing the total number of persons infected with HIV to 3,600 in 2004. The Board notes with concern the increasing proportion of HIV/AIDS infection among young people, and the reported spread of HIV in the prison systems. Reportedly, two thirds of prison inmates abuse drugs in Kazakhstan. The Board urges the Governments to take measures, with the support of all concerned, to prevent the further spread of HIV among all segments of the population.

Psychotropic substances

466. The Board notes with concern the increasing abuse of psychotropic substances, mainly

benzodiazepines and barbiturates, in tablet form, particularly among women, in West Asia. Such substances are often freely available and obtained without a doctor's prescription. The Board is particularly concerned about the extent of that problem in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey and other countries in the region. The Board urges the Governments of countries in the region to strengthen regulations on drug control, including at the retail level, while ensuring that sufficient controlled medicines are available for medical purposes.

467. Of increasing concern in many countries in West Asia is also the abuse of inhalants, which has been noted in the assessments carried out in Pakistan and Turkey and which is mainly associated with young people and adolescents, especially street children.

468. The abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants continues to be limited in West Asia. However, in the last two years, the availability and increasing use of MDMA (Ecstasy) or party or designer drugs have been noted in several countries in the region, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. Trafficking in and abuse of other illicitly manufactured stimulants (often reported as Captagon) also continues and is of particular concern in countries on the Arabian peninsula.

Missions

469. The Board sent a mission to Pakistan in July 2004 and notes the significant efforts made by the Government of Pakistan in combating illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse. For more than two decades, the country had been heavily affected by drug trafficking and had had a high prevalence of drug abuse. As a result, the law enforcement and demand reduction systems have been built up and considerable expertise has been accumulated in the suppression of illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse. The Board welcomes recent initiatives launched to develop legislation against money-laundering and encourages the Government of Pakistan to investigate incidents involving corruption.

470. The Ministry of Narcotics Control of Pakistan was established in 2003 to coordinate drug control activities. The Board hopes that the importance given to drug control within the institutional framework in Pakistan will contribute to the effective coordination of efforts by all authorities involved in the control of licit

and the countering of illicit drug-related activity, including at the federal and provincial levels.

471. The Board notes with concern the resurgence of illicit opium poppy cultivation in Pakistan in 2003, which continued in 2004. The Board recognizes the commitment by the Government of Pakistan to eradicate illicit crop cultivation areas. Trafficking in opiates originating in Afghanistan, as well as cannabis, which is also produced throughout Pakistan, continues unabated in Pakistan. The Board encourages the Government of Pakistan to continue to expand its demand reduction activities related to drug abuse prevention and treatment and to periodically investigate the extent and patterns of drug abuse. The abuse of heroin has reportedly been declining recently, but the abuse of some psychotropic substances is rapidly increasing.

472. In Pakistan, control over the licit distribution of pharmaceutical products has been found to be inadequate; that is reflected in the fact that controlled drugs are easily obtained without prescription through pharmacies. The Board is also concerned about incomplete reporting by Pakistan to the Board. The Board urges the Government to take the necessary steps to monitor the domestic manufacture and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, while ensuring sufficient availability of and accessibility to controlled drugs for medical purposes. Finally, the Board encourages the Government of Pakistan to decide as soon as possible about the future of the Opium Alkaloid Factory and, if it is continued, to integrate it into the existing licit drug control mechanism with a view to providing better laboratory and treatment services, as well as improve the reporting to the Board.

473. A mission of the Board visited Turkmenistan in December 2003. Particularly in view of its proximity to Afghanistan, it is important that Turkmenistan complies with all its obligations under the international drug control treaties, takes more vigorous efforts against illicit drug trafficking through its territory and gives high priority to cooperating actively with the international community in the fight against illicit drug trafficking.

474. The Government of Turkmenistan has provided only limited information on drug abuse, illicit drug

trafficking and seizures in that country. The Board requests the Government to ensure the systematic collection, analysis and use of information on drug abuse and the illicit drug traffic. The Government should share such information with the relevant international organizations and the Board, in conformity with the requirements of the international drug control treaties. The Board recommends that the Government carry out regular epidemiological studies on drug abuse.

475. In Turkmenistan, the legislative basis for the implementation of several provisions of the international drug control treaties has not yet been established. The Board urgently requests the Government to enact and implement such legislation, including the provisions concerning money-laundering and the control of precursors.

476. The Board encourages law enforcement authorities in Turkmenistan to intensify their efforts to curtail the illicit drug traffic and requests the Government to strengthen the capacity of those authorities to prevent the smuggling of illicit drugs into Turkmenistan as well as the use of the country as a transit area for consignments of illicit drugs and precursors. The Board encourages the Government to closely cooperate with the Governments of its neighbouring countries and to actively participate in regional drug control cooperation efforts. The Government should establish an effective system to monitor the manufacture and distribution of and international trade in precursors and should regularly furnish the required reports to the Board.

477. While data from official sources are not available, there are some reports that the number of drug addicts in Turkmenistan is increasing. The Board invites the Government to ensure that adequate treatment facilities are provided for drug addicts, in line with good medical standards. The Board recommends that the Government promote the rational use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical treatment. The authorities should monitor the consumption levels of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and ensure that they are available in sufficient quantities to those who need them, while enforcing the strict observance of the prescription requirement.

D. Europe

Major developments

478. Cannabis continues to be trafficked throughout Europe. Cannabis herb is increasingly being cultivated locally, particularly in member States of the European Union. It is estimated that more than 200 tons of cocaine are smuggled into Europe every year, entering the region mainly via Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. After three successive years of bumper harvests of opium poppy in Afghanistan, heroin trafficking has regained some momentum in Europe. There continues to be a significant illicit manufacture and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants, in particular MDMA (Ecstasy) and amphetamines, in the region.

479. The abuse of cannabis has shown an upward trend in almost all countries in Europe over the past 10 years. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Europe currently accounts for an estimated 20 per cent of all cannabis abuse in the world. The number of people in Europe seeking treatment for cannabis abuse has also increased. According to the European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction, 12 per cent of all drug abusers in treatment and 25 per cent of new drug abusers in treatment in member States of the European Union list cannabis as the primary drug of abuse. Cannabis has the highest prevalence figure in most countries in the region. However, the public debate over cannabis use is dominated more by its alleged potential benefits than by its risks. The above-mentioned upward trend in cannabis use seems to be related to the efforts by some to promote the notion that cannabis use is not harmful.

480. Whereas the abuse of heroin is stable or declining in most countries in Western Europe, the abuse of heroin in countries in Eastern Europe and in member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) continues to increase. The abuse of heroin has overtaken the abuse of "kompot" (concentrate of poppy straw) in the Russian Federation, which is becoming the largest heroin market in Europe.

481. Although methamphetamine accounts for the bulk of the amphetamine-type stimulants manufactured in the world, in Europe the clandestine manufacture of methamphetamine and its abuse appear to be limited to a few countries only. While the levels of abuse in

Western Europe appears to have stabilized, Eastern Europe is becoming increasingly important in terms of the manufacture, as well as the abuse potential, of amphetamines and MDMA (Ecstasy), which are rapidly becoming popular drugs of choice. In the Czech Republic and Poland, as well as the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), the incidence of the clandestine manufacture of amphetamines and MDMA (Ecstasy) has increased, as the number of detected illicit manufacturing factories and laboratories and the quantity of drugs seized continue to grow; such drugs are increasingly being manufactured on a large scale. Increased domestic demand has resulted in a shift towards illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, while local illicit manufacture has fuelled the spread of their abuse in the region.

482. The use of contaminated injection equipment among drug users continues to fuel the spread of HIV/AIDS; the Baltic States and the CIS member States have the highest growth rate of HIV cases among injecting drug abusers. About 80-90 per cent of new HIV cases in those countries are the result of injecting drug abuse, and the prevalence of injecting drug abuse among the adult population (persons 15-64 years old) is estimated to be as high as 2.5 per cent in Estonia, 2 per cent in the Russian Federation and 1.2 per cent in Ukraine. Furthermore, the observed spread of injecting drug abuse among sex workers and in prisons has exacerbated the situation, keeping the growth rate of registered HIV cases high or climbing. In 2003, 4 per cent of the prison population in the Russian Federation (or 37,240 persons) were infected with HIV: 95 per cent of the persons infected were injecting drug abusers. The proportion of the prison population infected with HIV was 3 per cent in the Republic of Moldova, 2 per cent in Belarus and 1 per cent in Ukraine.

483. The number of member States of the European Union increased from 15 to 25 on 1 May 2004; that development has resulted in the removal of border controls at many more borders of European Union member States. Several member States of the European Union are therefore in the process of reorganizing their customs services and significantly reducing their staff. The Board emphasizes that such adjustments should not have any adverse impact on the control of illicit drugs and precursors and the capacity to act against drug trafficking. Similarly, in many of the States that acceded to the European Union in 2004, controls over

chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs have been stricter than those required by European Commission regulations. The Board is concerned that the enlargement of the European Union membership may lead to a weakening of existing import or export controls throughout Europe. The Board calls on Governments of European countries to continue to enforce provisions relating to international trade in controlled substances.

484. Countries along the Balkan route continue to be vulnerable to illicit crop cultivation, the illicit production or manufacture of and transit trafficking in cannabis, heroin and synthetic drugs and the spread of organized crime, as a result of the continued unstable security situation, poor coordination of law enforcement efforts, lack of resources and widespread corruption in the public sector. The northern and southern branches of the Balkan route continue to supply up to 80 per cent of the heroin distributed in Europe.

485. The availability of treatment for drug addicts has increased steadily over the past few years, particularly in the member States of the European Union. Drug abuse treatment has also become more diverse: whereas, in the past, such treatment was largely for opiate dependence, more individuals are now seeking treatment for the abuse of other substances, such as cannabis and cocaine. In countries with economies in transition, however, drug abuse treatment services continue to face the consequences of restructuring and may, as a result, have to reduce their services or compete with private treatment providers, to the detriment of the increasing number of drug abusers seeking treatment. The Board urges Governments to allocate adequate resources and expand treatment services for drug addicts.

486. The Board welcomes the publication of initial results from one of the largest international studies ever to be carried out on drug abuse. The quadrennial European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD), which has been carried out under the auspices of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe since 1995 in some 30 European countries, is a cross-sectional survey undertaken in the school environment, covering more than 90,000 middle-school and secondary-school students aged 15-16. The results provide valuable information to policy makers about

the development attitudes and opinions regarding drugs over time.

Treaty adherence

487. Of the 44 States in Europe, 43 are parties to the 1961 Convention and the 1971 Convention and 41 States and the European Community are parties to the 1988 Convention.

488. Andorra remains the only State in Europe that is not a party to the 1961 Convention or the 1971 Convention. The Board invites Andorra to accede to both conventions as soon as possible.

489. The Board strongly encourages the Holy See, Liechtenstein and Switzerland to become parties to the 1988 Convention and reiterates that the 1988 Convention is the basis for effectively addressing illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and other related issues such as money-laundering.

Regional cooperation

490. In March 2004, the European Parliament approved the proposal for a Council of the European Union framework decision laying down minimum provisions on the constituent elements of criminal acts and penalties in the field of illicit drug trafficking. In accordance with that decision, member States of the European Union must take the necessary measures to ensure that serious trafficking offences are punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive criminal penalties, ranging from 1 to 10 years of imprisonment. The decision further requires member States to take the necessary measures to make incitement to commit, aiding and abetting or attempting illicit drug trafficking a criminal offence. The Board notes that possession and related offences of small quantities of drugs for "personal use" are excluded from the scope of the decision.

491. In July 2004, the Council of the European Union adopted a resolution on cannabis. The resolution calls for a variety of measures to be undertaken by member States of the European Union to address the problems of abuse of and trafficking in that substance. The resolution also calls for further research on cannabis and invites member States of the European Union to encourage new and ongoing research activities

involving cannabis, especially regarding its dependency and health risks. Furthermore, in its resolution, the Council encourages member States of the European Union, in accordance with their national legislation, to consider taking measures against Internet sites providing information on cannabis cultivation and promoting the abuse of cannabis.

492. Under the European Commission framework programme for police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters the European Conference on Money Laundering was held in Santander, Spain, from 26 to 29 April 2004. Organized by the Government of Spain, the event brought together customs and police service representatives from all member States of the European Union, as well as the European Commission, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, FATF, Interpol, the European Police Office (Europol) and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction. Participants explored how illicit drug demand and market data could contribute to a better understanding of the magnitude of the phenomenon of money-laundering. They also exchanged views on international intelligence-sharing, implementing legal frameworks and dealing with methods used by those engaged in money-laundering.

493. Regional cooperation remains strong with the eastward expansion of the European Union; countries in Southern Europe and CIS member States are becoming increasingly open to regional partnerships, especially in the areas of information exchange, law enforcement and supply and demand reduction. In 2004, the Russian Federation joined Operation Purple, which provides for international control over shipments of potassium permanganate, and Serbia and Montenegro joined Operation Topaz, which facilitates cross-border tracking of consignments of acetic anhydride. Ukraine participates in Project Prism and Operation Purple and takes part in Operation Topaz as an observer; furthermore, Ukraine continues to participate actively in the activities of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative and other regional operations, such as the second phase of Operation Containment, Operation Redoubt and Operation Channel. The Board notes the openness to international cooperation of the Government of Ukraine and, given the importance of establishing adequate controls over acetic anhydride, urges Ukraine to become a full participant in Operation Topaz.

494. The drug control authorities of the new member States of the European Union have continued their cooperation within the framework of the Phare programme (which will be phased out by 2006 for eight of the new European Union member States), workshops of the Council of Europe, and projects of the European Union, FATF and Interpol. Joint efforts have been undertaken in such areas as implementing measures against the illicit drug supply and money-laundering, emphasizing drug abuse prevention and treatment components of national strategies and integrating drug control activities of the national competent authorities of the new member States of the European Union into the framework of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction.

495. The Russian Federation continues to make efforts to contain the threat of opiate trafficking following another massive harvest of opium in Afghanistan. The competent authorities of the Russian Federation, jointly with the other CIS member States in the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, undertook measures to disrupt international drug trafficking, including by using the technique of controlled delivery; those efforts resulted in significant drug seizures. Operation Channel, conducted in September 2004 by the competent authorities of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan within the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, effectively improved interdiction capabilities and communication and coordination arrangements among participating law enforcement agencies. Particular attention was paid to the links between drug production and trafficking, involvement of banks in money-laundering schemes, financing of terrorist activities and the need to step up drug control operations.

496. The Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, within the framework of activities of the GUUAM States (Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan), have continued to strengthen their cooperation in pursuing the common objectives of strengthening regional security and combating international drug trafficking, money-laundering and international terrorism. The activities of the GUUAM States are aimed at enhancing the ability of CIS member States in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to respond effectively to new challenges and threats. The Board notes that the GUUAM States

are establishing a virtual law enforcement centre and an inter-State information analysis system that will foster the exchange of data and the coordination of border and customs control measures for tackling illicit drug trafficking.

National legislation, policy and action

497. In May 2004, the Government of the Russian Federation adopted a decree amending the criminal code and administrative regulations, which, inter alia, establish average single doses of narcotic drugs and psychoactive substances for the purpose of defining penalties for possession for personal use of and trafficking in illicit drugs. The decree stipulates that possession of illicit substances and related offences involving amounts of less than 10 average single doses will no longer be considered a criminal violation; instead it will be treated as an administrative infraction. The amendments will contribute to placing the emphasis of law enforcement efforts on pursuing drug traffickers rather than on drug abusers, while promoting the use of medical and social intervention programmes to mitigate the negative consequences of drug abuse. The Board notes that the amendments will allow heavier penalties to be imposed for trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, which is appropriate in view of the fact that there has been a significant increase in illicit drug trafficking in the Russian Federation.

498. In an effort to further align national legislation with the provisions of the international drug control treaties, the Government of the Russian Federation adopted in September 2004 a decree addressing the problem of domestic production of plant-based narcotics. The new decree makes it illegal to cultivate any plants containing narcotics, including cannabis, coca bush, all varieties of opium poppy, khat, psilocybin (hallucinogenic mushroom) and mescaline (peyote).

499. In France, a new government plan against illicit drugs, tobacco and alcohol for the period 2004-2008 was launched in July 2004 to ensure more homogeneous application of the law of 31 December 1970 on measures against drug abuse and drug trafficking, which makes possession of illicit drugs for any purposes a criminal offence. The Board notes that the Government of France decided against a change in the law itself, as that might have given the wrong

signal to the population regarding the danger of drugs, leading to a further increase in drug abuse. The new policy foresees the introduction of sanctions that are to have a deterrent effect, thereby reducing recidivism.

500. In Switzerland, the Parliament rejected a draft drug bill in June 2004 that, inter alia, would have led to the decriminalization of cannabis possession and related offences.

501. Several countries in Europe have taken measures aimed at reducing the demand for cannabis. In Switzerland, an action plan for the period 2004-2007 was launched to reduce cannabis abuse, particularly among young people, and to direct heavy cannabis abusers to counselling and treatment centres; each year, 1 million Swiss francs will be allocated to the action plan, which will make use of primary prevention measures, information campaigns and counselling services for adolescents and young adults, as well as their parents. In September 2004, "Realize it", a project to reduce cannabis abuse and cannabis dependence, was launched jointly by the Governments of Germany and Switzerland. The project involves using a 10-week counselling session to motivate young people who are regular or heavy cannabis abusers to reduce the amount of cannabis that they abuse or to stop abusing the drug altogether. In Germany, three drug counselling centres in cities close to the Swiss border are participating in the project. The Board welcomes the above-mentioned initiatives in the area of cannabis abuse prevention. The Board encourages the Government of the Netherlands to conclude its action plan against cannabis abuse, which is currently being developed.

502. In Ireland, the second phase of the National Drug Awareness Campaign was launched in January 2004. The campaign is an important component of the National Drugs Strategy of Ireland, which involves making a concerted effort in the areas of supply reduction, prevention, treatment and research in order to achieve the overall aim of reducing significantly the harm caused to individuals and society. One of the keys to achieving the overall aim of the campaign is to promote throughout society greater awareness, understanding and clarity about the dangers of drug abuse.

503. For the past two years, countries in Central and Eastern Europe have been actively strengthening their legislative base and action plans for addressing illicit

drug abuse and trafficking. The Government of the Czech Republic has presented its new national drug control strategy for the period 2005-2009, aimed at shifting the focus of competent authorities and institution in the field of drug control from supply reduction to the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, in particular among adolescents. The Governments of Latvia and Lithuania have continued to implement their new drug control strategies for the period 2004-2008, which have a common objective: promoting drug abuse prevention initiatives involving local authorities and civil society. In February 2004, the Parliament of Slovenia approved a new national drug control programme for the period 2004-2009, which envisages further strengthening of programmes for the reduction of illicit drug demand and supply, the development of drug control information systems, the coordination of prevention, evaluation and research programmes at the interministerial level and the promotion of international cooperation.

504. The restructuring of the competent drug control authorities of the Russian Federation continues. In July 2004, the State Committee of the Russian Federation on Narcotics and Psychotropics Control (Gosnarkokontrol), established in March 2003, was transformed into the Federal Drug Control Service and given a broad mandate to fight illicit drug trafficking, control the licit movement of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and promote inter-agency cooperation in the area of drug abuse prevention. The Board notes, however, that the legislative and operational aspects of the national drug control system need to be strengthened further to ensure co-operation among the newly structured competent authorities and government institutions involved in drug control.

505. Governments of the CIS member States continued strengthening their capacity to counter money-laundering by improving national legislative bases and institutional structures. An agreement was reached in October 2004 to create an FATF-type regional body in Moscow that would coordinate the efforts of CIS member States to combat money-laundering and financial crime. The Board notes that, in Belarus, following a revision of the relevant legislation, a financial investigation unit which is to facilitate cooperation with international agencies, as well as regional and bilateral partners, became operational.

506. In March 2004, the Government of Italy set up a national department for drug control policy in the Office of the Prime Minister to coordinate initiatives to deal with drug problems and to develop a three-year national drug control action plan.

507. In Spain, Royal Decree No. 1555/2004 was adopted in June 2004, making the Plan Nacional Sobre Drogas a part of the Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs. Previously, the National Plan on Drugs had been an organizational entity of the Ministry of the Interior.

508. The Netherlands continues to implement an action plan against MDMA (Ecstasy). In March 2004, a progress report indicated that the implementation of the action plan, which is to run until 2006, had led to an increase in the quantity of raw materials seized and in the number of suspects detained. Furthermore, the formation of specialized investigative teams yielded positive results, such as the dismantling of an internationally drug trafficking network in December 2003.

509. According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, the availability of drug substitution treatment in 15 European Union member States and Norway has increased by 34 per cent over the last five years. Some 400,000 people currently receive such treatment. Over 60 per cent of the treatment facilities are in France, Italy and Spain. The biggest increase in the availability of drug addiction treatment has been in countries that initially had few facilities for such treatment. The Board urges Governments of member States of the European Union to assess the impact of such programmes on the illicit market for and the abuse of heroin.

510. The establishment of rooms for drug injection, consumption and/or inhalation or other facilities where illicit drugs are administered continues to be a contentious issue, particularly in the member States of the European Union. While it is sometimes argued that drug injection rooms have some positive effects, such as establishing contact between social services and the hard-to-reach population of injecting drug abusers, the provision of such facilities raises legal and ethical issues. Drug injection rooms are legal facilities for the purpose of facilitating behaviour that is both illegal and damaging. The drugs used in those facilities come from the illicit market. The Board notes that the Governments of many European countries with drug

control policies as diverse as those of Denmark and Portugal have opted against the establishment of drug injection rooms, and the Board strongly supports their decisions. The Board also reiterates that drug injection rooms are against the central principle embodied in the international drug control treaties, namely that the use of drugs should be limited to medical and scientific purposes only.

511. The Board notes with concern that cannabis seeds and drug abuse paraphernalia continue to be sold over the Internet, often through advertisements specifically targeting young people. Moreover, drug abuse is presented as a desirable activity in magazines, other printed matter and on Internet sites. The Board notes that article 3, paragraph 1 (c) (iii), of the 1988 Convention requires States parties to establish as a criminal offence, inter alia, public incitement or inducement of others to engage in illicit drug use or drug trafficking. The Board appeals to Governments to apply that provision of the 1988 Convention, especially when minors are involved.

Cultivation, production, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

512. Albania and other countries in the area of the Balkans (Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) as well as the Russian Federation and Slovenia, remain the main suppliers of cannabis in Eastern Europe. In 2002, a total of 35 tons of cannabis were seized in Eastern Europe and an additional 30 tons were seized in the Russian Federation. Cannabis continues to be cultivated in Western Europe, mainly in the Netherlands and, to a lesser extent, in its neighbouring countries as well as in Switzerland. The Board appreciates the action of Switzerland against the illicit cultivation of cannabis, such as Operation Indoor, which resulted in the dismantling of 60 cannabis cultivation sites and the closure of 70 hemp shops in Switzerland; in addition, 4.2 tons of cannabis were seized.

513. Morocco remains a major source of cannabis resin abused in Western Europe. Cannabis resin from Morocco is smuggled into Spain in freight or other motor vehicles by ferry or on small boats. The drug is then transported by land to Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The Russian

Federation continues to be an important supplier of cannabis resin, reporting in 2002 the largest amount of cannabis resin seized in Eastern Europe—a total of over 1.4 tons. A total of over 2 tons of cannabis resin were seized in Eastern Europe in 2002.

514. Cannabis is the most widely abused illicit drug in Europe (and in all other regions). In Europe, an estimated 28.8 million people, or 5.3 per cent of the total population, abused cannabis during the last 12 months. Cannabis abuse continued to increase in 2003 and 2004 in Eastern Europe, where 3.6 per cent of the adult population, or about 8.5 million people, reportedly abuse cannabis. In the Czech Republic, the average annual prevalence rate for cannabis abuse is 11 per cent. In Eastern Europe, the average annual prevalence rate for cannabis abuse among persons 15-16 years old has doubled in the last decade.

515. Portugal and Spain continue to be used as main points of entry for cocaine consignments from South America, accounting for 5 per cent of the cocaine seized worldwide. There was an increase in the total amount of cocaine seized in some Western European countries (Belgium, France and Italy); that figure also increased in some Eastern European countries, albeit from a lower level. In Estonia, 30 kg of cocaine were seized in 2003, the largest figure ever recorded in that country.

516. In Europe, cocaine abuse has increased since 1998, with a tendency towards stabilization. In Eastern Europe, cocaine abuse is still at a level well below that of Western Europe. Cocaine abuse appears to be increasing in the United Kingdom and, to a lesser extent, in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland. Data show that 1-9 per cent of persons aged 15 to 34 have abused cocaine in their lifetime.

517. The illicit cultivation of opium poppy is at a low level in countries in Central and Eastern Europe and in the CIS member States; however, reported seizures of opiates indicate that the trafficking volume is high. In 2002, almost 2.5 tons of opium were seized in Eastern Europe. A total of 1,505 kg of opium were seized in the Republic of Moldova, 445 kg in the Russian Federation, 261 kg in Lithuania and 170 kg in Estonia. Over 2.7 tons of heroin and morphine were seized in Eastern Europe in 2002; 844 kg of heroin and morphine were seized in the Russian Federation.

518. After a recent decline, heroin seizures have increased again in Europe. Some 90 per cent of the opiates destined for illicit drug markets in Europe are estimated to have come from Afghanistan. Examination of the European seizures indicates that the so-called southern branch of the Balkan route, leading to Italy via Greece, Albania or the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, decreased in importance in 2003. The traditional northern branch of the Balkan route, a land route that passes through Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria, is playing a more significant role than it did in 2002. Partly as a result of improved law enforcement measures, the total volume of heroin seized is reported to have increased in most countries on the traditional route; the total quantity of heroin seized in Bosnia and Herzegovina doubled in 2003 and an increase in heroin trafficking has been noted in Croatia. The United Kingdom, Italy and the Netherlands (in that order) account for most of the heroin seized in Europe. In February 2004, some 113 kg of heroin were seized in Austria, the largest heroin seizure ever made in that country. Ferry connections between Albania and Italy are increasingly being used for smuggling heroin. Albania and the Kosovo area (in Serbia and Montenegro) are increasingly being used for storing and trans-shipping heroin destined for member States of the European Union.

519. In addition to heroin, amphetamines, MDMA (Ecstasy) and LSD are becoming more popular as drugs of choice in some countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Synthetic drugs are increasingly being illicitly manufactured locally, as evidenced by the fact that the number of detected illicit drug laboratories has continued to grow. In the Czech Republic, 32 illicit drug manufacturing laboratories were dismantled in 2003 and over 35,000 MDMA (Ecstasy) tablets and 7,300 doses of methamphetamine were seized. Poland continues to be a major supplier of amphetamines and MDMA (Ecstasy), mostly due to increased domestic demand. Seizures indicate that synthetic drugs are being illicitly manufactured on a large scale in Bulgaria, and that that country is becoming a major source of amphetamines, MDMA (Ecstasy) and precursors in Europe, having seized 350 kg of amphetamines and 1.5 tons of precursors in 2003. There has been a similar increase in the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs in the Baltic States, where many clandestine laboratories for large-scale

illicit drug manufacture were dismantled and record quantities of illicit drugs were seized in 2003. There has also been a shift in the amounts of the various drugs seized: the total volume of seizures of locally manufactured amphetamines and MDMA (Ecstasy) is overtaking that of heroin and other opiates in Estonia and Lithuania.

520. Russian border guards stationed on the 800-mile border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan have continued to be effective in fighting illicit drug trafficking, as they seized 5.3 tons of illicit drugs, including 2.7 tons of heroin, in 2003. Although that figure is only a fraction of the total amount being smuggled, it represents an increase of 33 per cent over the figure for 2002. According to the Russian Federal Drug Control Service, over 70 per cent of the opiates seized on the Russian border and inside the country originate in Afghanistan.

521. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, some 4 million people in Europe abuse opiates; two thirds of those people are in countries in Eastern Europe, primarily in the Russia Federation where the level of opiate abuse is very high. According to official estimates, there are over 1 million heroin abusers in the Russian Federation; thus, that country has become the largest heroin market in Europe. In Western Europe the country with the highest level of opiate abuse is Luxembourg, followed by Portugal, the United Kingdom, Italy and Switzerland. Whereas heroin abuse is stable or declining in Western Europe, it has been increasing in most countries in Eastern Europe.

522. The ongoing illicit production of poppy straw in the Russian Federation, supplemented by illicit imports, the availability of heroin of lower purity and a fivefold drop in prices in recent years may be some of the causes of the sudden increase in the abuse of opiates in that country.

523. The Board is concerned about a recently revealed fact: fentanyl, a synthetic opioid, has been illicitly manufactured in Ukraine. The fentanyl from Ukraine was reportedly illicitly supplied to the Baltic States and to Scandinavian countries. Given the potency of that substance and the immediate proximity of large consumer markets, the Board requests the Government of Ukraine to monitor the situation closely and to take the necessary measures to eliminate the illicit manufacture of fentanyl.

Psychotropic substances

524. The Netherlands continues to be the country most frequently reported by other countries as being the main source of MDMA (Ecstasy) and amphetamine; however, the frequency of those reports is declining and the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants is increasingly being reported in Central and Eastern Europe. Estonia and Poland have been identified as the main sources of amphetamines and MDMA (Ecstasy). The Polish law enforcement authorities report the dismantling of an average of 10 clandestine amphetamine laboratories every year; however, 8 such laboratories were dismantled already in the first quarter of 2004. In Ukraine, several well-equipped clandestine laboratories, manufacturing amphetamine-type stimulants and phencyclidine, a psychotropic hallucinogen, have been detected and dismantled in recent months. The fact that nine laboratories for the small-scale manufacture of GHB were discovered in Germany in 2003 indicates the increasing importance of that substance for the illicit drug market in that country.

525. Polish amphetamine is smuggled into Germany, Norway, Sweden and Ukraine, as well as the Baltic States, while an estimated 65 per cent of illicitly manufactured amphetamine is abused locally. Similarly, in most countries in Central and Eastern Europe and CIS member States, the abuse of stimulants has increased. Stimulants are becoming the most common drug of abuse among registered first-time drug abusers.

526. The abuse of both MDMA (Ecstasy) and amphetamine appears to have stabilized in most European countries. The level of abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) in European countries is among the highest in the world, second only to the level in Australia. In Europe, the level of abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) is reportedly highest in Ireland, followed by the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom and Spain. The highest level of amphetamine abuse in Europe is reportedly in the following European Union member States (listed in decreasing order): United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Spain, Czech Republic, Estonia and Poland. In Sweden, one of the first countries in Europe to be seriously affected by amphetamine abuse, a survey undertaken among military conscripts suggested that in 2003, amphetamine abuse in that subpopulation had reached its lowest level since 1996.

527. Psychotropic substances from the Balkan countries, as well as the Netherlands and Poland,

continue to be smuggled into Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Furthermore, flunitrazepam (Rohypnol) tablets have been diverted from licit trade in that area and have been appearing on the illicit markets of the Baltic States and the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden). Flunitrazepam is smuggled into Sweden, usually using Lithuanian couriers, by ferry either via the other Baltic States or via Germany and Denmark. Some of the shipments are also destined for Norway. Buprenorphine (opioid analgesic) reportedly originating in France is frequently seized in Finland. The Board urges Governments to intensify their efforts to maintain effective control over international trade in psychotropic substances and to strengthen international cooperation aimed at preventing or reducing the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in those substances. The Board also encourages law enforcement agencies in Europe to keep statistics on the different types of psychotropic substances seized.

528. Preparations containing psychotropic substances continue to be abused in several countries in Europe. The abuse of tranquillizers and sedatives has been reported in the Baltic States; as in Latvia, the lifetime prevalence rate for the abuse of such substances among persons aged 15-64 reached 22 per cent in 2003.

529. Several countries in Western Europe have placed khat under national control and regularly seize significant quantities of the substance. In Sweden, for example, the quantity of khat seized has steadily increased over the past few years, reaching almost 7 tons in 2003. In Norway, dried khat is reportedly either smoked in a mixture with tobacco or drunk as tea.

Missions

530. The Board sent a mission to Belgium in September 2004 to review the drug control situation and the progress made by the Government following its mission to that country in 1994. The Board notes with satisfaction that the Government of Belgium continues to be committed to addressing all aspects of the drug problem through an integrated and balanced approach.

531. The Board notes that, under the new legislation adopted by the Government of Belgium in January 2001, while the penalty for abuse of cannabis by an adult under specific circumstances has been reduced to administrative sanctions, the illicit manufacture of,

trafficking in and possession of drugs with the intent to resell or distribute remain prohibited. The Board encourages the Government to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the effects of the implementation of the new legislation on the consumption and possession of or trafficking in cannabis, as well as on demand reduction, in order to ensure that the new legislation is achieving the desired results through the provision of treatment to, and assistance in the social reintegration of, the offender rather than through imprisonment.

532. The Board notes with concern that a Belgian pharmaceutical company continues to use seized cocaine materials for the licit manufacture of pharmaceuticals for export, reportedly because of problems regarding the quality of cocaine materials licitly manufactured in and exported from Peru. The Board urges the Government of Belgium to explore alternatives to the use of seized cocaine materials for such purposes. The Board notes the intention of the Belgian authorities to assist in resolving the issue of the quality of imported cocaine materials.

533. The Board notes with concern that the illicit manufacture of MDMA (Ecstasy) has apparently shifted from the Netherlands to Belgium. The Government of Belgium has placed a high priority on the suppression of illicit manufacture of and trafficking in synthetic drugs, including MDMA, in particular the detection and dismantling of clandestine drug laboratories and the interception of illicit drug consignments along the border. The Board notes with appreciation the efforts of the Belgian authorities in the prevention of illicit manufacture of and trafficking in synthetic drugs and, in view of the increasing illicit manufacture of MDMA in Belgium, encourages the authorities to continue to strengthen drug control efforts focusing on that substance.

534. A mission of the Board visited Denmark in September 2004. The Board commends the Government of Denmark for the development of the action plan against drug abuse entitled "The Fight against Drugs", which is based on the international drug control treaties and rejects any legalization of drugs. The Board also welcomes the considerable progress that has been made in the implementation of the initiatives of the action plan. The Board commends the Government of Denmark for the introduction of a "treatment guarantee", which requires municipalities to

provide a variety of options for the treatment of drug addicts within 14 days of each addict's request for such treatment.

535. The Board welcomes action taken by the Government of Denmark against the trafficking of cannabis in the district of Christiania in Copenhagen, which has reduced the availability of the drug in Copenhagen, as well as in the south of Sweden. The Board invites the Government to communicate to the general public the objectives and results achieved by bringing drug trafficking under control in that area.

536. The high level of khat seizures in Denmark indicates that there may be a problem involving the abuse of that substance, and the Board requests the Government to investigate the matter. As khat is not controlled under the international drug control treaties, problems with trafficking in the substance, which are experienced in all Scandinavian countries and in many other countries in Europe, may exacerbate. The Government may also wish to notify the Secretary-General of the khat problem with a view to initiating the procedure for bringing that substance under international control.

537. It appears that, contrary to Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/32, in which States were called upon to import poppy seeds only from countries where opium poppy was grown licitly in accordance with the provisions of the 1961 Convention, poppy seeds originating in Afghanistan have been exported to Denmark. The Board urges the Government of Denmark to complete its investigation of the matter as soon as possible and to do its utmost to prevent such imports in future.

538. A mission of the Board visited Portugal in April 2004. The Board examined the legal framework that has been applicable to drug-related offences involving small quantities of drugs since July 2001 and noted that the acquisition, possession and abuse of drugs had remained prohibited. While the practice of exempting small quantities of drugs from criminal prosecution is consistent with the international drug control treaties, the Board emphasizes that the objective of the treaties is to prevent drug abuse and to limit the use of controlled substances to medical and scientific purposes. The Board calls on the Government of Portugal to examine ways in which the commissions for the dissuasion of drug abuse can contribute towards preventing drug abuse.

539. The Board notes that the rate of licit consumption of psychotropic substances in Portugal is higher than that of every other European country except Ireland and that the reasons for the high level in Portugal are not known. In Portugal, seizures of medicines containing diazepam, alprazolam or oxazepam indicate that, despite the strict control system in place, there is some diversion of those substances from the licit market to the illicit market. The Board therefore calls on the Government of Portugal to examine the current system of control of the distribution of pharmaceutical products, as well as current practice concerning prescription and use of benzodiazepines. The Board would also like to draw the attention of the Government to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 44/13, entitled "Contribution to the appropriate use of benzodiazepines".

540. A mission of the Board visited Sweden in September 2004. The Board commends the Government of Sweden for its commitment and efforts in the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, in line with the international drug control treaties.

541. The Board welcomes the national drug action plan of Sweden covering the four-year period (2002-2005) which envisages the achievement of a drug-free society by implementing initiatives that will both reduce the demand for and limit the supply of illicit drugs. The Board stresses that drug control efforts can only be effective if they are long-term and sustained. The Board underlines the importance of continuing the coordinating effort of the Office of National Drug Policy Coordination.

542. On licit control, the Board welcomes action by the Government of Sweden that has been successful in curtailing larger-scale diversions of psychotropic substances, particularly flunitrazepam. The Board encourages the Government to strengthen its capacity to monitor prescriptions for internationally controlled drugs in order to detect non-medical use of those drugs.

543. Noting that access to treatment is often difficult for drug abusers in Sweden, the Board strongly encourages the Government to accord higher priority to the treatment of drug abusers, which is one of the pillars of the national drug action plan, and to substantially increase the budgetary allocation to the provision of treatment.

544. A total of almost 7 tons of khat were seized in Sweden in 2003. The Board stresses that those seizures may indicate that there is a problem involving khat abuse and requests the Government to investigate the matter and develop countermeasures. As khat is not controlled under the international drug control treaties, problems with trafficking in the substance, which are experienced in all Scandinavian countries and in many other countries in Europe, may exacerbate. The Government may also wish to notify the Secretary-General of the khat problem, with a view to initiating the procedure for bringing khat under international control.

545. The Board reviewed the drug control situation in Albania and the Government's compliance with the international drug control treaties. Following a mission to Albania in September 2002, the Board had recommended that the Government take various measures to strengthen drug control, including administrative reforms to ensure adequate coordination between government agencies.

546. Despite several communications to the Government of Albania, the Government has failed to provide the Board with any information regarding the implementation of its recommendations. The Board continues to be concerned over persistent reports about the serious drug control problems in the country, including the lack of attention to the widespread smuggling of drugs into other countries. The Board urges the Government to take immediate measures to implement fully the provisions of the international drug control treaties and to provide the Board with detailed information on the steps that have been taken.

547. The Board, while examining the drug control situation in Serbia and Montenegro, reviewed the progress made by the Government in the implementation of the Board's recommendations following its mission to that country in 2001. The Board notes with concern that the Government of Serbia and Montenegro has not established a drug coordinating body at the federal level or adopted a drug control master plan to address the situation with regard to drug abuse and trafficking, although such efforts are being made within the Republic of Serbia pursuant to the Board's recommendations.

548. Given the fact that Serbia and Montenegro is on the traditional Balkan route, the Board urges the Government to take the necessary steps to ensure that

drug control activities are well coordinated and effectively implemented, not only in the area of supply and demand reduction, but also in the control of licit activities related to narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors.

549. The Board notes with appreciation that, despite the lack of human and financial resources, a number of well-coordinated law enforcement activities have taken place in Serbia and Montenegro, resulting in the detection of some illicit laboratories with a large capacity for manufacturing amphetamine-type stimulants. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts in that area, with a view to addressing the increasing activities of organized crime, especially those activities related to drug trafficking.

550. The Board reviewed progress made by the Government of Ukraine in the implementation of the Board's recommendations following its mission to that country in July 2001. The Board notes with appreciation that the Government has acted on its recommendations and has made considerable progress in some areas of drug control. In particular, the Board notes that the position of the National Narcotics Control Committee has been improved within the administrative structure, with a view to strengthening its role as coordinator of the relevant drug control agencies within the country. Ukraine has acceded to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention, adopted legislation against money-laundering and introduced additional controls over substances such as codeine and phenobarbital.

551. The Board shares the concern of the Government of Ukraine over the worsening drug abuse situation in that country, particularly with regard to the significant increase in the number of heroin addicts, as well as the fact that the majority of registered addicts are adolescents. The Board urges the Government to strengthen its efforts in the area of prevention and demand reduction in order to halt and even reverse that alarming trend.

E. Oceania

Major developments

552. Australia and New Zealand account for the majority of the drug and precursor seizures made in Oceania. There has been a considerable increase in the

illicit manufacture and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants in those two countries. The total number of clandestine laboratories detected in Australia reached 314 in 2003.

553. In Australia, heroin abuse has declined to a level below the levels recorded prior to the heroin shortage of early 2001. Most (90 per cent) of the heroin abused in Australia originated in South-East Asia; Sydney is the main port of entry for heroin shipments arriving in the country. The reduction in the availability of heroin in Australia has resulted in heroin abusers turning to other drugs.

554. Party drugs such as GHB, as well as ketamine trafficking and abuse, are a cause for serious concern in Australia, as is the abuse of several benzodiazepines diverted from licit distribution channels.

555. Trafficking organizations based outside of New Zealand are shipping into the country large quantities of amphetamine-type stimulants, including MDMA (Ecstasy) tablets (266,000 tablets were seized in 2003). The trafficking organizations include Chinese syndicates that bring in medicines containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, which are used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. Seizures of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are also increasing.

556. Most of the Pacific island countries continue to be vulnerable to drug transit trafficking and the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants.

Treaty adherence

557. The Board continues to be concerned that, of the 15 States in Oceania, only Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Tonga are parties to all three international drug control treaties. Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are not parties to any of the three treaties. Of the remaining five States, one (Solomon Islands) is a party only to the 1961 Convention and the others are parties to the 1961 Convention and the 1971 Convention. The Board urges those States to accede to all the international drug control treaties without delay. The Board calls on regional organizations such as the Pacific Islands Forum to support those States in that respect.

Regional cooperation

558. In June 2004, a joint operation involving Interpol and the law enforcement agencies of Australia, the

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Fiji, Malaysia and New Zealand led to the dismantling in Fiji of the biggest clandestine methamphetamine laboratory in Oceania, capable of manufacturing 1 ton of methamphetamine hydrochloride (commonly called “ice”) within a two-week period to supply illicit markets in Australia, New Zealand, the United States and countries in Europe.

559. The leaders attending the thirty-fifth session of the Pacific Islands Forum, held in Apia from 5 to 7 August 2004, noted with concern that countries in the region were facing major security problems and urged members of the Forum that had not yet done so to enact and implement existing provisions of model legislation, including those addressing terrorism and transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, weapons control and transport security. The Board welcomes the launching in the Cook Islands of a Combined Law Agency Group, which will facilitate the sharing by all government ministries and departments of information and other available resources to combat the various forms of crime, especially transnational crime. The Board also welcomes the establishment in Suva in June 2004 of the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre, which is to collect and disseminate law enforcement intelligence throughout the region.

560. Cooperation between law enforcement agencies in Australia and police authorities from several countries, including Cambodia, Peru and the Philippines, has resulted in major drug seizures. In March 2004, 1.5 tons of pseudoephedrine destined for Australia were seized in the Philippines and 750 kg of pseudoephedrine imported from Cambodia were seized at Australian borders. More than 44 kg of cocaine destined for Australia were seized in Peru. The Board encourages the Government of Australia to intensify its cooperation with the Governments of countries in South America with a view to fighting cocaine trafficking and abuse.

561. The Board welcomes the assistance given by the Government of Australia to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement agencies, especially in the Pacific island countries.

National legislation, policy and action

562. As mentioned in its previous reports,^{43, 44} the Board continues to be concerned about the establishment of a drug injection room in the

Australian state of New South Wales and about the four-year extension of the trial period. The Board is pleased to note that no other state of Australia plans to establish such an injection room.

563. The Board notes that the Government of Australia has adopted a national drug strategy for the period 2004-2009 that is to guide local governments and non-governmental organizations in the development and implementation of drug strategies, programmes and initiatives aimed at the prevention and reduction of harmful drug use.

564. The Board continues to be concerned that harmonized control over precursors in Australia is proving to be difficult. The Board welcomes the establishment of a working group on precursors that is addressing the matter with a view to finding solutions that would enhance cooperation between law enforcement agencies.

565. The Board notes that the government of the Australian Capital Territory has adopted a new law for stricter control over possession of cannabis plants for personal use (reducing the maximum number of plants tolerated to 2 instead of 10) and, at the same time, is opening a cannabis treatment clinic, specialized in the prevention and treatment of drug addiction.

566. The Board commends the Government of Fiji for establishing a transnational crime unit to fight drug trafficking, money-laundering and trafficking in human beings.

567. Although new legislation has been passed in the Cook Islands and Nauru to address deficiencies in national legislation against money-laundering, the Board continues to be concerned that the Cook Islands and Nauru are still on the list of countries and territories considered by FATF to be “non-cooperative” in efforts to counter money-laundering. The Board invites those two States to continue their efforts to comply with the FATF recommendations.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

568. In Australia, hydroponic cultivation continues to be the most common method used to cultivate cannabis for the domestic market, as it offers cannabis growers a higher yield from fewer plants and growers perceive

the risk of detection to be reduced. In addition, hydroponically grown cannabis is preferred by cannabis abusers. Thousands of cannabis plants and hydroponic systems and equipment are seized in Australia every year. As a result of the strategy “Tough on Drugs”, introduced by the Government in 1997, large quantities of cannabis have been seized at Australian borders (640 kg were seized in 2004).

569. In Australia, the purity of seized heroin increased slightly in 2003 compared with previous years. Furthermore, there was an increase in the detection of heroin at borders while there was a decrease in the total amount of heroin seized, suggesting that the methods used by heroin traffickers in Australia might be shifting from well-organized importation of large quantities of the drug to smaller-scale, opportunistic smuggling. A similar trend was observed in the illicit cocaine market; however, the purity of seized cocaine decreased slightly.

570. In New Zealand, cannabis growers are also involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in clandestine laboratories.

Psychotropic substances

571. Demand for amphetamine-type stimulants, including MDMA (Ecstasy), remains high in Australia and New Zealand, as confirmed in both countries by seizures and the number of clandestine laboratories used to manufacture amphetamine-type stimulants that have been dismantled recently.

572. Precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants, such as ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, are also increasingly being seized at the borders of New Zealand; there are indications that medicines containing those substances are smuggled into the country by mail and using air passengers from China and countries in South-East Asia, to be used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. An increased number of methamphetamine abusers have been brought to the attention of police and drug treatment centres, as serious violence and property crime have been associated with methamphetamine abuse.

573. Seizures of MDMA (Ecstasy) in Australia have been increasing since the mid-1990s. MDMA (Ecstasy), mainly of Western European origin, is smuggled into Australia by couriers using the “body carry” method.

574. The Board notes with concern that in New Zealand a foreign exchange company was used by a criminal syndicate to launder money believed to be profits derived from the importation of MDMA (Ecstasy) on a large scale. In New Zealand, some LSD in crystal and liquid form was intercepted in mail sent from Canada.

575. According to the *Party Drugs Initiative*, a national study to investigate and monitor trends involving MDMA (Ecstasy) and other recreational drugs in Australia, GHB, ketamine (a hallucinogenic sedative) and various anti-depressants are increasingly being abused in that country as dance party drugs. Control of GHB is becoming a matter of concern, as large quantities of its precursor *gamma*-butyrolactone (GBL) are imported for legitimate use. The Board urges the Government of Australia to develop strategies aimed at preventing the abuse of those substances.

(Signed)
Hamid Ghodse
President

(Signed)
Alfredo Pemjean
Rapporteur

(Signed)
Koli Kouame
Secretary

Vienna, 11 November 2004

Notes

¹ The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 976, No. 14152), the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1019, No. 14956) and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1582, No. 27627).

² *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1993* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XI.2), paras. 15 and 16.

³ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1997* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.XI.1), paras. 22 and 134.

⁴ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1998* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.XI.1), para. 103.