

III. Analysis of the world situation

A. Africa

Major developments

217. The cultivation and production of cannabis are on the rise in Africa, despite a marked reduction in cannabis production in Morocco (the world's largest producer of cannabis resin) over the past few years and intensive eradication efforts undertaken by the authorities of countries in the entire region. Likewise, Africa's share of global trafficking in cannabis has been increasing continuously, as corroborated by a number of multi-ton seizures of cannabis herb and resin that were effected in Africa during the past year. Cannabis remains the major drug of abuse in the region. As health-care facilities often lack the necessary resources, many African countries face serious difficulties in providing adequate treatment and rehabilitation for persons abusing cannabis.

218. Pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled substances are easily obtained on unregulated markets throughout Western, Central and Northern Africa. Misuse and abuse of those preparations are reported to be taking place among persons in all social strata. Those products, which are usually diverted from domestic distribution channels, are sold without prescription in pharmacies and other retail outlets. While drug control legislation prohibiting such practices is in place in most countries, it is often not adequately implemented and enforced. Due to insufficient funds, there is a shortage of trained pharmacists and pharmacy inspectors in many African countries, which is often exacerbated by a lack of funds to fill vacancies resulting from natural attrition and emigration ("brain drain"). There is concern that the problem of controlled drugs and counterfeit drugs being sold via illegally operating Internet pharmacies may soon spread to urban centres in Africa.

219. One particularly worrisome development in Africa is the large-scale trafficking in cocaine. Taking advantage of the weak interdiction capacities in Africa, drug trafficking networks are using the region as a transit area for smuggling cocaine from South America through Western, Central and Southern Africa. In addition, heroin from West and South-East Asia is

smuggled through Eastern Africa, to be shipped to illicit markets in Europe and, to a lesser extent, North America. The trafficking in cocaine in Africa is fuelled by rising demand for, and abuse of, cocaine in Europe. Both the number of couriers apprehended and the volume of bulk seizures of cocaine in Africa have increased significantly. As a spillover effect of the ongoing transit trafficking in heroin in the subregion, the abuse of heroin has become a problem in Eastern Africa. In addition, heroin is now also being smuggled by groups from Western Africa to that subregion, in exchange for cocaine that is smuggled into South Asia, where the abuse of cocaine appears to have spread.

220. Efforts by Governments of African countries to deal with those problems are impeded by a lack of adequate drug control mechanisms and skilled human resources. It is feared that, if left unchecked, the problem of drug trafficking in Africa might further exacerbate existing social, economic and political problems.

Regional cooperation

221. The Board notes the efforts made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to coordinate drug control activities in Western Africa. At a conference held in Abuja in July 2006 the coordinators of inter-ministerial drug control committees of ECOWAS member States carried out a final evaluation of the implementation of the 1997 Regional Plan of Action for the Control of Drugs in West Africa. Based on the recommendations of the evaluation, the member States agreed to develop a new regional plan of action on drugs and crime. Other issues discussed at the conference included the status of the regional training academy for drug control in Jos, Nigeria, and the regional drug training centre in Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire.

222. The Board welcomes the establishment of the West African Drug Regulatory Agencies Network, a subregional body of drug regulators aimed at combating counterfeit and fake drugs. The Network was created at an international conference held in

Abuja in March 2006.²⁸ It is chaired by the head of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control of Nigeria. The Board calls upon IMPACT, the newly established task force of WHO, to cooperate with the Network, as appropriate.

223. The WHO Regional Committee for Africa held its fifty-sixth session in Addis Ababa from 28 August to 1 September 2006. The session was attended by the ministers of health of 46 WHO member States in Africa, as well as representatives of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and bilateral donor agencies. The Board notes, with appreciation, that the WHO Regional Committee dealt with drug regulatory matters, urging Governments that had not yet done so to accede to the international drug control treaties and stressing the importance of training national drug control authorities to establish a sound drug regulatory system to ensure adequate availability of controlled substances for medical needs. At the occasion of that session, the Secretary of the Board met with a number of ministers of health of African countries and officials from the WHO Regional Office for Africa with a view to developing a collaborative programme to strengthen drug regulatory systems in Africa and made contributions to the development of future drug control action plans.

224. The Sixteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa, was held in Nairobi from 25 to 29 September 2006. Issues dealt with at the Sixteenth Meeting included alternative development and cannabis, the increased trafficking in cocaine in Africa, the control of precursor chemicals, controlled deliveries, drug abuse and HIV/AIDS, the illegal street sale of medicines, and psychotropic substances and synthetic drugs.

225. In view of the rapid increase in the smuggling of cocaine from South America via Western Africa to Europe using commercial airliners, Interpol hosted an operational working group meeting on the subject at its headquarters in Lyon, France, in May 2006. At that

meeting, participants²⁹ decided on measures for operational coordination and cooperation, including improved exchange of information and analysis of intelligence related to cocaine seizures.

226. In Western Africa, successful joint operations continue to be carried out by drug law enforcement authorities from Cape Verde, Ghana and Senegal. The Board notes the good interaction involving international drug liaison officers in those countries and local law enforcement agencies in gathering and sharing intelligence.

227. A memorandum of understanding was signed by the anti-narcotics general administrations of Egypt and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, with a view to strengthening cooperation at their joint border control points.

228. A regional meeting of national prison authorities held in Nairobi in November 2005 was attended by authorities from Kenya, Mauritius, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The discussion focused on the current situation with regard to drug abuse and HIV/AIDS in prisons in those countries and on the best ways to address them.

229. In 2006, assistance provided under the UNODC project to develop the drug interdiction capacity of law enforcement agencies at selected ports in Southern and Eastern Africa was extended to include the ports of Beira and Nacala in Mozambique. Similarly, the Government of Senegal and UNODC officially launched a container control project in the port of Dakar in early 2006.

230. The Windhoek Declaration on a new partnership between the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and its international cooperating partners was adopted in Windhoek on 27 April 2006. In the Declaration, a number of areas, including efforts to counter drug trafficking, are identified for cooperation between SADC and multilateral and bilateral donors.

231. South African authorities, with the support of the Government of France, organized in Roodeplaat, South Africa, in January 2006 a 14-day operational training course on the fight against drug trafficking and the

²⁸ The international conference, entitled "Combating Counterfeit/Fake Products in West Africa: a Need for a Unified Approach", was attended by representatives of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

²⁹ Law enforcement authorities from Belgium, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Ghana, Ireland, Italy, Morocco, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

diversion of precursor chemicals. During the course, law enforcement officials from 14 African countries,³⁰ were provided with skills and expertise related to drug identification and interdiction, monitoring of chemicals required for drug manufacture, controlled deliveries dealing with clandestine drug laboratories, and surveillance of containers, parcels and persons. The Government of South Africa also hosted in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 22 to 24 August 2006 the SADC Regional Seminar on Chemical Monitoring Programmes for member States. The seminar was attended by representatives of five SADC member States,³¹ as well as members of the chemical and pharmaceutical industries. In view of the increasing trafficking of drugs and precursor chemicals through Africa, the Board encourages all Governments concerned to support similar initiatives in Africa.

National legislation, policy and action

232. Despite efforts to improve drug control in Africa, many countries on the continent still lack appropriate and updated legislation, qualified human resources and well-structured drug control mechanisms. As a result, drug control policy and action continue to have limited impact.

233. The Government of Egypt continues to pursue a comprehensive drug control strategy that was developed in 1998. In Egypt, the Anti-Narcotics General Administration, the Ministry of the Interior, the coast guard, the customs service and selected military units cooperate in task forces designed to interdict illicit drug shipments.

234. The Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has established a new drug control committee under the supervision of the Minister of the Interior. The committee makes recommendations to the Ministry of the Interior and the Anti-Narcotics General Administration of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Currently, the Administration, in collaboration with other agencies in the country, is designing the national drug control strategy and action plan.

³⁰ Angola, Botswana, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Seychelles, South Africa, Togo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

³¹ Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania.

235. The Government of Kenya has stepped up efforts aimed at drug abuse prevention and treatment. Access to treatment for drug abuse was significantly increased by the establishment of specialized units run by the Ministry of Health and competent non-governmental organizations. Drug abuse by injection and its relationship to HIV/AIDS continued to be highlighted in several ways. In Kenya, more than 7,000 drug abusers made use of an outreach project in one year; more than half of them were referred for voluntary counselling and testing.

236. In October 2006, a new law on drug abuse has been submitted to the Parliament of Namibia. The new legislation, called the Combating of the Abuse of Drugs Bill, will ban trafficking in and sale, possession and consumption of dangerous, undesirable and dependence-producing substances and will provide for mandatory prison sentences. The new law, together with the Financial Intelligence Bill, submitted to Parliament earlier, and the Prevention of Organized Crime Act of 2004, is expected to pave the way for Namibia to accede to the 1988 Convention.

237. The Board notes that the Government of South Africa approved in October 2006 the national drug control master plan for the period 2006-2011. The new master plan places emphasis on ensuring adequate standards for centres for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers. In Nigeria, the Government is currently reviewing its national drug control master plan. New drug control laws have been drafted and are pending approval by the parliament in Ghana and Sierra Leone.

238. The Board notes the efforts by the Government of Nigeria to combat unregulated markets. The Government of that country, which, according to Interpol, used to be the nucleus of the illicit traffic in pharmaceuticals in Africa, has markedly reduced the incidence of counterfeit drugs within the past few years, through improved control, inspection of distribution outlets and public destruction of counterfeit and substandard products. The Board calls upon all Governments concerned to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their drug regulatory authorities with a view to preventing illicit distribution practices or counterfeiting while, at the same time, facilitating the access of their populations to the medication they require.

239. In Malawi, the inter-ministerial committee for drug control convened in November 2005 a broad-based stakeholders meeting to solicit support for the Government's new drug control master plan, drug control policy and drug abuse bill.

240. The Government of Morocco, following the positive results of eradication efforts in 2005 and as part of its comprehensive national drug control strategy, has launched a new eradication initiative aimed at making the Province of Taounate free of cannabis by the end of 2006. The initiative is complemented by various socio-economic programmes and alternative development projects, including pilot projects involving rural development in the areas affected by illicit cannabis production.

241. On 26 June 2006, the Ministry of Education of South Africa launched a new programme on substance abuse in schools. The programme places emphasis on the relationship between drug abuse, risky sexual behaviour and HIV/AIDS and is being implemented in schools and other educational institutions in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Social Development. The Government is also in the process of reviewing and updating its current law relating to the prevention and treatment of drug dependence. The new legislation will promote more community-based services, place greater emphasis on preventive services and be more sensitive towards the needs of drug-dependent children.

242. The Board is pleased to note that a number of Governments of African countries have taken measures against money-laundering. Legislation against money-laundering was adopted in Cameroon, Malawi, the Niger and Sierra Leone. The Board also notes that the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering has removed Nigeria from the list of countries and territories considered to be "non-cooperative" in efforts to counter money-laundering or to have critical deficiencies in their systems for countering money-laundering. Furthermore, the initiative to counter money-laundering in Western Africa was strengthened by ECOWAS by allocating substantial funds to the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), the body responsible for coordinating efforts to counter money-laundering at the subregional level.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

243. In Africa, the main drug of abuse remains cannabis, which is trafficked at the national, subregional, regional and international levels. Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria and South Africa remain important sources of cannabis herb. Africa accounts for almost one third of global seizures of cannabis herb. While Morocco continues to be a major producer of cannabis resin, cultivation of cannabis and production of cannabis resin reportedly declined in 2004 and 2005. According to the 2005 cannabis survey,³² conducted jointly by the Government of Morocco and UNODC, the total area under cannabis cultivation decreased by 40 per cent from 2004 (120,500 hectares) to 2005 (72,500 hectares), and the production of cannabis resin declined by 62 per cent (to 1,066 tons) in 2005. The decrease in Morocco was the result of unfavourable weather conditions combined with a successful eradication campaign, including awareness-raising and mechanical eradication of the cannabis crop (in Larache Province). From 2003 to 2004, seizures of cannabis resin in Morocco decreased from 96 tons to 87 tons, while seizures of cannabis herb increased from 69 tons to 319 tons. In Algeria, the volume of cannabis resin seized was reported to have increased from 8 tons to 12 tons. Overall, however, seizures of cannabis resin in North Africa decreased, from 115 tons in 2003 to 103 tons in 2004. The increase in cannabis production in Africa was accompanied by an increase in the abuse of that drug. While the abuse of cannabis resin is largely confined to Northern Africa, the abuse of cannabis herb takes place throughout Africa.

244. Cannabis herb continues to be the drug that is most widely smuggled within Africa. It is also smuggled out of the region, mainly into Europe. Africa's share of global cannabis seizures increased from 16 per cent at the beginning of the 1990s to over 30 per cent in 2004. In Africa, the largest seizures of cannabis herb in 2004 were effected in Nigeria and South Africa, while Morocco accounted for 6 per cent of global seizures of cannabis resin. In 2005, 78 tons of cannabis herb and 1.5 tons of cannabis resin were reported to have been seized in Egypt, and 14.3 tons of

³² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Maroc: enquête sur le cannabis 2005* (November 2006).

cannabis herb were reported to have been seized in Ghana. In Morocco, in 2005, almost 18 tons of cannabis were seized at the port of Tangiers alone, and 247 persons involved in international drug trafficking were arrested. Bulk shipments of cannabis (1-6 tons each) destined for countries in Europe, particularly the United Kingdom, continue to be seized by South African authorities. In May 2006, a record seizure of 22.5 tons of cannabis originating in Pakistan and destined for Canada was effected by Canadian authorities on a vessel on the high seas 320 kilometres off the coast of Angola. In a joint operation involving police from Lesotho and South Africa in July 2006, 47 tons of cannabis herb were seized.

245. African countries are being targeted for trans-shipment of cocaine. The smuggling of cocaine from South America into Europe through Africa continues unabated, with countries in Western and Central Africa being used as transit and storage areas for cocaine destined for Europe. Cocaine is trafficked from South America in large shipments along maritime routes leading predominantly to the countries surrounding the Gulf of Guinea, where it is re-packaged and smuggled by air by couriers into Europe or dispatched via parcel post. The most affected countries are Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria and Togo, while Ghana is serving as a major trans-shipment area and logistics base. Increasingly, Guinea-Bissau is being used by criminal groups from Latin America for the trans-shipment of cocaine. In September 2006, police in Guinea-Bissau seized 674 kg of cocaine and arrested two suspected smugglers, together with arms and radio and other equipment. Senegal has also become a transit country. Another matter of concern is that criminal organizations from South America involved in cocaine trafficking are reportedly linking with criminal groups involved in cannabis trafficking in Morocco and Spain.

246. During the past two years, there have been major seizures of cocaine in Africa. In Ghana, 558 kg of cocaine were seized in Tema in January 2004, 580 kg of cocaine were seized in Accra in November 2005 and 1.9 tons of cocaine hidden on a vehicle were seized on the Ghanaian coast in May 2006. In Kenya, 1.1 tons of cocaine were seized in late 2004. In addition, 3 tons of cocaine were seized on the high seas near Cape Verde in February 2006 on a vessel registered in Guinea-Bissau. In June 2006, over 14 tons of a mixture of cocaine and white cement was seized in Nigeria at the port of Lagos on board a vessel from Peru. The

seizure in Lagos was the result of successful collaboration involving drug law enforcement authorities from Nigeria, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States.

247. In addition, growing numbers of couriers with cocaine are being arrested at airports in Western Africa and Europe. There has been a spillover effect of such transit traffic: increased abuse of cocaine, including "crack" cocaine, in countries in Western Africa, including in Senegal and Sierra Leone.

248. Sizeable quantities of cocaine continue to be seized in South Africa, mainly at the international airport at Johannesburg. In South Africa, the abuse of cocaine also appears to be on the increase, as reflected by significantly increasing demand for treatment for cocaine abuse. Courier mail seems to be frequently used as a means of smuggling cocaine originating in South America, according to seizure reports from Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique and Zambia. To a lesser extent, cocaine is smuggled by air into Europe via cities in Eastern Africa, mainly Nairobi.

249. The Board urges the Governments of African countries affected by such transit traffic to step up surveillance of their territorial waters and points of entry to detect suspicious activities and to develop adequate mechanisms for cooperation in drug interdiction and intelligence-sharing. To that end, the provision of adequate assistance by the international community will be essential.

250. Heroin from South-West Asia and South-East Asia continues to be smuggled through African countries, intended for illicit markets in Europe and, to a lesser extent, North America. While increased heroin seizures throughout Africa, particularly in Western and Central Africa, have been reported in 2004, the last year for which global figures are available, the total quantity of heroin seized in Africa is still small compared with the global figure. One new development is the reported smuggling of heroin from India into Western African countries, mainly Nigeria, in exchange for cocaine trafficked by Western African criminal groups. As a result, a gradual increase in cocaine abuse has been noticed in cities in India, such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Goa (see paras. 500-501 below).

251. Significant seizures of heroin continue to be made at international airports in Ethiopia (at Addis Ababa), Kenya (at Nairobi), Mauritius (at Port Louis) and the United Republic of Tanzania (at Dar es Salaam). In addition, a case of smuggling of heroin by sea freight containers has been reported: as a result of a controlled delivery, 42 kg of heroin from Pakistan smuggled via the United Arab Emirates and Kenya were seized in Uganda and five persons were arrested. As a spillover effect of the smuggling of heroin through those Eastern African countries, the abuse of that substance is also occurring in those countries. Heroin abuse also occurs in South Africa and in some countries in Western Africa. The South African Community Epidemiological Network on Drug Use has reported increased availability of “cheap heroin”, a mixture of heroin and cannabis that is popular among young people.

Psychotropic substances

252. The availability and abuse of prescription drugs containing controlled substances is increasingly becoming a major problem in many countries throughout Africa (see also chap. I above). The abuse of preparations containing ephedrine³³ and diazepam (Valium) continues to be reported, particularly in Western and Central Africa. Prescription drugs can be obtained without prescription through over-the-counter dispensing at licensed pharmacies and are sold by street vendors, health-care providers and neighbourhood shops. The problems are often exacerbated by a proliferation of illegal retail outlets. A recent study³⁴ conducted by UNODC, in cooperation with the Government of Egypt and WHO, indicated that psychotropic substances were available in Cairo without prescription and revealed consumption patterns relating to inappropriate use.

³³ Ephedrine is controlled under the 1988 Convention. However, under the national legislation of many African countries, ephedrine is subject to the same controls as are applied to psychotropic substances controlled under the 1971 Convention.

³⁴ The exploratory study on the patterns of use and the misuse of prescription psychotropic substances in Cairo in 2006, conducted by the UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Population of Egypt and the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.

253. The illicit manufacture of psychotropic substances in Africa, notably methaqualone (Mandrax), methamphetamine, methcathinone and MDMA (“ecstasy”) remains limited to South Africa and some countries in Southern and Eastern Africa, where those substances are abused as well. That is corroborated by a substantial increase in the number of clandestine drug laboratories that have been dismantled, including a major methaqualone laboratory that was detected and dismantled by the Kenyan authorities in Nairobi in January 2006.

254. In South Africa crystalline methamphetamine has now emerged as the main substance of abuse among patients in treatment for drug abuse in the Western Cape area. In addition, the abuse of psychotropic substances has been reported in Egypt. In 2005, Egyptian authorities seized over 325,000 tablets containing flunitrazepam (Rohypnol). Furthermore, significant increases in both the volume and number of seizures of buprenorphine have been reported in Mauritius. According to the authorities of that country, because of the current shortage of heroin, traffickers and abusers are now increasingly turning to buprenorphine.

255. As most countries in Africa do not have the legislation and institutional framework in place to combat trafficking in precursors, such chemicals continue to be diverted through the region. Of particular concern are the ongoing diversion and attempted diversion of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine through African countries. While those substances are often destined for local abuse as a mild stimulant, there is some concern that parts of those consignments may be used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine and methcathinone elsewhere. That concern has been exacerbated by a series of diversions and attempted diversions of multi-ton consignments of pseudoephedrine to Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Kenya and Rwanda that have been detected during the last year under Project Prism, the Board’s international initiative to address the diversion of precursors of ATS.³⁵

³⁵ Project Prism is being carried out by about 130 national authorities in cooperation with Interpol, the World Customs Organization, UNODC and the European Commission.

256. The seizure in Belgium in July 2006 of 300 kg of pseudoephedrine in a shipment from the Democratic Republic of the Congo that was destined for Mexico, corroborates suspicions that international trafficking networks have been operating in African countries, notably the Democratic Republic of the Congo, using those countries for the diversion of pseudoephedrine to be used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in Mexico. Furthermore, the report that an African country had been used for smuggling into Europe a precursor of MDMA (“ecstasy”) was confirmed by a recent seizure effected in France of 4 tons of 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone from Madagascar and destined for the Netherlands (see the 2006 report of the Board on the implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention).³⁶

257. The Board calls upon the Governments of all countries in Africa to establish adequate mechanisms for the monitoring and control of the substances listed in Tables I and II of the 1988 Convention. At the same time, the Board encourages the relevant authorities in North America and Europe to extend the necessary cooperation and support to their counterparts in Africa to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals through that region. In that connection, the Board also welcomes the launching of a new Interpol project, named Project Drum, which entails the establishment of an African operational network for combating trafficking and diversions of synthetic drugs and precursor chemicals.

Substances not under international control

258. Khat continues to be cultivated in countries in Eastern Africa, mainly Ethiopia and Kenya and to a lesser extent the Comoros, Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania, and is commonly chewed as a stimulant in that subregion and parts of the Arabian peninsula. Though khat consumption is associated with health risks and may have detrimental social consequences, khat is only prohibited in some countries in the subregion, such as Eritrea, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, in some countries in Europe and in Canada and the United States. In 2006, members of a smuggling ring were arrested in the

United States on charges of having smuggled 25 tons of khat from Eastern Africa into the United States over the past few years.

Missions

259. The Board sent a mission to Djibouti in January 2006 to review the drug control situation in that country and the Government’s compliance with the international drug control treaties.

260. The Board notes that the national drug control legislation is not fully in line with main international drug control treaties. It therefore calls upon the Government of Djibouti to take steps to update and amend its drug control law as a matter of priority. If necessary, UNODC may be requested to provide technical assistance.

261. The Board notes with concern that the currently existing mechanisms for the monitoring and control of internationally controlled substances in Djibouti do not function adequately. While a multidisciplinary national drug control committee has already been established in the office of the Prime Minister, the required administrative structures for the implementation of its aims and objectives have not yet been put in place. The Board is particularly concerned about the serious weaknesses in the control of licit narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, including donated drugs, and the lack of control over precursor chemicals. The Board urges the Government of Djibouti to establish and maintain an appropriate drug control mechanism that is in compliance with the requirements of the international drug control treaties.

262. As the actual extent of drug abuse in Djibouti is not known, the Board encourages the competent authorities of that country to carry out, if necessary with the support of WHO and UNODC, an assessment of the situation in order to be able to plan adequate control and preventive measures.

263. In May 2006, the Board sent a mission to the Gambia, to assess the progress made by the Government in implementing the recommendations made by the Board pursuant to its mission in 1995 to that country. The Board appreciates the commitment of the Government to international drug control, which is reflected in the accession of the Gambia in 1996 to the 1961 Convention, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention, the ongoing updating of the national drug

³⁶ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2006 ...*, chap. III.

control legislation and the adoption of a national drug control master plan.

264. The legal framework for drug control in the Gambia is comprehensive and generally in compliance with the provisions of the three main international drug control treaties, although some further updating might be warranted. The Board is concerned, however, that the controls exercised over licit narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals are not adequate and that the Government's compliance with its mandatory reporting obligations pursuant to the treaties has not been satisfactory. The Board urges the Government to take all steps necessary to enhance coordination and cooperation among the institutions and agencies, both regulatory and law enforcement, that are responsible for drug control issues, and to ensure full implementation of its treaty obligations, as a matter of priority.

265. The Board notes with appreciation the efforts of the newly established multidisciplinary drug control administration in the Gambia to combat the smuggling of drugs through the country, and its active role in fostering and supporting cooperation in the field of drug control at the national, regional and international levels. The Board encourages the Government to allocate the necessary resources to that administration to further strengthen its capacity to fight drug trafficking and abuse and calls upon UNODC to provide assistance in that regard.

266. In August 2006, a mission of the Board visited Malawi. The Board notes that the Government is committed to addressing all aspects of the drug problem. A survey on drug abuse and HIV/AIDS and a survey on cannabis were carried out in 2004 to assess the magnitude of the drug problem in the country. The National Drug Control Master Plan, 2005-2009, approved by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Drug Control in 2005, provides the administrative framework to counter drug abuse and covers a range of measures for supply and demand reduction, including alternative development programmes. As the national drug control legislation currently in force is not fully in line with the international drug control treaties, the Board encourages the Government to enact without delay the draft drug control policy and the drug abuse bill, and to resume its reporting obligations pursuant to the international drug control treaties.

267. Illicit cannabis cultivation takes place throughout Malawi. More than 50 hectares of illicitly cultivated cannabis were eradicated in 2006. The detection capacities and drug control activities of the national law enforcement authorities, however, are hampered by a lack of financial and technical resources. The Board encourages the Government to strengthen its efforts to counter the illicit cultivation of cannabis plants and to introduce alternative development programmes, in cooperation with other countries in Africa and with the support of the international community, where possible.

268. The Board notes that the availability of opioids, their selection and quantities available for the control of pain do not always meet the requirements of the medical institutions in Malawi. The Board recommends that the Government accurately assess the national medical and/or scientific requirements for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and to take all steps necessary to ensure that those substances are available for treatment purposes.

B. Americas

Central America and the Caribbean

Major developments

269. Central America and the Caribbean continues to be used as a major trans-shipment area for cocaine from South America destined for North America and Europe. The main smuggling routes are the maritime corridor of the Pacific Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea. Cocaine is, to a lesser extent, also smuggled by land across Central America along the Pan-American Highway and by air. Institutional weaknesses and corruption seriously undermine efforts by the Governments of countries in Central America and the Caribbean to combat the drug problem. The link between local drug trafficking and organized crime perpetrated by youth gangs or *maras* in several countries in the region, especially El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras, continues to be a problem. The smuggling of arms and ammunition in exchange for drugs continues to prevail in the region, as reported in Honduras and Panama.

270. Trafficking in precursors of ATS is becoming a problem in Central America and the Caribbean.

Because of the lack of controls, there have been cases where a large amount of pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled precursors, such as ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, has been legally imported into a country in the region and then smuggled into North America or South America, to be used for the illicit manufacture of drugs.

Regional cooperation

271. The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States (OAS) has developed a regional framework for drug control plans and policies, as well as an evaluation system for the region. The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism enables OAS member States to assess their own policies and those of other OAS member States and make recommendations to improve them.

272. CICAD has also developed hemispheric guidelines on school-based prevention programmes³⁷ aimed at standardizing interventions for preventing drug abuse in schools. The guidelines deal with issues such as the political framework, theoretical foundations, principal characteristics of a plan and examples of existing prevention programmes.

273. To tackle the problem of maritime drug smuggling, Governments of countries in Central America and the Caribbean signed in 2003 the agreement concerning cooperation in suppressing illicit maritime and air trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the Caribbean area. However, the agreement has yet to be ratified by several countries in the region.

274. In order to prevent the smuggling of drugs by land, the United States has assisted Central American States in improving their border inspection facilities by establishing mobile inspection and law enforcement teams. Moreover, a database called the regional information and intelligence-sharing system is being developed to collect data on the movement of persons in Central America and the Caribbean. It will connect the 24 countries and territories that are part of the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police, facilitating the screening of arrival and departure of

travellers, and will be also linked to Interpol. Furthermore, the ministers of defence of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua agreed on a cooperative control framework that will include information-sharing and the review and updating of national and regional legal systems.

275. Representatives from Mexico and countries in Central America held a meeting in San Salvador in September 2006 to discuss the creation of a regional centre to fight drug trafficking. During the meeting, experts from various national drug control agencies discussed the terms of reference of the centre and the functions that it should have. The centre would be established in El Salvador and would be operated by prosecutors, police officers and military personnel from Central American countries and Mexico.

276. During a regional workshop organized by UNODC in Panama City in March 2006, national experts and government representatives from Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama developed a strategy for Central America and the Caribbean based on national studies of the services available for the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug-dependent persons in the region. The strategy enables countries to work together on particular topics such as training to reinforce common issues, in order to improve the services for drug-dependent persons.

277. After testing the methodology in Barbados and Jamaica in 2004, UNODC has since mid-2005 expanded its computer-based training programme in the Caribbean to include eight additional countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. The aim of the computer-based training programme is to implement self-sustaining training programmes to counter drug trafficking and organized criminal activity affecting island States.

National legislation, policy and action

278. In the Bahamas, the Cabinet is currently preparing new legislation to improve controls and ensure compliance with standards and regulations for preventing the diversion of pharmaceutical products containing controlled substances.

³⁷ Organization of American States, *CICAD Hemispheric Guidelines on School-Based Prevention* (Washington, D.C., 2005).

279. Belize started to participate with other Central American countries in a cooperative national information exchange system. The system helps to find and intercept civilian aircraft and facilitates the detection of drug trafficking routes and the arrest of drug traffickers. A new act for the control of pharmaceuticals is expected to be enacted in Belize by the end of 2006. The Ministry of Health has set up a unit to monitor and control pharmaceutical products.

280. Costa Rica has implemented a national database system, which, together with complementary computer programs, will make possible the cross-checking of sales reported by distributors of controlled substances and pharmacies, as well as prescriptions written by doctors for medicine distributed in pharmacies. Moreover, the Government has enacted the Regulations on Granting and Oversight of Licenses to Handle Psychotropic Substances and Narcotics in the context of the national drug control plan for the period 2005-2007.

281. In Cuba, as part of Operation Aché III, efforts to counter drug trafficking are being further strengthened by increasing air, sea and radio reconnaissance and the number of border troops. Those efforts are helping to consolidate the success of Operation Aché III in preventing maritime drug trafficking, seizing a large volume of illicit drug consignments and maintaining information exchange with regional drug control agencies.

282. In Dominica, the draft pharmacy bill on the control of pharmaceutical products has yet to be adopted, but it is anticipated that the bill will be enacted in 2007.

283. Joint cooperation between the Governments of El Salvador and the United States has led to the imprisonment of a former Salvadoran legislator, extradited to the United States for drug trafficking. The Government of El Salvador is introducing more comprehensive approaches to prevention, education, public safety and the development of life skills, in order to deal with the persistent problem of youth gangs.

284. In Guatemala, high-level police officials were arrested in November 2005 and charged with conspiracy to import cocaine into the United States. The Government of Guatemala has restructured the procedures for approval of the production, import and

sale of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and is working to update the customs communication network to control the imports of those products into the country.

285. In Haiti, armed gangs continue to be a serious problem, mainly because they are linked to organizations involved in drug trafficking. The coast guard of Haiti has again begun to patrol the territorial waters of the country, achieving an important goal in the prevention of maritime drug trafficking.

286. In Tegucigalpa, cooperation among the Government of Honduras, the private sector and different organizations continues to be given priority in order to ensure the consolidation of the UNODC "labour integration programme", an innovative vocational scheme for youth at risk. Honduras must carry out a nationwide survey to assess the extent of drug abuse and approve the minimum standards of care for drug-dependent persons.

287. In Jamaica, the Government-appointed Precursor Chemical Committee, which had worked on the preparation of subsidiary legislation to the Precursor Chemicals Act, 1999, has been re-established to finalize such regulations.

288. In the Netherlands Antilles, efforts at the international airport at Curaçao focusing on detecting "mules" (passengers who hide illegal drugs inside their bodies) continued to produce results during 2006. However, there are indications suggesting that the "mules" may be shifting their activities to other airports in the territory. To prevent that, the Government is starting to carry out "anti-mule" operations in those airports. Following the recommendation of the Board, the territory has started to address the problem of the illegal sale of drugs through Internet pharmacies.

289. In Nicaragua, the Government approved the Minimum Standards of Care for Users of Psychoactive Substances through ministerial agreement No. 41-2006 of 3 February 2006.

290. Panama has strengthened its controls over precursor chemicals. The Government passed on 13 June 2005, the Special Chemicals Law (Law No. 19) and its regulations. In addition, a new project to evaluate and improve drug control in the Colón Free Zone is to be implemented during 2006. Despite the efforts of the Government, corruption is a persistent

problem in the country. In 2005, a high-level official of the counter-narcotics unit was detained and accused of corruption.

291. The authorities of Trinidad and Tobago, in cooperation with United States authorities, have developed a computer system that will give the Ministry of Health the capacity to track chemical shipments, with a view to preventing their diversion for use in illicit drug manufacture. Moreover, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago appointed a special Precursor Chemical Team that has completed a review of the current legislation and is in the process of drafting a new law.

292. The use of cash couriers and of money transfer services to pay for consignments of illicit drugs is increasing. Cash couriers have been detained in Antigua and Barbuda, El Salvador and Honduras. In addition, cash couriers from Antigua and Barbuda have been detained in other countries, particularly in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, where links to drug traffickers have been established by the police.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

293. In spite of being used as major transit and trans-shipment areas, all countries in Central America and the Caribbean, with the exception of El Salvador, have relatively low levels of drug abuse. The most commonly abused drug in the region is cannabis, followed by cocaine hydrochloride and "crack" cocaine.

294. Central America and the Caribbean is not a main drug-producing area, although some countries in the region, such as Guatemala and Jamaica (see paras. 299-300 below), are threatened by increasing production of illicit drugs.

Narcotic drugs

295. About 90 per cent of the cocaine entering North America every year passes through Central America. Moreover, the Caribbean is situated along one of the main cocaine trafficking routes leading to Europe. The authorities of the Netherlands made about 40 per cent of their total seizures in the waters of the Netherlands Antilles in 2004. Jamaica and Martinique continue to play an important role in the trans-shipment of cocaine to the United Kingdom and France, respectively.

296. In El Salvador, law enforcement authorities seized over three times more illicit drugs during the period 2000-2005 than during the previous five-year period. Six out of 10 Salvadorans have abused an illicit drug at least once in their lifetime, particularly during adolescence. Between January and November 2005, 2,394 persons in El Salvador were arrested for drug trafficking and the possession of drugs.

297. In Nicaragua, a joint operation implemented in February 2006, involving the police and the army and coordinated by the prosecutor's office, led to the seizure of 547 kg of cocaine that were being shipped from Costa Rica to Guatemala.

298. In Costa Rica, the abuse of drugs, particularly "crack" cocaine, has increased; there has also been an increase in violent crime linked to drug trafficking and abuse.

299. In Guatemala, almost 490 hectares of illicit opium poppy cultivation were eradicated in 2005, which represents an increase of more than 250 per cent compared with the figure for 2004 (181 hectares). During 2005, 6,400 persons were arrested for possession or illicit use of drugs, of whom 3,334 were young persons of between 15 and 25 years of age. In contrast, only 46 persons were arrested for drug trafficking during the same period.

300. Jamaica is the main illicit producer and exporter of cannabis in Central America and the Caribbean. However, there is no precise estimate of the quantity of cannabis plant illicitly cultivated in the country. The illicit cultivation of cannabis plants, which was carried out on a large scale in the past, is now being done on smaller plots of land hidden in inaccessible mountainous areas. Cannabis is the most commonly abused drug not only in Jamaica but also in the region as a whole.

301. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is also an important illicit producer of cannabis in the Caribbean subregion. Illicit drug trafficking has penetrated the licit economy of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, making parts of the population dependent on the illicit cultivation of cannabis plant and on trafficking in cannabis.

Psychotropic substances

302. During the first half of 2006, law enforcement authorities of Costa Rica confiscated 3,450 tablets of

MDMA (“ecstasy”) that were being smuggled by Colombian nationals. That was the largest quantity of synthetic drugs ever seized by the police in that country.

303. The Dominican Republic continues to be used as a major trans-shipment area for MDMA (“ecstasy”) from Europe destined for the United States. In 2005, a total of 280,000 MDMA tablets were seized.

304. In Trinidad and Tobago, the National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Programme, which is responsible for the coordination of demand reduction initiatives, has reported evidence of the abuse of MDMA (“ecstasy”) in the country, in addition to the abuse of cocaine, cannabis and heroin.

Missions

305. A mission of the Board visited El Salvador in August 2006. The Board notes that the Government is committed to combat drug trafficking and abuse and is making its best efforts towards those ends, as evidenced by a high degree of professionalism and good coordination among the state agencies in charge of drug control. However, some of those agencies, in particular the Supreme Council of Health, lack the financial and technical resources to fully carry out their mandate. The Board encourages the Government of El Salvador to join Project Prism.

306. Control over the licit movement of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in El Salvador is, in general, satisfactory. Nevertheless, the availability of controlled substances for medical purposes is very low. The Board encourages the Government to take the necessary measures to ensure sufficient availability of controlled medicines for medical purposes. The Board notes that the problem related to the youth gangs or *maras* (criminal bands organized to commit all kinds of offences, including drug trafficking) (see para. 269 above) is growing steadily. The Board encourages the Government to study the problem and to take the necessary measures to deal with it.

307. A technical visit of the Board to Honduras took place in August 2006. The Board notes that Honduras ratified the 1971 Convention in May 2005 and has thus become a party to each of the three international drug control treaties. The Board also notes the commitment of the National Council against Drug Trafficking (CNCN), which is comprised of the highest-level

officials in Honduras, to the fight against drug trafficking and abuse. However, inadequate resources and coordination among drug control agencies have hampered the Government’s efforts to combat drug trafficking effectively.

308. The Board notes that the legal framework for drug control in Honduras is outdated. The Board requests the Government to enact a new, more comprehensive law, in line with the international drug control treaties, that will include the regulation of precursor chemicals and to fully implement the 1971 Convention. The Board also notes that the Unit for the Regulation of Pharmaceutical Products, the competent authority in charge of the licit movement of drugs, lacks adequate resources to carry out its basic responsibilities. The Government should take the necessary measures to solve those problems as soon as possible.

309. The Board notes that no surveys on the extent of drug abuse among the general population in Honduras have been conducted recently, and no minimum standards of care have been approved yet. The Government should take measures to deal with those problems.

North America

Major developments

310. North America, comprising Canada, Mexico and the United States, continues to be one of the prime targets of drug traffickers. For more than 30 years, drug abuse and perceived risk of drug abuse among students in secondary schools in the United States have been monitored in the annual survey “Monitoring the Future”. According to the survey, the proportion of students using illicit drugs has been on the decline for four consecutive years; as a result, the annual prevalence rate for various drugs is currently 10-30 per cent lower than it was 10 years ago. There has been a significant decline in the percentage of students in secondary schools who reported lifetime use of cannabis; there have also been declines in their lifetime use of other drugs, such as methamphetamine, MDMA, cocaine and heroin. The Board notes that, according to the survey, those declines are largely related to a significant rise in the percentage of adolescents perceiving the abuse of amphetamines, cannabis,

“crack” cocaine, heroin and MDMA to be high-risk activities. However, the same survey reveals that the abuse of prescription drugs is increasing among students in secondary schools; for example, abuse of oxycodone preparations (OxyContin®) increased by almost 40 per cent from 2002 to 2005.

311. Substance abuse remains a matter of serious concern in the United States, particularly with regard to the high level of abuse of prescription drugs by adolescents and adults. The gradual increase in the abuse of sedatives (including barbiturates), tranquillizers and narcotic drugs other than heroin among the general population has resulted in prescription drugs becoming the second most abused class of drugs after cannabis. The abuse of prescription drugs such as fentanyl, oxycodone and hydrocodone has led to a rising number of deaths.

312. The spread in the abuse of prescription drugs is also related to the increasing use of the World Wide Web as a global drug market. International law enforcement efforts closed down thousands of illegal Internet pharmacies involved in drug trafficking. Despite those efforts, there is an increasing number of such Internet sites selling medicines containing opioids and stimulants without prescriptions.

313. Methamphetamine trafficking and abuse continue to be key problems in Canada and the United States. In some rural areas and a number of small cities in the United States, the abuse of methamphetamine has reached widespread proportions. Methamphetamine abuse has become a serious health, law enforcement and political concern and the fastest-growing drug threat: 58 per cent of counties rank it as their biggest drug problem. While United States drug law enforcement agencies have been successful in closing down illicit methamphetamine laboratories, domestic illicit manufacturers of methamphetamine have largely been replaced by transnational drug trafficking organizations, based in Canada and Mexico. In Canada, domestic illicit manufacturers account for the largest share of the trafficked methamphetamine.

314. The Board notes the significant legislative efforts made by all three States in North America to counteract the surge of methamphetamine in the region. The United States has enacted new legislation (the Patriot Act), which inter alia, restricts the sale of ephedrine and medications containing pseudoephedrine. Limits on imports of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine have

also been introduced in Mexico. Canada amended the 2003 Precursor Control Regulations, strengthening, inter alia, import and export licensing procedures.

315. The involvement of organized criminal groups has led to Canada being used as a source for cannabis, methamphetamine and MDMA sold on the illicit market in that country or in the United States. The importance of illicit methamphetamine exports to the United States has declined following the introduction of improved precursor controls in 2003.

316. Mexican drug trafficking organizations and criminal groups control most of the organized wholesale drug trafficking in the United States, in particular trafficking in cocaine, cannabis, methamphetamine and heroin that is illicitly manufactured in Mexico. They are expanding their control of drug trafficking to areas formerly under the influence of Colombian, Dominican and other criminal groups.

Regional cooperation

317. The Governments of all three countries in North America have responded to the threat of drug trafficking operations, particularly those operations run by organized criminal groups, with increased cooperation and mutual support. The close cooperation between Mexico and the United States has included major institution-building initiatives, as well as financial and technical support, as evidenced by the provision of training courses for Mexican law enforcement personnel and prosecutors at the national, state and local levels. The Attorney General of Mexico and the Attorney General of the United States hold meetings on a regular basis to discuss bilateral cooperation and border violence.

318. The extradition of drug criminals from Mexico to the United States is taking place more frequently. An increasing number of fugitives are being deported to the United States by Mexican police and immigration authorities. The Government of Mexico initiated Operativo México Seguro (Operation Secure Mexico) to counter violence that began in 2005 among criminal organizations fighting for control over smuggling routes in cities along the border of Mexico with the United States. The Governments of Mexico and the United States started in 2005 Operation Border Unity, a bilateral, multi-agency effort to address violence on both sides of the border in the Laredo/Nuevo Laredo area.

319. The involvement of criminal groups in drug trafficking between Canada and the United States is counteracted by close cooperation of the authorities of the two countries at the national, state (or provincial) and local levels. One example of that close cooperation is the Integrated Border Enforcement Team initiative, which has become one of the primary tools used to ensure that criminals cannot exploit international borders to evade prosecution. The Shiprider Agreement, concluded in 2006 between Canada and the United States, has strengthened law enforcement cooperation by providing transborder law enforcement authority to Canadian law enforcement officers operating along and across the border.

320. Cooperation between Canada and the United States has also been used to combat drug trafficking in the transit zone from South America to North America. Canada deployed “Maritime Patrol Assets” in support of “Joint Interagency Task Force South”, of the United States, one of three such task forces conducting operations to counter drug trafficking.

National legislation, policy and action

321. The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005, signed in March 2006, contains a number of important provisions to combat the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in methamphetamine. The provisions include: restrictions on the sale of medicines containing pseudoephedrine, ephedrine and phenylpropanolamine; increased criminal penalties for illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and smuggling of methamphetamine; and provisions for bilateral efforts at the border between Mexico and the United States.

322. In addition, individual states in the United States have responded to the new challenge posed by methamphetamines and enacted additional state-level legislation on precursor control. States with the strictest laws on pseudoephedrine have seen a significant reduction in the number of seizures of methamphetamine laboratories.

323. In November 2005, the Government of Canada enacted the first major amendments to the 2003 Precursor Control Regulations, which provided for strengthened licensing procedures. Canada also moved methamphetamine to a more strictly controlled national

schedule, increasing the maximum penalty for trafficking in or illicit manufacture of the substance (from 10 years of imprisonment to life imprisonment) and for possession (from three years of imprisonment to seven).

324. The Government of Mexico introduced a policy limiting the importation of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine to manufacturers only, thereby reducing imports of those precursors by 40 per cent. Wholesale distributors are no longer allowed to import base pseudoephedrine and ephedrine. In addition, the quantity that can be imported in a single shipment is limited to 3,000 kg. Import quotas were tied to estimates of national needs.

325. The Supreme Court of Mexico ruled in November 2005 that sentencing a person to life in prison without the possibility of parole did not violate the Mexican Constitution, which prohibited cruel and unusual punishment. The ruling has removed a significant obstacle to the extradition of fugitives from Mexico facing life imprisonment in the United States for offences involving major drug trafficking and violent crimes.

326. In November 2005, the Parliament of Canada passed the Proceeds of Crime Bill, which targets the illicit proceeds of organized crime, including serious drug offences, and authorizes the courts to order the forfeiture of property of those convicted of either membership in a criminal organization or certain drug-related offences.

327. The Board notes that the Government of Canada has decided not to pursue the proposed cannabis reform legislation that would have decriminalized possession of small quantities of cannabis.

328. The Board is seriously concerned that several cities in Canada, in addition to the heroin injection site in Vancouver, have planned to distribute drug paraphernalia, including “crack” pipes, to chronic users. The Board has repeatedly mentioned in its annual reports³⁸ that such programmes are in

³⁸ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.XI.2), para. 590; *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2004* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.XI.3), para. 510; *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2003* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XI.1), paras. 325-326.

contravention of the international drug control treaties. The Board urges the Government to make available adequate services to drug abusers in need of treatment and rehabilitation, rather than providing drug injection rooms, in order to ensure full compliance with the provisions of the international drug control treaties.

329. The Board welcomes the Drug Strategy Community Initiatives Fund, established by the Government of Canada, which supports efforts in demand reduction and treatment for drug abuse carried out at the local community level, in particular initiatives for preventing the abuse of cannabis and methamphetamine.

330. The United States is responding to the increasing problem of abuse of prescription drugs, focusing on preventing the diversion of prescription drugs and providing treatment for abusers of such drugs. At the state level, the prescription-drug monitoring programme provides doctors, pharmacists and, when appropriate, law enforcement with information about patients' prescriptions. In late 2005, a total of 25 states had operational programmes for monitoring prescription drugs or were in the process of implementing them.

331. In Mexico, corruption continues to be a serious problem. The Agencia Federal de Investigación (federal investigative agency) is the central body coordinating efforts to fight corruption in the country, promoting professionalism and the effectiveness of law enforcement institutions. Mexico has taken a number of steps to reduce, if not eliminate, corruption among law enforcement and government officials, such as the establishment of a career path for investigators and the introduction of the concept of "culture of lawfulness" as part of the curriculum in schools. Authorities at the national, state and local levels have initiated training on the rule of law for police personnel. Investigations into possible misconduct by law enforcement officers and government employees are carried out regularly. The Board, while noting those efforts, again requests that Mexican authorities actively pursue the implementation of policies to counteract corruption.

Situation with regard to drug trafficking and abuse

332. Cannabis continues to be the most commonly abused and trafficked illicit drug in the region. North America accounts for the largest part of illicit cannabis production worldwide. According to available information, in 2005 Mexico produced more than 10,000 tons of cannabis and the United States produced nearly 4,500 tons.

333. According to the latest Canadian Addiction Survey, annual prevalence of cannabis use among persons aged 15 and above increased from 6.5 per cent in 1989 to 14.1 per cent in 2004. Illicit cannabis plant cultivation has become a thriving illegal industry in Canada. In addition to outdoor cultivation, more sophisticated indoor crop-growing methods are increasingly being used to produce high-potency cannabis (cannabis with a high tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content). On some of the plantations there are thousands of cannabis plants. Criminal groups are increasingly gaining control over the production and distribution of high-potency cannabis in Canada and have been identified as the principal suppliers of such cannabis to the United States. The total amount of Canadian cannabis seized by United States customs authorities was more than eight times greater in 2004 (more than 19 tons) than in 2000.

334. In Canada, cultivation of cannabis plants and trafficking in cannabis currently account for the bulk of the caseload of drug law enforcement authorities. Each year, approximately 1.3 million cannabis plants are seized; using that figure as a basis, Canadian law enforcement agencies estimate annual production of cannabis to be 1,070-2,676 tons.

335. Cannabis remains the most commonly abused drug in the United States, but a steady decline in its abuse by adolescents has been noted for almost a decade. A large part of the cannabis products available in the United States are smuggled into the country by Mexican drug trafficking organizations and criminal groups. More than 580 tons of cannabis originating in Mexico were seized by United States customs authorities in 2004. In Mexico, the eradication of cannabis plants remained at the same level in 2005 as in 2004 (30,882 hectares).

336. Mexican drug trafficking organizations have increased the size and sophistication of their cannabis

plant cultivation operations on public and private lands in the United States. New techniques are used on those well-protected cultivation areas to produce a larger, more potent outdoor cannabis crop with a THC content of at least 5 per cent and with an increased street value. Such higher-potency cannabis accounted for more than half of the total cannabis seized in 2005. Approximately 5.7 million cannabis plants were eradicated within the United States in 2005, which represents an increase of 1 million plants compared with the figure for 2004.

337. Another major problem in North America is the increasing methamphetamine manufacture, abuse and trafficking, involving mainly the United States market. Amphetamine abusers accounted for 8 per cent of all drug abusers admitted for treatment in 2004, compared with 3 per cent in 1994. Methamphetamine abuse has gradually expanded from the western states of the United States to the eastern states. It is particularly a problem in rural areas and small cities in that country.

338. While domestic illicit methamphetamine manufacture is still the main supplier of the United States market, it has declined in recent years as a result of law enforcement pressure and restrictions on the sale and use of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine. In the United States, the number of seizures of laboratories illicitly manufacturing methamphetamine, whether on a large or a small scale, declined significantly, from more than 10,200 in 2003 to less than 5,300 in 2005. The reduction in the manufacture of methamphetamine in the United States has been largely offset by sharp increases in the large-scale manufacture of that drug in Mexico, particularly in the western and north-western parts of the country. The latter trend has been confirmed by the increasing amount of methamphetamine manufactured in Mexico and seized on the border between Mexico and the United States (2 tons in 2004).

339. The prevalence of methamphetamine abuse is still relatively low among the general population in Canada; however, among youth, particularly among street youth and youth in the rave and club scenes, methamphetamine abuse is rising.

340. Most of the methamphetamine trafficked in Canada is manufactured in clandestine laboratories in the country itself. The number of seizures of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories increased from 13 in 2001 to 40 in 2004. While there are many

small methamphetamine laboratories operated by individuals in rural areas, there has been an increase in the number of "super laboratories" (manufacturing methamphetamine in excess of 5 kg per synthesis cycle). The level of sophistication of the laboratory set-ups, as well as the involvement of organized criminal groups in methamphetamine manufacture, has increased. In some parts of Canada, such as Quebec, most of the methamphetamine trafficked is in tablet form. The shift from powder form to tablet form is in response to the growing number of users in the rave and club scenes.

341. The Board is concerned about the increasing abuse in the United States of prescription drugs listed as controlled substances, including pain killers, stimulants, sedatives and tranquillizers. Levels of non-medical use and abuse of pharmaceuticals are higher than levels of use for most illicit drugs, second only to the levels of cannabis abuse. Pharmaceuticals commonly abused in the United States include cocaine, codeine, fentanyl, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, methadone, methylphenidate, morphine, oxycodone, the amphetamine group and the benzodiazepine group. The abuse of several of those substances can have lethal effects, and there has been an increasing number of deaths related to such abuse in the United States. The Board calls on the United States authorities to raise public awareness and take more effective action with regard to the added risk for non-medical drug users who tamper with prescription drugs and formulations. The tampered medications include narcotic analgesics, stimulants and depressants.

342. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health in the United States, 11 per cent of persons aged 12-17 reported lifetime non-medical use of pain killers. According to data from the study *Monitoring the Future*, OxyContin[®] abuse increased from 2002 to 2005 by almost 40 per cent, to an annual prevalence of 5.5 per cent among students in their final year of secondary school (aged 17-18). Hydrocodone (Vicodin[®]) is also widely abused: 7.4 per cent of college students (aged 18-22) abused that drug in 2005 (see also para. 56 above).

343. The Board wishes to draw to the attention of the United States authorities that the overall increase in the amount of prescription drugs abused appears to be related to an increase in sales of prescription narcotic drugs, depressants and stimulants. From 2000 to 2004,

the commercial distribution of pharmaceuticals in the United States increased by 109 per cent. One matter of particular concern is the sharp rise in sales of commonly abused pharmaceuticals such as hydrocodone and oxycodone.

344. Another matter of particular concern to the Board is the noticeable increase in the abuse of fentanyl since May 2006 in the United States, and, to a lesser extent, in Canada. The abuse of fentanyl, a synthetic opioid 80 times as potent as heroin, is particularly dangerous, as evidenced by the recent dramatic increase in the number of deaths from fentanyl overdoses registered on the eastern coast of the United States. The fentanyl is either sold as heroin or mixed with heroin. Fentanyl abusers are unable to judge the strength of the substance they are injecting. There have also been cases of the abuse of a mixture of fentanyl and cocaine.

345. Fentanyl is diverted by means of pharmacy theft, fraudulent prescriptions and illicit distribution by patients, physicians and pharmacists. Lately, fentanyl preparations, in particular in the form of transdermal patches and lozenges, are becoming as popular as OxyContin® in pharmacy burglaries and robberies. Not all fentanyl found on the illicit market has been diverted. To date, over 12 different analogues of fentanyl have been manufactured clandestinely and identified in seizures of drugs trafficked in the United States. Recent developments involving large quantities of trafficked fentanyl, as well as raids of clandestine laboratories in Mexico and the United States, indicate the growing role of illicitly manufactured fentanyl in supplying the illicit market.

346. Cocaine abuse in the United States is stable, with a slight decline in the number of persons who abused cocaine at least once in the past month. The proportion of persons admitted for treatment for cocaine abuse declined from 18 per cent in 1994 to 14 per cent in 2004. Persons who smoked “crack” cocaine accounted for 72 per cent of all persons admitted for treatment for cocaine abuse in 2004. United States inter-agency and multinational forces in the transit zone from South America to North America (the Joint Interagency Task Force South) seized a record 254 tons of cocaine in 2005, compared with 219 tons in 2004 and 176 tons in 2003. However, the Board notes that, as traditional maritime routes of cocaine trafficking have been disturbed by joint law enforcement operations, drug traffickers have tried to evade interdiction efforts by

moving fishing-vessel operations farther out in the Pacific, as far as the Galapagos Islands. Vessels or yachts carrying cocaine intended for illicit markets in Canada and the United States have been seized in locations even farther away, such as off the coast of Spain.

347. The cocaine smuggled into the United States is derived from coca produced mainly in Colombia but also in Bolivia and Peru. Mexico continues to be used as the principal trans-shipment country for cocaine entering the United States. Cocaine abuse is increasing in Mexico.

348. Demand for cocaine in Canada remains strong, and large-scale illegal importations of the drug continue. Law enforcement operations have revealed close relations between organized criminal groups from Canada and Colombian cartels attempting to import to Canada bulk shipments of cocaine (several hundred kilograms each) on a regular basis. The most common areas used as trans-shipment points for smuggling cocaine into Canada are Antigua, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Martin, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States. According to the Canadian Addiction Survey, cocaine is the third most widely used illicit drug in Canada, after cannabis and hallucinogens (such as lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) and phencyclidine). According to survey data, annual prevalence of abuse of powder and “crack” cocaine in Canada increased from 0.7 per cent in 1994 to 1.9 per cent in 2004.

349. The Board regards the decrease in heroin abuse among adolescents in the United States as an encouraging sign: annual prevalence of such abuse was 0.2 per cent in 2004, compared with 0.6 per cent in the mid-1990s. As the current perception that the risks of heroin abuse are high is expected to continue, the rate of past year abuse of heroin is expected to decrease even further.

350. The total amount of heroin seized in the United States decreased from 2,773 kg in 2002 to 1,845 kg in 2004. Most of the heroin abused in that country is manufactured from opium poppy grown in Colombia and Mexico, though opium production in those countries accounts for less than 4 per cent of global production. Expanded aerial eradication efforts, as well as upgraded security screening and increased seizures at United States airports, has led to a decrease in the availability of Colombian heroin; however, Colombia

is still the main supplier of heroin to the United States, accounting for 60-70 per cent of the heroin sold in the United States.

351. In Mexico, opium poppy growers employ small, widely dispersed plots in remote, hard-to-access areas, hindering detection and eradication of crops. In addition, the favourable climate in 2005 permitted two or three opium poppy harvests. Opium poppy is mostly cultivated in areas on the Pacific coast and then transported to the centre and north of Mexico for processing. The eradication operations of the Mexican Army and the Attorney General's Office usually destroy at least 80 per cent of the opium poppy grown in the country. In 2005, the total area of eradicated opium poppy crops increased to 20,464 hectares, an increase of 28 per cent over the previous year.

352. In Canada, the total volume of heroin seized remained comparatively low (68 kg in 2004) but the volume of opium seized increased (from 27 kg in 2001 to 84 kg in 2004). According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, consignments of opium and heroin from Afghanistan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan are usually routed through a European country or the United States to Canada. Since 2002, the total seizures of heroin originating in South-East Asia has somewhat declined, and the market share of Latin American heroin has been increasing.

353. The sharp increase in MDMA trafficking in the United States noted five years ago (11 million tablets in the peak year 2001) has been halted: the total amount of MDMA seized in that country has declined to less than 3 million tablets in the last two years. The number of past-year abusers of MDMA (aged 12 and above) declined by 40 per cent between 2002 and 2004. In Canada, significant seizures of MDMA from clandestine laboratories indicate the involvement of larger and more sophisticated operations involving organized criminal groups. Prior to 2004, MDMA arrived mainly in tablet or powder form from Europe. In 2004, importations of MDMA decreased as traffickers began to produce MDMA on a large scale within Canada. The total amount of seized MDMA increased to a record level of 15 million dosage units in 2004, compared with an annual average of less than 2 million dosage units in the period 2000-2002. The number of seized clandestine laboratories nearly tripled (to 17) in 2004. Most of the clandestine laboratories are polydrug laboratories, manufacturing more than

one single illicit drug (for example, a combination of methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA) and MDMA, a combination of MDA and methamphetamine or a combination of MDMA and methamphetamine). Organized criminal groups are heavily involved in the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in such drugs.

354. In Canada, MDMA, MDA and *gamma*-hydroxybutyric acid (GHB) continue to be widely abused in the rave scene. The abuse of those drugs has spread to far broader user groups, including youth attending clubs, private parties, secondary schools, colleges and universities.

Substances not under international control

355. Among students in their final year of secondary school in the United States, the proportion of students who abused inhalants in the past year was considerably lower in 2004 (4.2 per cent) than in the peak year 1995 (8.0 per cent). The abuse of inhalants in the United States, however, is on the rise again. It appears that, among adolescents, inhalants are the third most widely used class of illicit drugs.

356. In the United States, there have been reports on the abuse of high doses of dimenhydrinate, the active ingredient in Dramamine[®], with dangerous or even fatal effects.

357. Khat from various countries is smuggled into Canada, mainly via the United Kingdom, where it is not a prohibited substance. Under Schedule IV of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act of Canada, khat is designated a "controlled substance" and as such it is a criminal offence to import, export or traffic in khat.

South America

Major developments

358. The total area under coca bush cultivation in the Andean subregion increased slightly, from 158,000 hectares in 2004 to 159,600 hectares in 2005, but the figure for 2005 still represented a decrease of 28 per cent compared with the figure for 2000. Slight decreases in the total area under coca bush cultivation in Bolivia and Peru were offset by an increase in Colombia despite intensified eradication efforts. The ability of coca bush growers to move their operations from one area to another adversely affected the results

of eradication efforts by the Government of Colombia. Potential cocaine manufacture in the Andean subregion decreased by 3 per cent. Cocaine continues to reach the principal markets of the United States and Europe through the main trafficking routes in Central America and the Caribbean, as well as through Africa, as evidenced by increased seizures in Western and Central Africa (see para. 401 below).

359. With a view to monitoring the total area under coca bush cultivation, field research measuring coca leaf yields and cocaine yields from coca leaves was conducted in Colombia in 2006. The research confirms the findings of the Board that the cocaine yields are higher than reported in 2005. Those new findings are reflected in the 2005 figure for potential cocaine manufacture in Colombia (640 tons). In Peru, work to update the methods used to measure coca leaf and cocaine yields started in 2006 and will be applied in 2007. A similar review is also expected in Bolivia.

360. The Board notes that the Government of Bolivia is considering the introduction of a new drug control policy with a view to using coca leaf for a wide range of products, as evidenced by the inauguration in June 2006 of a plant for processing coca leaf. The plant will manufacture packed coca tea, for local consumption and, according to proposals, also for export to other States parties to the 1961 Convention.

361. The Board wishes to reiterate its position reflected in its report for 2005³⁹ and urges the Governments concerned to ensure the full implementation of the provisions of the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol concerning the production of coca leaf, its industrial uses and international trade. The Board is concerned that that action could serve as a precedent and may send the wrong message to the public if it is allowed to stand.

362. In Peru, coca bush growers are putting pressure on the new Government to stop manual eradication of coca bush and to remove coca leaf from international control. In Argentina, under current legislation, the possession of coca tea or coca leaf in a natural state for chewing purposes is not considered to be possession or personal use of a narcotic drug. The Board wishes to remind Governments that it is the responsibility of the

States parties to the international drug control treaties to ensure that the provisions concerning the cultivation of coca bush and the possession and use of coca leaves are adhered to, and the Board is ready to assist Governments in their efforts to fulfil that responsibility.

363. The implementation of measures aimed at countering drug trafficking, reducing illicit crop cultivation, preventing and fighting corruption related to drug trafficking and extraditing drug traffickers has met with resistance by violent groups in some countries in South America. The Board urges all Governments not to reduce their efforts to enforce their drug control policies, despite difficulties that they may be experiencing in that area.

364. Large amounts of precursor chemicals required for the illicit manufacture of drugs continue to be seized in most countries in South America, which indicates the availability of those precursor chemicals to be used for such purposes. Measures to counter smuggling, including measures used in controlling domestic distribution networks and investigating diversions of precursor chemicals, need to be further strengthened.

365. Cocaine abuse continues to account for most of the demand for treatment for drug abuse in South America, though the share accounted for by cocaine abuse has declined since the late 1990s. Several countries in the region carried out activities specifically aimed at the establishment of minimum standards of care for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug-dependent persons and the evaluation of the effectiveness of existing programmes for the treatment and prevention of drug abuse and conducted studies on the prevalence of drug abuse.

Regional cooperation

366. To advance efforts in drug control and supply reduction, CICAD continued to provide its member States with support in the form of training and technical assistance. The establishment of a network of national drug observatories in South America, to ensure that Governments are supplied with high-quality information on drug production, trafficking and abuse and related crime, was one of the priorities of CICAD. For example, in Peru, the Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo y Vida sin Drogas (national commission for development and a drug-free lifestyle)

³⁹ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2005 ...*, para. 394.

submitted to the Government in February 2006 a draft decree providing for the establishment of the Observatorio Peruano de Drogas (Peruvian drug observatory), which also received support from Belgium.

367. The VIII High-Level Meeting of the Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Vienna on 6 and 7 March 2006. The mechanism is of particular importance within the framework of relations between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean, as it is an institutional forum at the interregional level for identifying new approaches and exchanging proposals, ideas and experiences in addressing illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption.

368. At the Fifteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Santa Marta, Colombia, from 17 to 21 October 2005, participants reported on the latest drug trafficking trends and distribution networks and links between drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime. The meeting recommended, inter alia, regular revision of the relevant legal instruments to counteract new trends in the use of technology by organized criminal groups and regulation of ownership of speedboats, a means of transportation frequently used by drug traffickers.

369. Experts from countries in the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe participated in the Latin American conference on cocaine trafficking via maritime routes, held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 14 to 17 February 2006. The experts analysed maritime routes used for smuggling cocaine into the United States and Europe, the structures of the criminal organizations involved and interdiction operations in international waters. It was recommended that the capacity of law enforcement agencies be strengthened in particular through better utilization of investigative techniques such as controlled delivery.

370. The Board notes that South American countries continued to adopt specific measures to strengthen the security of their borders. A pilot programme to identify cars and trucks in real time was developed at the land border crossing between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay with a view to supporting the sharing of information among the law enforcement authorities of those countries. Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and

Uruguay are among the countries that have been implementing the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPC Code) of the International Maritime Organization.

371. South American countries continued to participate in regional projects, such as Drogas Sintéticas and Seis Fronteras, and in international projects initiated by the Board, such as Project Cohesion and Project Prism. Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), the five countries participating in a project for the control of precursor products in Andean countries (PRECAN), which is financed by the European Commission, decided in October 2005 to establish a joint regional web portal for use by administrative control authorities. The portal is expected to be operational before the end of 2006.

372. Colombia and Ecuador signed, in December 2005, a joint declaration on the strengthening of border cooperation, which includes measures to counter trafficking in essential chemicals and arms. The Governments of the two countries also agreed on a 10-kilometre buffer zone to protect the border of Ecuador from the effects of aerial spraying of illicit crops in Colombia; the agreement went into effect in January 2006.

373. The first international meeting of drug observatories of Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Caracas from 28 to 30 November 2005. The Board is pleased to note that participants from more than 40 countries shared experiences in the field of drug demand reduction, information on recent trends in drug abuse and methodologies used for the processing and analysis of epidemiological data. The Board welcomes the first comparative study of drug abuse in secondary schools in South American countries, an initiative of the subregional system for drug abuse information and investigation, comprising Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay, as well as CICAD and UNODC. The Board also welcomes a study on the human, social and economic costs of drugs in certain countries in the Americas, including Chile and Uruguay.

National legislation, policy and action

374. New national drug strategy plans were adopted in Guyana in June 2005 and in Suriname in January 2006.

In Guyana, the national drug control master plan for the period 2005-2009 includes the implementation of school-based and occupation-based surveys to determine the prevalence of drug abuse in targeted areas.

375. The Board notes that, in Ecuador, there is closer cooperation between the National Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances Control Board (CONSEP), the drug control directorate of the police and the customs authorities (see para. 405 below).

376. In Bolivia, Ministerial Regulation 112/06 (Reglamento de Circulación y Comercialización de la Hoja de Coca en su Estado Natural), adopted in June 2006, allows coca producers to trade their coca on licit coca markets. Furthermore, two draft laws, one on coca in its natural state and the other on controlled substances, are being prepared to replace law No. 1008 of 19 July 1988 on the Regimen de la Coca y Sustancias Controladas (regime applicable to coca and controlled substances).

377. The Board notes that the Government of Bolivia intensified its interdiction efforts in 2006. The Board urges the Government to ensure that, in addition to strengthening its measures for countering drug trafficking, all provisions of the new drug control legislation, including those relating to the cultivation of coca bush and the use of coca leaf, are in line with the international drug control treaties.

378. In October 2006, the Government of Peru decided on the decentralization of the national coca leaf enterprise. The Board urges the Government to ensure that that measure does not violate the provisions of the 1961 Convention on establishing a government agency to control coca bush cultivation and coca leaf production and does not undermine efforts in Peru to combat illicit coca bush cultivation and drug trafficking.

379. In Brazil, law No. 11.343 of 23 August 2006, which establishes the Sistema Nacional de Políticas Públicas sobre Drogas (national system of public policy on drugs), was promulgated in August 2006. The law also stipulates procedures related to the investigation of drug-related crimes and sanctions, as well as measures for the prevention of drug abuse. The law distinguishes between drug traffickers and drug users and establishes alternative sanctions for drug abuse without decriminalizing it.

380. In Paraguay, decree No. 5213/05 was enacted, updating the list of controlled substances and providing for the control of prescriptions for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

381. In Ecuador, the Ley para reprimir el Lavado de Activos (law against money-laundering) was promulgated and a new Corte Suprema de Justicia (supreme court of justice) was established in October 2005. The law defines money-laundering as a criminal activity, establishes a financial intelligence unit and includes provisions for mutual legal assistance and the exchange of information.

382. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, law No. 38.281 (Ley Orgánica contra la Delincuencia Organizada) was enacted in September 2005, inter alia, establishing money-laundering as an offence.

383. In several countries in South America, such as Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), new laws on precursors and regulations establishing further control mechanisms, defining codes of conduct for precursor traders and providing for the exchange of information were adopted.

384. In Peru, law No. 28305 (Ley de Control de Insumos Químicos y Productos Fiscalizados), which entered into force in October 2005, introduced controls over substances listed in the 1988 Convention over which there had previously been no control in the country. In addition, the Comité de Coordinación Interinstitucional was established by decree No. 053-2005-PCM to coordinate and assess policies and action in the area of chemical control.

385. In Colombia, the national drug regulatory authority initiated a survey on the access and availability of opioids in hospitals throughout the country. In addition, the results of a national study on the mental health of adults and adolescents and a national survey on drug use in schools have been completed in that country and are expected to be published in 2006.

386. In accordance with the recommendations of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism of CICAD, countries in South America such as Guyana and Suriname have carried out activities aimed at the establishment of programmes for drug abuse prevention and the development of standards for programmes for the treatment of drug abuse.

387. In Guyana, where the programmes for the treatment of drug abuse that are currently available do not meet the national requirements, the minimum standards of care for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers are currently being prepared and are expected to be ready for implementation in 2007.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

388. According to UNODC estimates, approximately 18 per cent of global illicit cannabis herb production occurs in South America. Though illicit cultivation of cannabis to be sold on the local market continues to be detected in most of the countries in the region, cannabis grown in Paraguay, and to a lesser extent, Colombia is also being smuggled into other countries, both in South America and in other regions. Between 2004 and 2005, the total volume of seizures of cannabis herb decreased in Argentina and Colombia, while in Bolivia it increased from 28.0 to 34.5 tons.

389. Paraguay remains a major producer of cannabis in South America: the total area under cannabis cultivation in the country is estimated to be 5,500-6,000 hectares. Owing to the weak economic situation, the high prices paid by traffickers for crops and the lack of effective drug control programmes, illicit cannabis production has spread to areas of the country previously not affected by such activity. In 2004, the discovery of a new hybrid of cannabis that had been developed by traffickers and was capable of growing during the dry months of winter was reported in Paraguay. The Board is concerned that year-round cultivation of cannabis may contribute to an increase in potential cannabis production; for that reason, the Board urges the Government of Paraguay to implement programmes to eliminate illicit cannabis cultivation.

390. In Brazil, cannabis is grown mostly in the north-eastern part of the country. While there are still no accurate estimates of the total area under illicit cannabis cultivation and the potential cannabis production capacity, it is believed that most of the cannabis abused in Brazil originated in neighbouring countries. For example, according to the National Anti-Drug Secretariat (SENAD) of Paraguay, approximately 85 per cent of the cannabis produced in that country is smuggled into Brazil, 10-15 per cent is smuggled into

other countries in the Southern Cone and only 2-3 per cent is for local consumption.

391. In Peru, the illicit cultivation of cannabis, for local consumption, but also for illicit markets in Chile and Ecuador, increased in 2005. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reported cannabis eradication operations at its border with Colombia.

392. Though cannabis is regarded as the most widely abused drug in South America, data collected in the period 2001-2005 indicate significant differences in the annual prevalence of cannabis abuse by the population aged 15-64 in that region. For example, Chile, with a 5.6 per cent prevalence rate, is regarded as the most affected country, and is the only country in the region reporting an annual level of cannabis abuse that is above the global average. Though cannabis is produced in Paraguay, that country has a prevalence rate of only 0.5 per cent. In Argentina and Peru, an upward trend in the prevalence of abuse of cannabis herb was reported in the past year. According to a recent epidemiological study on drug abuse carried out by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, cannabis is the drug most widely abused among persons aged 15-70 in that country. The study also indicated a major difference in lifetime prevalence of drug abuse (use of illicit drugs at least once in a person's lifetime): the figure for males (3.9 per cent) was five times higher than the figure for females.

393. In 2005, the majority of illicit coca bush cultivation continued to take place in the following countries, in descending order: Colombia, Peru and Bolivia.

394. In Colombia, despite eradication efforts, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in 2005 increased by 6,000 hectares to 86,000 hectares. That represents a decline of 47 per cent compared with the peak annual estimate of 163,300 hectares in 2000. Illicit coca bush cultivation in Colombia spread rapidly to areas where it had not been detected before. The most significant increase was noted in two areas bordering Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). A total of 170,070 hectares of coca bush were eradicated in Colombia in 2005, mainly through aerial spraying. The intensive eradication efforts in Colombia continued also in 2006. By mid-September 2006, 150,600 hectares of illicitly cultivated coca bush had been eradicated in that country.

395. In Peru, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation decreased by 4 per cent, to 48,200 hectares, between 2004 and 2005. The decline is attributable mainly to alternative development efforts in several valleys in which coca bush was grown and to manual eradication campaigns in other areas, most notably in parts of the Upper Huallaga valley (San Martín) and in San Gabán (Puno), where illicit coca bush cultivation dropped sharply, from 2,700 hectares in 2004 to 292 hectares in 2005. The total area under illicit coca bush cultivation eradicated in Peru increased in 2005 by 19 per cent, to 12,000 hectares. Between January and August 2006, an additional 8,000 hectares of coca bush were eradicated.

396. In Bolivia, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation dropped by 8 per cent, to 25,400 hectares, in 2005. The total area includes 12,000 hectares in the Yungas, where coca bush cultivation has been permitted under law No. 1008 for traditional uses, and an additional 3,200 hectares in the Chapare area, where such cultivation has been temporarily authorized by the Government.

397. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, following the use of a satellite monitoring system for the detection of illicit crop cultivation, 80 hectares of coca bush were eradicated at the country's north-western border with Colombia during Operation Sierra, conducted in November 2005.

398. In 2005, maceration pits and coca paste or coca base laboratories continued to be detected in all three illicit coca-producing countries in South America, whereas cocaine laboratories were found mainly in Colombia. The total amount of cocaine hydrochloride seized in Colombia (168 tons) was almost 50 times higher than the total amount seized in Bolivia and Peru together.

399. According to the information available on disclosures of clandestine laboratories in South America, some illicit manufacture of cocaine continues to take place in non-traditional illicit cocaine manufacturing countries. For example, in Argentina, the number of clandestine laboratories manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride has increased since 2000. In 2004, 16 cocaine laboratories and 4 coca paste or base laboratories were reported to have been dismantled. While the amount of cocaine illicitly manufactured in that country each year is still small, there are concerns

that traffickers are moving their activities into that country.

400. According to the European Police Office (Europol), every year almost 250 tons of cocaine enter the European Union, the second largest market for cocaine after the United States. Most of the cocaine is transported by sea from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Suriname and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) to the main European seaports. Sizeable amounts of cocaine are also smuggled into Europe by air courier.

401. Traffickers from South America and criminal groups from Central and Western Africa have been smuggling large shipments of cocaine by sea to Europe and the United States, as evidenced by the large quantities of cocaine seized in Lagos, Nigeria, in 2006 (see para. 358 above).

402. According to law enforcement agencies in South America, the organizations traditionally involved in drug trafficking are becoming more specialized, also offering their services to other criminal groups. Criminal organizations often exploit new technological developments in communication and transportation to prevent disclosure of their criminal activities.

403. Criminal organizations also exploit certain vulnerable population groups. For example, in Ecuador, children have been used as street dealers. Increased drug trafficking in that country is also accompanied by waves of violent crime, including kidnapping and juvenile gang "warfare".

404. In Brazil, the total volume of cocaine seizures has doubled over the past year. The use of drug couriers for transporting drugs from Brazil to South Africa and from there to European countries and Australia has been identified. Since the introduction in 2005 of a new law permitting unidentified aircraft to be shot down in Brazil, drug trafficking using small aircraft in the Amazon area has decreased but there has been a substantial increase in drug seizures on boats and small ships in the river network.

405. Drug traffickers from Colombia and Mexico continued to use Ecuador for stockpiling and redistributing cocaine destined for illicit markets in North America and Europe. In Ecuador, following the implementation of a programme by the Government to strengthen the control of containers at the port of Guayaquil, more than 40 tons of cocaine were seized in

2005, eight times more than in the previous year. The cocaine was found mainly in sea freight containers and on fishing vessels transferring their illicit consignments to mother vessels waiting in international waters. In the first quarter of 2006, an additional 11 tons of cocaine were seized during Operation Pacific Storm, which resulted in the dismantling of a major trafficking organization. Although no similar seizures have been reported since that operation, cocaine trafficking continued, using other routes and methods.

406. Paraguay continues to be used to trans-ship cocaine consignments to other countries in South America and to Africa and Europe. Approximately 40-60 tons of cocaine are smuggled each year through Paraguay by criminal organizations, most of which are controlled by nationals of Brazil.

407. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the total volume of cocaine seizures increased in 2005 by 87 per cent, to 58.4 tons; a further 23 tons of cocaine were seized in the first nine months of 2006. Most of the intercepted cocaine shipments were destined for Spain and the United Kingdom.

408. According to UNODC data for the period 2004-2005, the annual prevalence of cocaine abuse in South America in the population aged 15-64 was 0.7 per cent. In two countries in South America, Bolivia and Chile, the prevalence rate for cocaine abuse was higher than the regional average. In Peru, the prevalence of cocaine abuse increased over the past year. However, this was not the case for all forms of cocaine. In 2005, the declining prevalence of the abuse of cocaine base was offset by the increased abuse of cocaine hydrochloride. The abuse of "paco" (coca paste) has risen sharply in recent years in Argentina (see para. 420 below).

409. According to the results of the sixth national study on the abuse of drugs among the general population in Chile, which was carried out in 2004, 0.8 ton of cocaine base and 1.9 tons of cocaine are abused each year in the country.

410. In Colombia, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation dropped by 49 per cent in 2005, to 2,000 hectares, as a result of continued eradication efforts by the Government. During 2005, six heroin laboratories were destroyed and 745 kg of heroin were seized. A record 1.6 tons of raw opium were seized in Colombia in 2005, compared with 27 kg in 2003 and

57 kg in 2004. Increasing amounts of heroin destined for North America and Europe continued to be trans-shipped through Ecuador. On a smaller scale, trafficking in heroin originating in Colombia was also reported in Argentina.

411. According to the Government of Peru, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in the country in 2004 was estimated at 1,500 hectares. More than 92 hectares of opium poppy fields were eradicated in 2005, and a further 88 hectares were eradicated during the first eight months of 2006.

412. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, illicit opium poppy cultivation areas larger than 100 hectares were identified during eradication operations in 2005.

413. Heroin seizures have been reported in recent years in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The most significant increase in the volume of heroin seizures has been recorded in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela: in that country, heroin seizures rose steadily from 196 kg in 2000 to a record 658 kg in 2004.

414. In South America, the prevalence rate for the abuse of opiates, in particular heroin (0.1 per cent of the population aged 15-64), is among the lowest in the world. In 2004, the latest year for which data are available, the abuse of opiates increased in Argentina (also in 2005), Colombia and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Precursors

415. Seizures of precursor chemicals, including potassium permanganate and acetic anhydride, were reported in South America. Furthermore, in 2005, 16 laboratories manufacturing potassium permanganate were destroyed in Colombia and 2 such laboratories were dismantled in Bolivia. There has been increased use of substances not listed under the 1988 Convention as substitutes for precursor chemicals. Recycling chemicals that can be reused as many as five or six times is one of the methods used by traffickers to circumvent controls. The Board urges the Governments concerned to further foster, in cooperation with the

chemical industry, the existing controls, particularly at the domestic distribution level.⁴⁰

Psychotropic substances

416. Although the total amount of ATS seized in South America is not significant, drug abuse surveys indicate that the popularity of stimulants is increasing in some countries in the region, including Argentina and Peru. MDMA, mainly from the Netherlands, is the synthetic drug most commonly abused in Brazil. In the first half of 2006, more than 900 amphetamine tablets and 7,500 “ecstasy” tablets were seized in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. In 2005, “ecstasy” tablets were seized in Paraguay for the first time.

417. Several countries in South America have reported a rising trend in the non-therapeutic use of sedatives and tranquillizers. In Argentina and Peru, the prevalence of the abuse of those substances is slightly higher among the female population than among the male population. In Brazil, the licit use of amfepramone and fenproporex, stimulants listed in Schedule IV of the 1971 Convention, is increasing. Zopiclone and ketamine, two substances not under international control, were found to have been diverted into illicit channels and abused in Argentina.

418. Pharmaceutical preparations containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are often smuggled into countries in South America, such as Ecuador, and sold over the counter in non-licensed outlets.

Missions

419. The Board sent a mission to Argentina in May 2006. The Board appreciates the commitment of the Government to combating illicit activities related to drugs. The Board found that existing laws and regulations on drug control are not always in line with the international drug control treaties and noted that changes in the legislative basis for drug control and related areas had been planned or already introduced. The Board urges the Government to implement measures to comply with the provisions of the 1961 Convention concerning the use of coca leaf and to harmonize laws and jurisdiction between provinces

⁴⁰ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2006 ...*, chap. III.

with a view to sending a clear message to the public on the dangers of drug abuse. The Board notes that, in addition to drug trafficking, the illicit manufacture of cocaine from coca paste that has been smuggled into the country has been increasing in recent years. The Board is aware of the measures already taken to suppress those activities and encourages the Government to ensure concerted action at the federal and provincial levels involving the relevant government agencies, including the customs authorities. In that connection, the gathering and analysis of intelligence on drug-related crime should be improved, in order to assist in the investigation and prosecution of illicit activities related to drugs; to that end, additional resources should be provided.

420. The mission of the Board found that the controls applied to the licit movement of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors in Argentina appeared to be comprehensive. The Board welcomes the plan to establish a prescription monitoring programme to identify unusual consumption patterns and encourages the Government to continue to promote the rational prescription of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In view of the continued diversion of precursor chemicals in Argentina, the Board requests the Government to remain vigilant and investigate all cases of diversion and attempted diversion, with a view to identifying new trends and detecting and arresting the traffickers involved. With respect to demand reduction, the Board notes with satisfaction the recent efforts to ascertain the extent and patterns of drug abuse in the country. Since it has been found that drug abuse, in particular the abuse of “paco” (coca paste), has been rising sharply in Argentina, the Board advises the Government to continue its efforts to improve the prevention of drug abuse and the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers.

C. Asia

East and South-East Asia

Major developments

421. Since 2004, there has been an increase in seizures of cocaine in the Hong Kong SAR of China.

422. Traffickers are attempting to arrange the illicit sale of drugs using the Internet and cellular phones. Recently, attempts to smuggle illicit drugs into Japan through the postal system have increased.

423. In several countries in East and South-East Asia, including China and Japan, persons who until recently had abused a single type of drug have shifted to polydrug abuse.

424. There is growing concern in the region regarding the illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of substances not under international control.

425. Although the HIV epidemic remains concentrated among high-risk groups in East and South-East Asia, HIV infection continues to be a major problem in countries in the region where heroin is the drug of choice among persons who abuse drugs by injection. In Japan, the prevalence of HIV infection attributed to drug abuse by injection continues to be low.

Regional cooperation

426. A memorandum of understanding was signed by the Secretary-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Secretary-General of the Economic Cooperation Organization in January 2006. The areas of cooperation related to drug control include: the exchange of information on national legislation and activities to suppress illicit drug trafficking; the promotion of law enforcement cooperation; the promotion of increased public awareness of the dangers of drug abuse, the development of community-based drug abuse prevention and treatment programmes and the development of programmes for the reduction of illicit drug demand.

427. The Beijing Congress Declaration, the updated ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD) Plan of Action, 2005-2010, and the Special Initiative on Regional Joint Action against ATS-related Crimes were adopted at the Second International Congress of ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs, held in Beijing in October 2005. Those initiatives are aimed at identifying further strategies and measures to be used for drug control cooperation in South-East Asia.

428. The second Training Course on Precursor and Chemical Control for ASEAN Narcotics Law

Enforcement Officers was held in Bangkok from 16 to 22 May 2005. Law enforcement officers from ASEAN member States, as well as China and India, attended the course. The objective of the course was to provide an overview of the illicit traffic in precursor chemicals in countries in South-East Asia, China and India, as well as training in the use of investigative techniques. The Office of the Narcotics Control Board of Thailand and the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency organized a training course on international drug law enforcement in Bangkok in August 2005. In 2005, China continued to provide law enforcement training for officers from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. In addition, through its alternative development assistance, China provided training for 135 agricultural and medical workers and facilitated the cultivation of over 330 hectares of food crops in northern Myanmar.

429. In July 2005, cooperation between law enforcement officials from China and Myanmar led to the seizure of 100 kg of methamphetamine. In September 2005, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand cooperated in an investigation that resulted in the arrest of two major drug dealers in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and in the seizure of 496 kg of heroin in Shan State, the largest seizure ever made in Myanmar.

430. UNODC regional activities involving laboratory assistance to strengthen regulatory and law enforcement control with respect to ATS and their precursors in East and South-East Asia became operational in early 2006. The aims of such assistance are to improve the integration of scientific support into national and regional drug control systems. Two regional meetings were held on the subject in Bangkok in May and September 2006. The meetings were attended by UNODC laboratory personnel, as well as law enforcement, health and regulatory authorities from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

National legislation, policy and action

431. In Viet Nam, the master plan for drug control for the period 2005-2010 is currently being implemented. It is aimed at increasing public awareness of the harmfulness of drug abuse, preventing illicit crop cultivation and illicit drug manufacture and trafficking,

strengthening programmes for the treatment of drug abuse and reducing drug abuse by injection. The plan includes measures to eliminate the illicit cultivation of opium poppy and to prevent the use of precursor chemicals in the illicit manufacture of drugs.

432. The National Narcotics Board of Indonesia launched its national strategy to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking for the period 2005-2009. The strategy includes activities aimed at building the capacity of law enforcement agencies and strengthening programmes for the prevention of drug abuse and the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers.

433. In line with the recommendations of the Board following its mission to Thailand in May 2004, the Board wishes to reiterate its recommendation to the Government of Thailand to undertake sustainable measures to address the problem of drug abuse, as well as to provide treatment and rehabilitation for drug abusers in Thailand.

434. In China, a drug control bill was submitted to the national legislature for consideration in August 2006. The bill was drawn up to curb drug-related crime and the growing population of drug abusers in the country. The Ministry of Public Security of China has actively supported the bill.

435. Several States in East and South-East Asia have taken action to deal with specific drug-related issues. For example, in June 2006, the National Assembly of Viet Nam adopted a comprehensive law on HIV/AIDS prevention and control that will enter into force in January 2007. The law includes provisions for harm reduction. The National Committee for AIDS, Drugs and Prostitution Prevention and Control held a meeting in Hanoi in March 2006 to review the national programme for the period 2001-2005. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic launched in 2005 a national strategy calling for a balanced approach to eliminating opium in the country during the period 2006-2009. The main components of the strategy are alternative development, demand reduction, law enforcement and civic awareness. In August 2006, the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic introduced a draft action plan targeting 1,000 former opium poppy cultivating villages that are most at risk of reverting to opium poppy cultivation. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Cambodia has incorporated drug

awareness issues into the national curriculum for primary and secondary schools.

436. In order to prevent the illicit manufacture of ketamine (currently not under international control), the Dangerous Drugs Board of the Philippines classified ketamine as a dangerous drug in October 2005.

437. A number of States in East and South-East Asia are taking steps to prevent money-laundering. In Viet Nam, decree No. 74/2005/ND-CP of 7 June 2005, aimed at preventing and combating money-laundering, entered into effect on 1 August 2005. Steps are being taken to establish a money-laundering information centre in the State Bank of Viet Nam, with a view to raising awareness within the financial sector and training police and other law enforcement officers. The Cabinet of the Government of Cambodia endorsed in July 2006 draft legislation to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism; the draft legislation includes provisions on establishing a financial intelligence unit and, if adopted, would introduce measures to detect and prevent money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic has trained banking officials as part of its efforts to tackle the problems of money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

438. The Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering has welcomed the progress made by the Government of Myanmar in reforming its programme for countering money-laundering and has urged the Government to continue its efforts in that direction. Myanmar is the only country that remains on the list of countries and territories considered by the Financial Action Task Force to be "non-cooperative" in efforts to counter money-laundering.

Situation with regard to drug trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

439. The illicit cultivation of cannabis plants continued throughout the region, particularly in South-East Asia. Cannabis plants are illicitly cultivated throughout the Philippines. The illicit cultivation of cannabis plants also continued in Thailand, particularly in the northern and north-eastern parts of the country. Illicit cannabis production in the Lao People's

Democratic Republic takes place mainly in the lowlands, in the south and in areas near the Mekong. Cannabis plants are illicitly cultivated in the central and southern parts of Myanmar. There is limited illicit cultivation of cannabis plants in Cambodia in some provinces along its borders and the Mekong. Cannabis plants are also illicitly cultivated in some areas in Indonesia.

440. Countries in East and South-East Asia continued their campaigns to eradicate cannabis plants. In 2005, 12 tons of cannabis were seized in Thailand and the Government of the Philippines destroyed millions of cannabis plants. China, Indonesia, Japan and Myanmar also seized significant amounts of cannabis. Viet Nam reported a major increase in the volume of cannabis seizures. Most of the cannabis seized in the Hong Kong SAR of China originated in the Golden Triangle, Cambodia or countries in South Asia.

441. Illicit opium poppy cultivation continued to decrease in almost all countries in East and South-East Asia. Most of the illicit cultivation of opium poppy in the region occurs in Myanmar; however, each year the Government of that country succeeds in reducing the level of such cultivation. Although illicit opium poppy cultivation in the southern and eastern parts of Shan State has increased, the total area under such cultivation declined to 21,500 hectares in 2006. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, all provinces and the special zone where opium poppy used to grow were declared by the Government in February 2006 to be opium-free; however, limited illicit opium poppy cultivation reportedly continues in several northern provinces of that country. In Viet Nam, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation was negligible.

442. Seizures of opium continued to be reported in countries in East and South-East Asia. In 2005, Chinese law enforcement officers seized a total of 2.3 tons of opium. Law enforcement officials in Viet Nam also reported seizures of opium. In addition, 124 kg of morphine were seized in Yunnan Province of China in 2005.

443. Since 2004, there has been an increase in seizures of cocaine in the Hong Kong SAR of China. In March 2006, law enforcement officers from China (including the Hong Kong SAR) and the United States cooperated with each other to uncover a cocaine trafficking syndicate based in Colombia. As a result of that cooperation, 142 kg of cocaine were seized and

nine people were arrested. In 2005, small amounts of cocaine were seized in Cambodia and Thailand. Cocaine is smuggled into Thailand from South America, usually entering the country via Bangkok International Airport. Some of the cocaine has also been smuggled into Thailand via South Africa and Europe. Seizures of cocaine decreased dramatically in Japan, where 2.9 kg of cocaine were seized in 2005, compared with 85.4 kg in 2004.

444. Heroin is illicitly manufactured in Myanmar. Illicit heroin manufacture in the Lao People's Democratic Republic remains limited. Most of the heroin seized in the Lao People's Democratic Republic has been smuggled through Myanmar. In 2005, China, Thailand and Viet Nam reported a large volume of heroin seizures. Heroin continues to be smuggled into Thailand over its northern, north-eastern and eastern borders. A total of 924 kg of heroin were seized in Thailand in 2005, the highest reported volume of heroin seizures in that country since 1998. Traffickers also continued to use Thailand as a transit point for heroin consignments. Most of the heroin seized in China was smuggled into that country from the Golden Triangle. The total volume of heroin smuggled into China from the Golden Triangle decreased in 2005 compared with the previous year. Law enforcement officers in China continued to focus on strengthening drug control activities at the south-western border of that country. As a result, 66.8 kg of heroin were seized at the border between China and Viet Nam. In China, law enforcement officers from the autonomous region Xinjiang identified nine cases involving the smuggling of drugs from the Golden Crescent by air and seized a total of 14.5 kg of heroin. Small amounts of heroin were also seized in Cambodia, Indonesia and Japan in 2005. Most of the heroin seized in the Hong Kong SAR of China originates in the Golden Triangle; the heroin is smuggled into Yunnan Province and is transported overland through the autonomous region Guangxi and Guangdong Province into the Hong Kong SAR.

445. Cannabis continues to be abused in countries in East and South-East Asia, including Brunei Darussalam, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea. Heroin remains the drug of choice among drug abusers in most countries or areas in the region, such as China (including the Hong Kong SAR and the Macao SAR of China), Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Viet Nam. In Malaysia, morphine continues to be the drug abused

by almost one third of persons undergoing treatment for drug abuse.

446. In 2004, there was an increase in HIV infection among persons who abuse drugs by injection in the Macao SAR of China; largely as a result of swift Government action to stem the spread of HIV infection, in 2005 there was a decrease in both the number and the proportion of persons who abused drugs by injection among newly reported HIV cases in the Macao SAR. In Viet Nam, the HIV epidemic remains concentrated among high-risk groups, and drug injection continues to be the main cause of HIV transmission: 53 per cent of newly detected cases of HIV infection were attributed to drug abuse by injection. In China, over 40 per cent of the 135,630 registered HIV/AIDS patients contracted the disease through drug abuse by injection. In Myanmar, HIV prevalence among persons who abuse drugs by injection is estimated at 34 per cent. In Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, the prevalence of HIV among persons who abuse drugs by injection remains high. In Japan, HIV infection attributable to drug abuse by injection continues to be low (0.5 per cent).

Psychotropic substances

447. Large-scale clandestine laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine continued to be uncovered in East and South-East Asia. In 2005, seven clandestine laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine were dismantled and 11 kg of methamphetamine, precursor chemicals and equipment were seized in the Philippines. In China, police uncovered a large-scale drug smuggling, trafficking and manufacturing operation in Guangdong Province in May 2005; as a result, a clandestine laboratory manufacturing methamphetamine and another manufacturing 1-phenyl-2-propanone were dismantled and 46.7 kg of methamphetamine, 1-phenyl-2-propanone and other precursor chemicals were seized. In June 2005, Chinese law enforcement officers uncovered a transnational operation involved in the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in methamphetamine; as a result, 42.5 kg of methamphetamine and tons of precursor chemicals, including ephedrine and acetic anhydride, were seized. In Thailand, two clandestine laboratories manufacturing methamphetamine were dismantled in 2005.

448. In 2005, large amounts of ATS continued to be seized in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam. Many of the ATS tablets recently seized in the Hong Kong SAR of China originated not in Europe (which is often the case) but in Asia. Many countries in East and South-East Asia have reported a significant increase in the volume of methamphetamine seizures. In 2005, China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand each reported an increase in seizures of methamphetamine tablets. In January 2006, the Anti-Narcotics Task Force of Myanmar arrested eight suspects and seized a large amount of methamphetamine tablets (worth an estimated US\$ 10 million) in Tachilek, a town on the border of Myanmar with Thailand, near the Mekong. In 2005, there was increased smuggling of methamphetamine from the Lao People's Democratic Republic into Cambodia. In 2005, Cambodian border patrol officers uncovered 128 cases of trafficking in methamphetamine and arrested 284 people and seized a significant amount of methamphetamine in connection with those cases. Attempts to smuggle methamphetamine into Thailand over its north-eastern and eastern borders continued to be detected. Methamphetamine is smuggled into the Philippines mainly through the shorelines of the Northern Luzon, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog regions. A few countries in the region, including Japan and the Philippines, reported a considerable decrease in the volume of methamphetamine seized in 2005.

449. The amount of methamphetamine smuggled into China increased in 2005 compared with the figure for 2004. In 2005, law enforcement officials in Yunnan Province of China seized 2.62 tons of methamphetamine, accounting for almost 50 per cent of the total volume of such seizures in China. Methamphetamine from mainland China continues to be smuggled into the Hong Kong SAR of China. At the end of 2005, 192 kg of methamphetamine were found in a container in the Hong Kong SAR. Attempts to smuggle the drug were also detected in the northern border areas of Thailand.

450. In January 2006, a clandestine laboratory that had been tableting MDMA was dismantled in Kowloon, in the Hong Kong SAR of China; as a result of that operation, 60 kg of MDMA powder, a tableting machine and a number of MDMA tablets were seized. Analysis of the ingredients of ATS seized in the Hong Kong SAR of China suggest that clandestine

laboratories may be moving away from the illicit manufacture of MDMA (“ecstasy”), in the direction of a mixture that includes methamphetamine. According to a recent analysis conducted in the Hong Kong SAR of China, 37 per cent of seized ATS tablets contained only MDMA, while 63 per cent contained a combination of MDMA and other ingredients such as amphetamine, caffeine, estazolam and diazepam.

451. MDMA continued to be smuggled into Thailand across its border with Malaysia. In Myanmar, the total number of MDMA tablets seized increased from 5 in 2004 to 3,981 in 2005. In 2004, an attempt to smuggle MDMA from China and the Russian Federation into Japan were detected for the first time. In 2005, Japan reported the largest volume of MDMA seizures since 2001. However, several countries in East and South-East Asia, including China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, reported a decrease in MDMA seizures in 2005.

452. In the Philippines, there was a significant increase in the amount of diazepam seized in 2005 compared with previous years.

453. In 2005, prescription drugs containing controlled psychotropic substances were smuggled from Thailand into Europe and the United States through air parcel services. Traffickers are attempting to arrange for the illicit sale of drugs using the Internet and cellular phones. Recently, attempts to smuggle illicit drugs into Japan using the postal system have increased.

454. Precursor chemicals, including acetic anhydride, continued to be smuggled into the Golden Triangle. In 2005, 158 tons of precursor chemicals were seized and 34 clandestine laboratories were dismantled in China; all of the precursor chemicals found in the laboratories had been produced locally. Seizures of ephedrine in Myanmar increased significantly, to 1,283 kg, in 2006. After several years of increased seizures of ephedrine in the Philippines, there was a decline in such seizures in 2005.

455. The abuse of ATS has emerged as a serious and fast-growing problem in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. Methamphetamine is the drug of choice among drug abusers in Japan, accounting for 83.5 per cent of the arrests for drug-related offences. It also remains the drug of choice among drug abusers in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand. Of the drug abusers undergoing treatment in the

Philippines, 81 per cent reported having abused methamphetamine; some also reported having abused preparations for treating coughs and colds. Methamphetamine is also widely abused in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Myanmar and Singapore. Methamphetamine is rapidly gaining in popularity in Malaysia: more than twice as many people abused methamphetamine in that country in 2005 (15 per cent) than in 2004 (7 per cent). Drug abusers in China are also increasingly abusing methamphetamine. In Japan, MDMA continues to be abused throughout the country. Drug abusers in China are increasingly abusing MDMA and triazolam. MDMA is the second most abused drug after ketamine among persons aged 11 to 20 in the Hong Kong SAR of China. An increase in the abuse of GHB, LSD and nimetazepam (Erimin 5) has been noted in the Hong Kong SAR of China.

456. Most methamphetamine abusers in Japan abuse the substance by injection. While no national figures are available, data suggest that there has been an increase in drug abuse by injection in Cambodia, especially in urban areas of the country. In Indonesia, 56 per cent of drug abusers abuse drugs by injection. Limited abuse of ATS by injection has been reported in Cambodia, China, the Hong Kong SAR of China, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Thailand.

Substances not under international control

457. The illicit manufacture of and trafficking in ketamine continued to be matters of concern in East and South-East Asia. In 2005, Chinese law enforcement officers seized 2.6 tons of ketamine. In the past, ketamine from mainland China was often smuggled into the Hong Kong SAR; however, in 2005, law enforcement authorities uncovered cases in which traffickers attempted to smuggle into the Hong Kong SAR of China through South-East Asia large consignments of ketamine originating in South Asia. In 2005, there was a significant increase in seizures of ketamine in the Hong Kong SAR of China. A small quantity of ketamine was also seized in Thailand. Ketamine from Europe was smuggled through neighbouring countries into Thailand. Data suggest that the illicit manufacture of ketamine for export is taking place in the Philippines. During the period 2003-2005, five clandestine laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture or processing of ketamine were dismantled and ketamine hydrochloride and ketamine

powder were seized in the Philippines. Law enforcement officials in Viet Nam reported seizures and abuse of ketamine in the country in 2005.

458. The abuse of substances not under international control is a matter of concern in China, the Hong Kong SAR of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. In 2005, Japan placed under national control as narcotic drugs 5-methoxy-*N,N*-diisopropyltryptamine, *alpha*-methyl-tryptamine, 2,5-dimethoxy-4-(*n*) propylthiophenethylamine and *N*-methyl-1-(3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl)-2-butanamine. The main drug of abuse among persons aged 11-20 in the Hong Kong SAR of China is ketamine. Drug abusers in China are increasingly abusing ketamine. The abuse of ketamine has also been reported in the Macao SAR of China, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore. The abuse of dextromethorphan, fenfluramine and nalbuphine has been reported in the Republic of Korea. There have been reports of nalbuphine hydrochloride (sold under the brand name Nubain[®]) being abused by injection in the Philippines.

Missions

459. The Board sent a mission to China in January 2006. The Board commends the Government of China for its political will and commitment towards the implementation of the international drug control treaties, as evidenced by the adoption of new national legislation on the control of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors in August 2005.

460. The Board notes that in China drug control is not only incorporated into the programme for national economic and social development, but is also made an important duty of governments at all levels. The Board welcomes the launch of the "People's War on Drugs", aimed at mobilizing the entire society to address its growing drug problem. The Board encourages the Government to take the measures necessary to ensure that progress is made in implementing the new laws, as well as in combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking in the country.

461. China, which is a major producer of precursor chemicals, is facing a growing challenge in preventing the diversion of such chemicals from licit sources into illicit channels, particularly in view of the growing abuse problem of methamphetamine globally and in the region. The Board, while acknowledging the

Government's cooperation in providing pre-export notifications for exports of ephedrine and pseudo-ephedrine, requests the Government to do the same for exports of pharmaceutical preparations containing those two substances and to put in place mechanisms for monitoring domestic distribution of the substances to ensure that no diversion takes place.

462. The Board notes the increasing role played by China in drug control in East and South-East Asia. China has made achievements in various areas of drug control through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. However, the situation with regard to the illicit manufacture of ATS in the region remains serious. The Board encourages the Government of China to further strengthen its cooperation, particularly with neighbouring countries, and play a more active role in combating this problem.

463. The Board sent a mission to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in June 2006. The Board notes that the Government remains fully committed to strengthening its cooperation with the Board in drug control, as evidenced by the progress made in the implementation of the Board's recommendations pursuant to its last mission to that country in 2002.

464. The adoption of new national drug control legislation and the establishment of the national coordinating committee for drug control are two important steps taken by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea towards full compliance with the provisions of the international drug control treaties. The Board welcomes those developments and encourages the Government to take measures to ensure that further progress is made in drug control.

465. The Board notes that there is adequate control over the licit movement of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. However, the Board is concerned that there is an insufficient amount of opiates for medical purposes. The Board acknowledges the difficulties that the Government has encountered in the implementation of the international drug control treaties and calls upon it to seek legal and technical assistance, particularly in developing regulations required for the implementation of the new national drug control legislation.

466. The Board notes that continuous efforts are being made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea towards acceding to the international drug control treaties. The Board trusts that the Government will take concrete steps to expedite the process of accession, thereby effectively integrating itself into regional and international efforts to fight drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The Board encourages the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cooperate with its neighbouring countries to combat the problem of ATS trafficking in East and South-East Asia.

467. The Board sent a mission to Myanmar in October 2006 to review the implementation of the international drug control treaties and maintain its ongoing dialogue with the Government on issues related to drug control. The Board notes the continued commitment of the Government to eradication of illicit opium poppy cultivation. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts to achieve the goal of complete eradication of illicit drug production, as set out in the 15-year national plan.

468. The Board also recommends to the Government of Myanmar to continue to cooperate with the Governments of neighbouring countries in strengthening law enforcement activities and, in particular, to make additional efforts to identify the sources and trafficking routes of precursor chemicals used for the illicit manufacture of ATS.

469. With regard to the availability of narcotic drugs for treatment of pain in Myanmar, while recognizing that some traditional methods of pain management are used in the existing sociocultural situation, the Board recommends that the authorities should nevertheless examine the adequacy of the provisions of the current drug control law to ensure that the existing laws and regulations do not constitute obstacles to the adequate availability of controlled drugs for medical purposes.

South Asia

Major developments

470. Trafficking in and abuse of opiates, in particular heroin, are serious problems in South Asia, which is geographically sandwiched between West and South-East Asia, the two major producers of illicit opiates. Despite the strict controls imposed by Governments of countries in South Asia, an unknown quantity of

opiates is diverted from licit opium poppy cultivation in India, to be either abused domestically or smuggled into other countries.

471. In South Asia the abuse of heroin, as well as other drugs such as buprenorphine, often takes place through injection, and unsafe practices surrounding abuse by injection remain one of the key factors in the spread of HIV/AIDS in the region. Though that is particularly true in India and Nepal, Bangladesh also has the potential for an HIV/AIDS epidemic outside of the subpopulation of those who abuse drugs by injection, and for that reason Governments of countries in the region need to remain vigilant.

472. Available information suggests an emerging trend of increasing abuse of and trafficking in cocaine in South Asia. In India in particular, there have been increasing seizures of cocaine, as well as evidence that the abuse of that drug is on the rise.

473. In many countries in South Asia, in particular Bangladesh, India and Nepal, there continue to be long-standing problems with the licit control of pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled substances. That has led to widespread abuse of such preparations among all segments of the population. In general, pharmaceutical preparations are diverted from domestic distribution routes and are sold without prescription in pharmacies and various other retail outlets in the region.

474. The Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area⁴¹ entered into force on 1 January 2006, creating a framework for the establishment of a free trade zone for the seven member States of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The agreement stipulates measures to be taken by States to reduce import duties, depending on their stage of development. The Board urges the member States of SAARC to ensure that the implementation of the agreement does not hamper measures to combat drug trafficking within the region.

International cooperation

475. The ministers of the interior of the member States of SAARC held a meeting in Dhaka on 11 May 2006 to review measures taken by SAARC member States against drug trafficking and terrorism. The ministers

⁴¹ A/58/716-S/2004/122, annex III.

recognized the rapid spread of drugs in the region, and decided to strengthen the resources of the SAARC secretariat in drug control. The ministers also decided to increase cooperation with other organizations, such as ASEAN and UNODC, and to share information on drug control efforts.

476. The Fifth SAARC Conference on Cooperation in Police Matters was held in Dhaka on 9 May 2006. The police chiefs of SAARC member States who attended the conference agreed to work towards the establishment of a police forum, to be called SAARCPOL, that would enhance regional cooperation in the area of law enforcement, as well as to form a regional association of police chiefs.

477. The countries of South Asia continued to conduct activities against drug abuse and trafficking under the umbrella of the Drug Advisory Programme of the Colombo Plan. The Drug Advisory Programme organized the International Conference of Faith-Based Organizations/Islamic Scholars on Drug Policies and Strategies in Jakarta from 27 February to 1 March 2006. Participants at the conference reaffirmed their commitment to overcoming the drug problem by strengthening the role of religious leaders in reducing demand for drugs. It was also agreed that religious principles could be incorporated into demand reduction approaches in Islamic countries in the region.

478. The Fifth Asian Youth Congress, held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 24 to 27 October 2006, discussed how participants could be empowered to prevent drug abuse in their communities. Asian Cities against Drugs, a network of cities from over a dozen countries modelled after European Cities against Drugs, has been established, bringing together mayors, city councillors and officials working in the field of drug control to exchange information and enhance skills in both supply and demand reduction. Both of those activities were established under the Drug Advisory Programme.

National legislation, policy and action

479. Bhutan, with the assistance of UNODC, is currently building its capacity to implement the international drug control regime. Bhutan, which acceded to the 1961 Convention and the 1971 Convention in August 2005 and thus became a party to the three international drug control treaties, is currently finalizing detailed regulations to implement new drug control legislation.

480. All but one of the States in South Asia are now parties to the international drug control treaties. The one exception is Nepal, which has yet to accede to the 1971 Convention. The Board reiterates its call to the Government of Nepal to accede to and implement the 1971 Convention at the earliest opportunity.

481. Maldives finalized its drug control master plan for the period 2006-2010. The Board welcomes the plan, which was prepared with the assistance of UNODC, and urges the Government to ensure its speedy and effective implementation, so as to address the growing drug control problem in the country. The Board also urges the international community to provide assistance to Maldives in this respect.

482. The Board notes with concern that the monitoring of drug abuse patterns and trends in many countries in South Asia remains inadequate and, as a result, concrete data on drug abuse in those countries are scarce. The Board notes that a new national survey on drug abuse in India may be conducted soon, with the assistance of UNODC. The Board encourages Governments of countries in the region that have not yet done so to ensure that the extent of drug abuse can be measured and that adequate measures are taken against drug abuse.

483. On 26 June 2006, the Government of India and UNODC launched the national awareness campaign, a nationwide drug abuse prevention campaign. The campaign utilizes a wide variety of media, including television, posters and the printed media, to convey the dangers of drug abuse, in particular to young persons. National youth organizations are also conducting peer awareness initiatives as part of the campaign.

484. The Board notes with satisfaction the effective working relationship that exists between the Governments of many countries in South Asia and national and international non-governmental organizations in the field of drug control. That cooperation has enabled many of those organizations to play an effective role in complementing and strengthening the activities of the Government, particularly in the areas of treatment and prevention of drug abuse.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

485. Though, in South Asia, trafficking in and abuse of opiates and pharmaceutical preparations usually command the most attention, cannabis is also a problem that should not be overlooked. In addition to growing wild in a number of countries in the region, including Nepal, cannabis plants are also illicitly cultivated in certain areas of India and Sri Lanka.

486. In 2004, the last year for which detailed figures are available, over 46 tons of cannabis herb were seized in north-east India, accounting for over one third of the country's total volume of seized cannabis herb (144 tons).

487. In Sri Lanka, illicit cultivation of cannabis plant takes place mostly in the eastern and southern provinces of the country. Though the amounts have fluctuated over recent years, seizures of cannabis plant have remained significant, with 29 tons seized in 2005. Cannabis-related arrests also increased in Sri Lanka in 2005.

488. Despite stringent measures taken by the Government of India against the diversion of licitly cultivated opium, some opium and poppy husk continue to be diverted to illicit markets in India. Crude heroin manufactured from such diverted opium is trafficked and sold on illicit markets in India or is smuggled into other countries. Domestically manufactured heroin continues to be seized in India. Most of the illicit heroin laboratories dismantled in the country are near opium poppy cultivation areas.

489. In addition to low-grade heroin manufactured using opium diverted from licit sources, heroin from South-West Asia continues to be smuggled into India and passes through the country on its way to other countries. Heroin in small quantities entering some north-eastern states of India from South-East Asia is mainly abused locally in those states. Evidence suggests that the State of Punjab has been emerging as a new hub for smuggling drugs into India, the traditional trafficking hubs being New Delhi and Mumbai. This recent development appears to be connected with the increase in the licit and illicit cross-border flow of goods and persons between India and Pakistan. Most of the drugs, particularly heroin, that are smuggled into India through Punjab are

subsequently taken to New Delhi or Mumbai before being transported further to other countries.

490. The border between India and Nepal remains porous, and smuggling between the two countries, in particular the smuggling of cannabis from Nepal into India, continues.

491. Seizure trends show significant increases in the smuggling of heroin into Maldives in recent years, though it remains at a low level. Nevertheless, it is a source of concern that seizures made by the authorities of Maldives remain small compared with the seizures made by Indian and Sri Lankan authorities of heroin destined for Maldives. Most seizures in Maldives in 2005 occurred at that country's airport, despite the fact that most drug addicts and law enforcement officials consider the country's seaports to be the main entry points for trafficked drugs.

492. Recent investigations by law enforcement authorities indicate that drug trafficking organizations have been using Bangladesh as a trans-shipment point for smuggling drugs into Europe. In April 2006, it was reported that consignments of heroin had been smuggled through Bangladesh into the United Kingdom, where they had been seized. It is believed that the heroin might have been smuggled from Afghanistan into Bangladesh through the border with India and then shipped to the United Kingdom from there. It is also reported that heroin destined for the United States has been smuggled through Bangladesh.

493. Sri Lanka remains an important trans-shipment point for heroin from Afghanistan and India. The heroin is destined mainly for countries in other regions, but also stimulates the domestic market for the drug. Heroin enters the country mainly by sea from India and, to a lesser extent, by air from Pakistan.

494. The abuse of opiates, including illicitly manufactured heroin and low-quality heroin base known as "brown sugar", remains a problem in several countries in South Asia, including Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. There is also a continuing trend in the region to move rapidly from inhaling to injecting drugs (mainly heroin and buprenorphine).

495. Drug abuse in Maldives has reached alarming levels, and, according to several ministers and high-ranking officials, is now the most serious problem the country is facing. There are indications that, since a

rapid situation assessment was conducted in 2003, the situation has continued to worsen, with drug abuse spreading outside of the capital city and younger persons abusing drugs. Drug abuse is linked closely with the rising theft and robbery rates in Maldives, with prison authorities estimating the prevalence of drug abuse among inmates at 80 per cent.

496. Preventive measures taken by the Government of Bangladesh appear to have resulted in a decrease in the abuse of buprenorphine and pethidine in that country. However, it also appears that this has resulted in an increase in the abuse of heroin. The Board urges the Government to monitor the situation closely and to take remedial measures as appropriate.

497. In India, drug abuse by injection has been one of the main factors behind the spread of HIV in some areas. It has been well documented that drug abuse by injection has been one of the main driving forces behind the spread of HIV in the State of Manipur, in the north-eastern part of the country.

498. In Bangladesh, the prevalence rate of HIV among persons who abuse drugs by injection in that country remains relatively low. However, a mission of the Board that visited Bangladesh in 2005 found that the proportion of persons abusing drugs by injection had been increasing steadily for years and that the HIV infection rate had reached epidemic levels in certain communities where people abused drugs by injection, such as those in the capital city of Bangladesh.

499. In June 2006, the Indian authorities seized 200 kg of cocaine from a container in the port of Mumbai. It was the largest single seizure of cocaine in India, more than the total amount of cocaine seized in the country in over 10 years. The case is currently under investigation by the Indian authorities. Once the results of the investigation are available, it will be possible to make an assessment of the possibility of a newly emerging trafficking route for cocaine.

500. The above-mentioned seizure seems to corroborate information that the abuse of cocaine is growing in India, particularly among the newly emerging wealthy population. Though the first ever national survey on drug abuse in India was released by the Government in 2004, data on cocaine abuse do not feature in the survey. It appears that data on the abuse of cocaine in the country have yet to be collected.

501. The Board, concerned about the possibility of cocaine abuse growing in India, urges the Government to remain vigilant regarding that development. In addition, the Board is concerned about reports of growing abuse of and trafficking in cocaine in other countries in Asia, where cocaine has traditionally not been a major problem. The Board urges the Governments concerned to continue to monitor the situation and to take appropriate measures to combat the abuse of cocaine.

502. For many years trafficking in and abuse of pharmaceuticals have been among the largest drug control problems in countries in South Asia, in particular in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. Many of the pharmaceutical preparations subject to abuse are manufactured in India. Though there are strict regulations in India and in most other countries, loopholes in enforcement mean that pharmaceutical preparations are subject to diversion at all levels of the supply chain. That has resulted in widespread abuse of pharmaceutical preparations, affecting all segments of the population, both rich and poor.

503. Some of the main problem drugs include buprenorphine, which is the main drug of injection in most areas of India, and cough syrups containing a high level of codeine. Besides supplying local markets in India, cough syrups are also trafficked into Bangladesh and, in some cases, pharmaceuticals are also trafficked to Myanmar.

504. The abuse of dextropropoxyphene in the north-eastern states of India has also increased significantly in recent years. Dextropropoxyphene is a synthetic pain reliever and, although it is banned for sale in some of the north-eastern states, it is smuggled from other states and is easily obtained from street merchants.

505. The Board notes with concern that ATS are also becoming an increasing problem in several countries in South Asia, in particular India. The abuse of MDMA and methamphetamine appears to be increasing in some parts of India.

506. There are indications of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine being smuggled from India through the north-eastern states into Myanmar, where those substances are used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. India produces a significant amount of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine every year, for licit use in industry. Large amounts of ephedrine (totalling

650 kg) were seized in New Delhi in August and September 2006.

West Asia

Major developments

507. The Board remains concerned that the drug control situation in Afghanistan is worsening, despite efforts by the Government and the international community. Illicit opium poppy cultivation increased by 59 per cent in 2006 compared with 2005, and the level of production increased by nearly 50 per cent, reaching a record 6,100 tons. The Board again urges the Government and the international community to take effective measures to eradicate illicit opium poppy cultivation and to ensure that opium poppy farmers are provided with sustainable, legitimate livelihoods. The eradication of illicit opium poppy in Afghanistan is a long-term project, and the Board urges all those involved to continue their efforts.

508. It is estimated that Afghan opiates are trafficked predominantly through Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and countries in Central Asia. As a result of continuing large-scale opium poppy production in Afghanistan, those countries are faced with a wide range of problems related to large-scale drug trafficking, such as organized crime, corruption and relatively high illicit demand for opiates. For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran has the highest rate of opiate abuse in the world.

509. In addition, the abuse of ATS is spreading in various countries in West Asia, including Iran (Islamic Republic of), Turkey and several countries on the Arabian peninsula.

510. Though drug seizures in Central Asia decreased significantly in 2005, it appears that there was no decrease in the amount of drugs trafficked through the subregion. In 2006, opium production in north-eastern Afghanistan increased, resulting in a rising level of drug trafficking in Central Asia. The abuse of drugs in Central Asia also continued to increase, and a rise in drug abuse by injection fuelled the spread of HIV/AIDS.

511. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, which are situated in the southern Caucasus, which border Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation and

Turkey and which have coastlines along the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, are experiencing an increase in drug trafficking and abuse.

Regional cooperation

512. Afghanistan continued to receive assistance through several multilateral mechanisms. The Afghanistan Compact (S/2006/90, annex), a blueprint for sustained international engagement in the development of the country over a five-year period, was agreed upon at the Conference on Afghanistan held in London on 31 January and 1 February 2006, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders. The Compact, which was subsequently endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 1659 (2006) of 15 February 2006, is aimed at consolidating Afghan institutions, curbing insecurity, eliminating the illicit narcotics drug industry, stimulating the economy, enforcing the law, providing basic services to the Afghan people and protecting human rights. Representatives at the Conference pledged US\$ 10.5 billion for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

513. Experts met at a round table on cross-border cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries in Dushanbe on 10 and 11 April 2006. The experts recommended the exchange of drug liaison officers at additional border crossing points between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries, the enhancement of law enforcement training, the harmonization of technical and communication equipment and the giving of greater priority, at the political and operational levels, to the control of precursors. The meeting in Dushanbe was part of a series of round tables held, pursuant to Paris Pact recommendations,⁴² to improve law enforcement coordination in countries affected by trafficking in heroin from Afghanistan.

514. Central Asian States continue to cooperate in bilateral and multilateral efforts, including the Central Asian Drug Action Programme and the Border Management Programme in Central Asia of the European Union and the Central Asian Regional Drug Information Network. In February 2006, the parties to

⁴² The Paris Pact initiative emerged from the Paris Statement (S/2003/641, annex), which had been issued at the end of the Conference on Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe, held in Paris on 21 and 22 May 2003.

the Memorandum of Understanding on Subregional Drug Control Cooperation (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) agreed on the legal framework of the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre and signed a resolution for its establishment in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The Coordination Centre, staffed by law enforcement officials from the above-mentioned countries, will promote the sharing of border intelligence, training and effective coordination of supply reduction measures in Central Asia.

515. In July 2006, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-Russia Council initiated a programme to strengthen law enforcement efforts in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Under the programme, mobile training teams from NATO member States and the Russian Federation visited Afghanistan and five Central Asian countries, providing specialized training in counter-narcotics operations to local law enforcement agencies. In October 2006, the first group of Afghan law enforcement specialists completed the training. The training complemented training already provided for those specialists in the Russian Federation and Turkey.

516. The members of the operational group of the Russian Federal Security Service remaining in Tajikistan after the withdrawal of the Russian border guard troops in 2005 continued to provide advisory assistance to Tajik border guards in the effective border patrolling and training of recruits. The Government of Tajikistan has increased the border guard to over 10,000 troops and, with the assistance of the Governments of the Russian Federation and the United States, has strengthened patrolling, security and customs control at border crossing points.

517. China and Pakistan agreed in July 2006 to further strengthen bilateral cooperation against drug trafficking, as well as other forms of cross-border crime. China has also reportedly reinforced its exchange of drug trafficking information and law enforcement cooperation with Afghanistan.

518. In July 2006, the Board and UNODC together launched Operation Trans-shipment, aimed at streamlining measures to prevent the smuggling of acetic anhydride through the Central Asian States to Afghanistan. In March 2006, the Board and UNODC had held a planning session for the Operation in

Tashkent and training sessions for officials from the customs, border services and national security services and for drug control authorities were conducted at the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime in June 2006.

519. The Board continues to be concerned that regional cooperation in drug control among the countries in the southern Caucasus remains inadequate, as there is no comprehensive framework that includes all countries in the subregion. The Board urges the Governments of countries in the southern Caucasus to participate actively in existing international projects and task forces aimed at promoting regional cooperation in drug control.

520. In November 2005, Israel and the Palestinian Authority adopted a joint declaration outlining procedures for improving collaboration and for strengthening cooperation against drug trafficking.

National legislation, policy and action

521. The National Drug Control Strategy of Afghanistan (S/2006/106, annex) was adopted in January 2006. The strategy is comprehensive, addressing supply and demand reduction, alternative livelihoods and the strengthening of government institutions. The Afghan Ministry of Counter Narcotics is the lead agency for implementing the strategy, and action plans for its implementation have been finalized. The Board urges the Government and the international community to ensure that the strategy is implemented properly.

522. In Afghanistan, the total area of opium poppy eradicated in 2005 (5,000 hectares) increased threefold in 2006, to 15,300 hectares, most of which was eradicated by provincial governors (13,050 hectares). The remainder was eradicated by the Afghan Eradication Force, an agency of the Government of Afghanistan. That development indicates that significant progress has been made in the cooperation of the Government with provincial governments on the drug issue, as only 4,000 hectares of opium poppy were eradicated by provincial governments in 2005.

523. On 1 August 2006, the Government of Afghanistan established the Drug Regulation Committee, in order to regulate the licensing, sale, dispensation, import and export of all drugs for licit purposes in the country. The Committee includes

officials from the Ministry of Counter Narcotics, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Finance of Afghanistan.

524. In May 2006, the Meshrano Jirga (Upper House) of the National Assembly of Afghanistan adopted a resolution banning the activities of a certain non-governmental organization based in France. The organization had been advocating legalization of the cultivation of opium poppy in Afghanistan for the manufacture of opiate medications. The Government, the Board⁴³ and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs have opposed the idea, stating that it would lead to a further deterioration in the drug control situation in Afghanistan.

525. Drug demand reduction action teams have been established in Afghanistan to deal with the mounting problem of drug abuse. The teams have focused their activity on community-based treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

526. The Board notes with concern that throughout Afghanistan, many of the prerequisites for successful legitimate livelihood programmes, such as adequate irrigation, agricultural skills and a functioning credit system, are lacking. The Board also notes with concern that the drug control efforts of the Government of Afghanistan continue to be hampered by limited coordination between drug control authorities at the national and provincial levels. The Government has attempted to address the issue by initiating the revival of alternative livelihood working groups at the provincial level. The Board urges the Government to continue those efforts. The Board stresses that this will necessarily be a long-term project, one that will require a concerted and sustained approach by both the Government and international donors.

527. In early 2006, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced an emergency plan to provide 3,000 people abusing drugs by injection in Tehran with a three-month treatment course. The Government also implemented a nationwide plan for the rehabilitation of drug addicts from November 2005 to March 2006. The Government is also taking various measures to deal with serious problems involving drug abuse in prisons.

⁴³ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2005 ...*, para. 208.

528. In November 2005, the President of Kazakhstan signed a new strategy for combating drug trafficking and for the prevention of drug abuse for the period 2006-2014. In February 2006, the Parliament of Kazakhstan adopted a law amending the national drug control legislation, introducing stricter sentences for drug dealers and requiring government approval of equipment used in the production of drugs.

529. In April 2006, the Government of Turkmenistan approved a new national programme on the fight against drug trafficking for the period 2006-2010. The programme includes measures to strengthen the legislative bases for implementing the national drug control law, developing and adopting legislation against money-laundering, and improving regional and international cooperation in combating trafficking, as well as measures to prevent the further spread of drug abuse and HIV.

530. In May 2006, a financial intelligence unit was established under the Prosecutor-General's Office of Uzbekistan. The unit will monitor all financial transactions and maintain a centralized computerized system for collecting and analysing information on methods used in the laundering of criminal proceeds.

531. In June 2006, the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan adopted a law to combat the financing of terrorism and money-laundering. The law, which is based on the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering and includes mandatory reporting of all suspicious transactions by all financial institutions in Kyrgyzstan, empowers the independent financial intelligence unit, established in September 2005, to undertake effective action to combat money-laundering.

Drug trafficking and abuse situation

Narcotic drugs

532. In 2006, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan increased to a record 165,000 hectares, an increase of 59 per cent over the figure recorded in 2005, and more than twice the figure for 2003. The harvest in 2006 was approximately 6,100 tons of opium. In the southern province of Helmand, where attacks by Taliban forces against government and international troops have increased, illicit cultivation soared to 69,300 hectares, demonstrating once again the linkage between ensuring

adequate security and combating illicit crop cultivation. Only six of the 34 provinces in Afghanistan are free of the scourge of illicit opium poppy cultivation.

533. Although it has not reached the high level of the early 1990s (over 10,000 hectares), illicit cultivation of opium poppy in Pakistan has, in recent years, again been on the increase. The Government continued its efforts to reverse the trend and succeeded in eradicating illicit opium poppy cultivation in the province of Balochistan. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts at both the national and the provincial levels to eradicate illicit opium poppy cultivation. In several countries in Central Asia, opium poppy is cultivated on a small scale; however, eradication campaigns have virtually eliminated the risk of a significant increase in opium poppy cultivation in those countries.

534. Besides opium poppy, cannabis plant is illicitly cultivated in Afghanistan; it also grows wild in the country. Illicit cultivation of cannabis plant also continues in Lebanon, as well as in countries in Central Asia, in particular Kyrgyzstan.

535. In West Asia, routes used for cannabis trafficking have changed since the early 1990s, with Lebanon supplying less illicit cannabis to other countries in the region and cannabis from Afghanistan being smuggled through Jordan. There was a sharp decrease in the amount of seized cannabis in the United Arab Emirates. Cannabis accounts for 72 per cent of all drugs seized in Central Asia. In 2005, about 25.5 tons of cannabis were seized in Central Asia, 85 per cent of which were seized in Kazakhstan.

536. Large amounts of opiates continue to be seized in West Asia and Central Asia, giving a clear indication of the significant amounts of Afghan opiates being smuggled through that area. Seizures of Afghan opiates in the Islamic Republic of Iran increased considerably in 2005, reaching 350 tons. Seizures of opium in Pakistan have remained at a relatively low level compared with the seizure levels in its neighbouring countries. Pakistan deployed 10,000 additional troops to its border with Afghanistan in June 2006, in part to strengthen efforts to prevent drug trafficking.

537. In Turkey, seizures of heroin continued to increase. That increase is partly attributable to strengthened law enforcement efforts. However, at the

same time, there has been a decrease in seizures of opium in Turkey, indicating that heroin is being manufactured from opium in clandestine laboratories outside of the country before it is smuggled through Turkey. There was also a significant increase in the amount of heroin seized in 2006 in Israel, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates.

538. Although the total amount of opiates seized in Central Asia declined by 37 per cent in 2005, in the first half of 2006 that figure increased sharply by 32 per cent, reaching a total of 4.3 tons. During the first half of 2006, seizures of heroin showed an increase in all Central Asian States except Kazakhstan. The amount of heroin seized in Tajikistan during the first half of 2006 increased by 45 per cent compared with the same period of the previous year.

539. One new trend is the smuggling of heroin from Pakistan into China, both by air and by land. There is information indicating that, in addition to being used for the increasing domestic market, heroin entering China is smuggled further to markets in Europe through the Hong Kong SAR of China. In 2005, 23 seizures were made from departing passengers at international airports in Pakistan, compared with only 3 seizures in 2004. The traffickers were bound for several different airports in China.

540. The amount of cocaine seized in Israel increased in 2005 because of several large-scale seizures at border points. During the period under review, a record 120 kg of cocaine were seized in a container arriving from Europe. It appears that the drugs were bound for Europe and were not intended for the illicit market in Israel.

541. The smuggling of large quantities of opium poppy from Afghanistan continues to lead to severe problems in the abuse of opiates in neighbouring countries, in particular Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan. The Islamic Republic of Iran is the country with the world's highest rate for the abuse of opiates: the most recent information available indicates an abuse rate of 2.8 per cent. The Islamic Republic of Iran is also facing an increasing problem of heroin abuse by injection and the attendant risk of HIV infection. In Pakistan, the rate of abuse of opiates is also high (0.8 per cent), according to the most recent data available.

542. In Central Asia, drug abusers are estimated to account for almost 1 per cent of the total population. In all countries in the subregion, drug abuse is increasing and heroin has replaced cannabis and opium as the main drug of abuse. The incidence of heroin dependence in Central Asia ranges from 50 to 80 per cent of all registered drug abusers, the highest rates being recorded in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The number of registered drug abusers in Central Asia reached 89,000 in 2005, 55,000 of whom are in Kazakhstan. According to official estimates, the actual number of drug abusers in Central Asian countries is at least five times higher.

543. Drug abuse is a growing problem in Afghanistan. The first nationwide survey of drug abuse in the country, published in late 2005, indicated that 0.6 per cent of the adult population abused opium and 0.2 per cent abused heroin. A survey of opium poppy growers showed that personal consumption was the second main reason (20.6 per cent) for the increasing illicit opium poppy cultivation in 2005. However, "hashish" (cannabis resin) is by far the most commonly abused drug in Afghanistan, with an abuse rate of 2.2 per cent.

544. The Board notes with concern the problem of drug abuse among Afghan refugees in neighbouring countries, including Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan. Approximately 35 per cent of male and 25 per cent of female drug abusers in Afghanistan first abused opium as refugees outside of Afghanistan, particularly in the Islamic Republic of Iran and in refugee camps in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. The Board also notes that evidence suggests a high risk of transmission of HIV among persons who abuse drugs by injection in Afghanistan, particularly among refugees returning from the Islamic Republic of Iran who abuse drugs by injection.

545. There are indications that drug abuse in Iraq is increasing. The Board urges the Government to take immediate measures to assess the scope of the problem and ensure adequate steps are taken to combat drug trafficking and abuse.

546. Drug abuse by injection remains one of the main driving forces behind the spread of the virus in Central Asia. The fastest spread of HIV has been recorded in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and up to 93 per cent of new cases of HIV infection in Tajikistan are accounted for by persons who abuse drugs by injection. Estimates

suggest that 40,000 persons are infected with HIV in Central Asia.

547. Drug abuse by injection is increasingly becoming the main mode of transmission of HIV in the southern Caucasus, accounting for 57 per cent of new cases in Azerbaijan, 53 per cent in Armenia and 67 per cent in Georgia.

Psychotropic substances

548. There has been a significant increase in trafficking in MDMA in Turkey in recent years. The MDMA smuggled in Turkey is largely intended for the domestic market. There are indications that the abuse of MDMA in Turkey has spread from the main metropolitan and tourist areas to other areas, in particular among the youth population.

549. The abuse of synthetic drugs, in particular MDMA, in the Islamic Republic of Iran is increasing at a fast pace. The number of persons aged 25-30 who abuse MDMA is also increasing sharply.

550. The trafficking in and abuse of fenetylline remains a problem in the countries on the Arabian peninsula. Jordan is used mainly as a transit point for fenetylline tablets destined for Saudi Arabia. In 2005, Jordanian authorities seized almost 11.2 million fenetylline tablets, a considerable increase over previous years. That increase in seizures has been attributed mainly to strengthened law enforcement efforts.

551. Turkey is also used for the trans-shipment of fenetylline destined for countries on the Arabian peninsula. While traditionally fenetylline in tablet form has been smuggled through Turkey, recent evidence shows that substances used in the manufacture of fenetylline are also being trafficked through Turkey.

552. Trafficking in and abuse of synthetic drugs and psychotropic substances have also been reported in Central Asia. In particular, MDMA and amphetamines are increasingly becoming available on the illicit market in Kazakhstan, as evidenced by the fact that 36,000 MDMA tablets were seized by law enforcement authorities in 2005.

553. The abuse of pharmaceutical medications remains a serious problem in Afghanistan. The slow pace of reconstruction of the administrative structure for the licit control of drugs means that a wide range of

pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled substances continue to be available without prescription in the country, in pharmacies, other retail outlets and roadside stalls.

Missions

554. In January 2006, a mission of the Board visited Yemen. Yemen has been taking important steps to strengthen its efforts to combat drug trafficking, including by the establishment of the Anti-Narcotics General Directorate, which coordinates all drug control activities in the country. The Board notes with concern, however, that the lack of a proper legal framework and adequate financial resources is hampering drug control activities. The Board therefore urges the Government of Yemen to ensure that the Anti-Narcotics General Directorate is able to carry out its mandate effectively.

555. The smuggling of illicit drugs in and out of Yemen through various ports of entry and the coastline is occurring, but the extent of drug abuse in the country is not known. The Board recommends the authorities to carry out, with the support of WHO, an assessment of the situation in order to be able to plan adequate control and preventive measures.

556. The Board remains concerned about the elevated cultivation of khat and its widespread abuse in Yemen. The Board calls upon the authorities to consider taking appropriate measures to control its cultivation, trade and use and recommends that campaigns be initiated to raise community awareness regarding the addictive nature of khat and its negative impact on society.

D. Europe

Major developments

557. Cannabis continues to be the most commonly abused drug in Europe. The European countries with the highest prevalence for cannabis abuse include the Czech Republic, Denmark, France and the United Kingdom. According to estimates of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), about 20 million people (or 6 per cent of the adult population) in the member States of the European Union and in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland have tried cannabis once in their lifetime. Among young adults (persons 15-34 years of

age) in Europe the prevalence rate for cannabis abuse has been consistently high.

558. National policies in Europe vary, reflecting the drug abuse situation and political context in individual countries. Many European countries have recently adopted preventive measures to counter widespread abuse of cannabis among youth. Such measures include the provision of information on cannabis abuse through media campaigns, brochures or websites targeting potential drug abusers.

559. Europe has become the second largest illicit market for cocaine in the world. Statistics show that the total amount of cocaine seized in Europe and the number of persons who abuse that drug have increased compared with the previous year. According to the *World Drug Report 2006*⁴⁴ of UNODC, Western and Central Europe account for about one quarter of all cocaine abused worldwide. After opiates and cannabis, cocaine is the drug of abuse most commonly reported by those entering programmes for the treatment of drug abuse in member States of the European Union, as well as in Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Cocaine abusers account for about 10 per cent of drug abusers admitted for treatment in the European Union. In most European countries, the percentage of drug abusers entering public treatment programmes for cocaine abuse is quite low, the exceptions being the Netherlands and Spain (38 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, in 2005). The countries in Europe with the highest prevalence rate for cocaine abuse are Spain and the United Kingdom.

560. Europe continues to be one of the main illicit markets in the world for stimulants. Only cannabis is more commonly abused than MDMA ("ecstasy"). The main source of illicitly manufactured ATS in Europe continues to be the Netherlands, followed by Poland, Belgium, Lithuania and Estonia. The illicit manufacture of amphetamines continues to expand throughout Europe. According to EMCDDA, however, the use of ATS in the United Kingdom has continued to fall.

561. The abuse of methamphetamine continues to be reported by the authorities in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine appears to be taking place on a small scale but is growing, the main source countries

⁴⁴ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.XI.10.

being the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Moldova and Slovakia.

562. Heroin abuse has remained largely stable or even declined in Western and Central Europe, while the level of abuse of opiates has increased in Eastern Europe, particularly in members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and countries in South-Eastern Europe situated along the Balkan route. According to UNODC, of the 4 million abusers of opiates in Europe, an estimated 3.3 million are heroin abusers. Of the 2.46 million abusers of opiates in Eastern Europe, an estimated 1.7 million, or 1.2 per cent of the population aged 15-64, are heroin abusers.

Regional cooperation

563. In June 2005, the Council of the European Union endorsed the European Union Drugs Action Plan (2005-2008).⁴⁵ The Action Plan covers four priority areas (demand reduction, supply reduction, international cooperation and research and information and evaluation) and lists specific measures to be implemented by the European Union and its member States by the end of 2008. Assessment tools and indicators, as well as responsibility for implementation and deadlines, are clearly indicated for each action. According to the Action Plan, the European Union is to contribute fully to the evaluation of the implementation of the commitments set out by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, held in 1998.

564. In July 2005, the second German-French working conference hosted by the French and German drug commissioners was held in Strasbourg, France, to discuss the treatment of cannabis abusers and cross-border cooperation to prevent the abuse of cannabis.

565. Germany and Switzerland are currently conducting a bilateral assistance project called "Realize it" to help juvenile cannabis abusers stop using the drug. Germany, together with four other European countries, is also participating in a research project on the treatment of young cannabis abusers.

566. In anticipation of the parliamentary ratification of the bilateral law enforcement cooperation treaties between Belgium and Germany, practical measures, including more stringent cross-border surveillance,

have recently been taken to reduce drug trafficking in border areas.

567. The Second Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking Routes from Afghanistan ("Paris 2 – Moscow 1") was hosted by the Russian Federation, with the support of UNODC, in Moscow from 26 to 28 June 2006. Ministers and heads of delegations attending the conference adopted the Moscow Declaration, which was then circulated in the General Assembly and in the Security Council. The Declaration calls for, inter alia, further support to be provided to the Government of Afghanistan in implementing its National Drug Control Strategy, for improvement of regional measures against trafficking in precursor chemicals, for a more systematic exchange of information and for an extension of the Paris Pact Initiative.

568. Building on the success of the operation Channel 2004, the federal drug control service of the Russian Federation, in cooperation with the competent drug control authorities of member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation and Tajikistan), carried out in October and December 2005 a two-phase operation, Channel 2005, with the participation of the law enforcement authorities of CSTO observer States (Azerbaijan, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ukraine and Uzbekistan). The first phase of the operation Channel 2006 was carried out from 22 to 29 May 2006 with the participation of the law enforcement authorities of observer States, as well as Mongolia and the United States. The second phase, carried out in October 2006, was aimed at the detection and suppression of national and international trafficking in synthetic drugs along routes leading from Europe, the dismantling of clandestine laboratories manufacturing synthetic drugs and the disruption of drug trafficking routes leading from Afghanistan through the territories of the participating countries. Besides the competent drug control authorities of CSTO member States, law enforcement authorities from Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the United States participated in the second phase as observers. The two-phase operation resulted in the seizure of more than 23 tons of narcotic drugs, including approximately 250,000 tablets of synthetic drugs, and more than 165 tons of precursor chemicals. During the operation, several new drug trafficking routes were detected.

⁴⁵ *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 168, 8 July 2005.

569. In December 2005, the NATO-Russia Council agreed on a pilot project for the training of personnel from the drug control agencies of Afghanistan and countries in Central Asia. The project is aimed at improving the capacity of the anti-narcotics agencies of those countries to fight the drug trafficking threat from Afghanistan.

570. GUAM member States Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine participated in the fortieth session of the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East, held in Baku from 12 to 16 September 2005. The resulting Baku Accord on Regional Cooperation against Illicit Drugs and Related Matters: a Vision for the Twenty-first Century (Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/30, annex) will further strengthen cooperation in the region to combat drug trafficking and other forms of crime. The GUAM action plan for 2006 contains a number of actions to be taken by the GUAM member States, in cooperation with the South-East European Cooperative Initiative, to counter terrorism, trafficking in human beings, illegal migration, corruption and drug trafficking. In line with the protocol on cooperation between UNODC and the CIS Executive Committee, signed on 1 July 2005, an international law enforcement cooperation seminar was jointly organized in Minsk from 28 to 30 June 2006.

571. The ninth European Conference on Drugs and Infections Prevention in Prison, held in Ljubljana from 5 to 7 October 2006, was organized by the European Network on Drugs and Infections Prevention in Prison. The theme of the Conference was "From the principle of equivalence to the practice of care: bridging the gap". The Conference provided an opportunity for dialogue on the development and implementation of effective drug prevention and health promotion policies and services aimed at preventing drug abuse and promoting health among persons who come in contact with the criminal justice system.

National legislation, policy and action

572. In November 2005, the parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted a law on the prevention and suppression of the abuse of narcotic drugs. The law, which entered into force in February 2006, establishes a national inter-ministerial committee and a national agency to oversee and coordinate drug control efforts at the national level. The Board regrets that the new

legislation did not take into account several aspects of the control of psychotropic substances.

573. The Government of Denmark has recently taken initiatives aimed at reducing the demand for drugs, especially cannabis, among young people. Under the project "Drugs out of town", the Government has initiated the development of new measures to encourage partners in the community to join forces and reduce the illicit distribution of drugs at the local level. The Government also supports projects aimed at establishing services for treatment for young people who are drug abusers. The Government has decided to impose a minimum fine for possession of small quantities of drugs (including cannabis) for personal use.

574. In France, a national information campaign to boost medical treatment for cannabis and heroin abusers was launched in 2005 within the framework of the action plan "Programme drogue et toxicomanie" (drug and addiction programme). The action plan provides funding for European Union and United Nations agencies dealing with drug control programmes in four priority regions: Africa; Central Asia; Central and Eastern Europe; and Latin America and the Caribbean. Additional initiatives taken by the Government of France in 2005 included measures to counter drug trafficking through increased cooperation with neighbouring countries and Morocco and measures to facilitate the confiscation of drug traffickers' assets.

575. Germany has continued to implement its Action Plan on Drugs and Addiction, launched in 2003. The Action Plan established a comprehensive multi-year strategy to combat narcotic drugs. The key pillars include: prevention; therapy and counselling; survival aid as an immediate remedy for drug addicts; and interdiction and supply reduction. "Addiction therapy" programmes focus on drug-free treatment, psychological counselling and substitution therapy. The findings of a pilot project on heroin-based treatment for long-term opiate addicts are expected to be made available before the end of 2006.

576. The number of drug injection rooms in Germany continued to increase during 2006. There are currently 25 drug injection rooms in Germany. The Board has repeatedly expressed its concern that such rooms (called "drug consumption rooms" in Germany) are in violation of the international drug control treaties. The

Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts to ensure that adequate services are made available to those in need of treatment, rehabilitation and social integration in conformity with the international drug control treaties, rather than continue operating drug injection rooms (see paras. 175-179 above).

577. The Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) of Germany established a telephone hotline in March 2005 for anonymous tips regarding the smuggling of goods, including narcotic drugs. According to BKA, since the establishment of the hotline, callers have provided tips that have proved useful in a number of investigations.

578. In Italy, new legislation adopted in March 2006 has eliminated the legal distinction between the abuse of “hard” and “soft” drugs and has decreased the threshold for possession of a “moderate quantity” of drugs, making possession of drugs for personal use virtually illegal. In November 2006, the Government reversed the existing policy on cannabis by increasing, through an administrative act, the current maximum quantity of cannabis permitted for personal use from 500 mg to 1,000 mg without incurring penal sanctions. In 2005, the Dipartimento nazionale per le politiche antidroga (national department of anti-drug policies) signed several programme agreements with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, University and Research. It should be noted that, among those programmes, one is designed to tackle the country’s “cocaine emergency” and another is aimed at family-based prevention of drug abuse.

579. In Latvia, in August 2005 the Government approved the State programme for the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for the period 2005-2008. The national strategy is aimed at reducing the spread of drug abuse, especially among young people, and promoting the rehabilitation of drug abusers.

580. In November 2005, the Government of the Netherlands made an assessment of its policy on cannabis and concluded that the policy allowing the sale of medicinal cannabis in pharmacies had largely failed and could only be effective if cannabis-based medicine were registered. The Minister of Health indicated that he intended to end the experiment if the pharmaceutical industry failed to develop such a

medicine within one year. The Minister of Justice proposed amending the Opium Act to make it easier for local governments to close down establishments where drugs were sold illegally. A regulation introduced in July 2005 facilitated the prosecution of cocaine couriers arrested at Schiphol airport, near Amsterdam; as a result, seizures of cocaine at Schiphol airport have increased. In June 2005, the Government decided to expand projects providing free heroin to hard-core drug abusers to include an additional 15 municipalities.

581. In July 2005, the Government of Norway published a progress report on its Action Plan to combat drug- and alcohol-related problems. In January 2005, the Ministry of Social Affairs opened the first drug injection room for addicts in Oslo. The Board encourages the Government of Norway to continue its efforts to ensure that adequate services are made available to those in need of treatment, rehabilitation and social integration in conformity with the international drug control treaties, rather than continue operating drug injection rooms (see paras. 175-179 above).

582. In November 2005, the Government of Romania adopted the National Anti-Drug Strategy for the period 2005-2012. In addition, a new law on the judicial regime of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and plants and pharmaceutical products containing such substances, which had been adopted by the parliament in 2005, entered into effect in July 2006. The new legislation provides for enhanced security in the dispensing of prescriptions for controlled pharmaceuticals. The new legislation is the result of three years of collaboration between the Government and WHO aimed at identifying and removing regulatory barriers to pain relief. The Board welcomes such collaborative activities aimed at improving the medical use of morphine and other opioids for pain relief.

583. In September 2006, UNODC released the study *Sweden’s Successful Drug Policy: a Review of the Evidence*, which includes an analysis of Sweden’s drug policies since the 1960s. After having experienced problems in the 1960s (linked to experiments with liberal drug control policies), Sweden, in the 1970s and 1980s, successfully reduced the level of drug abuse, tightened drug control laws and sent a clear political message that illicit drugs would not be tolerated in Swedish society. Sweden’s success was linked to

decisive measures on both the supply side and the demand side, including extensive programmes for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers, based on strong political consensus. Improved coordination and funding following the implementation of the national action plan and the introduction of the National Drug Policy Coordinator also helped to lower the levels of drug abuse.

584. The Government of Switzerland has proposed the revision of the Swiss drug control law, which, if adopted, would have in effect created a legal market for cannabis. In February 2006, the Government indicated that a revision of the drug control law was being debated in the parliament and that the bill did not include any of the provisions regarding the decriminalization of cannabis. The Board welcomes that development and urges the Government to ensure that any modifications to the legislation should be in line with the international drug control treaties.

585. The Swiss authorities have extended to 2009 the heroin maintenance prescription programmes that were originally intended to end in December 2004. Switzerland is one of the countries in Europe where drug injection rooms are part of the national drug control policy. According to the Government, in November 2005, there were 12 drug injection rooms in the country. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts to ensure that adequate services are made available to those in need of treatment, rehabilitation and social integration in conformity with the international drug control treaties, rather than continue operating drug injection rooms (see paras. 175-179 above).

586. The Board calls on the Government of the United Kingdom not to open drug injection rooms, which would be a violation of the international drug control treaties. In early 2005, the Home Secretary of the United Kingdom requested a review of the cannabis reclassification decision, in the light of recent studies that had established a correlation between the regular abuse of cannabis and mental illness. The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs issued its report in December 2005 but did not make recommendations with regard to cannabis.

Drug trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

587. Spain and Portugal continue to be used as the main trans-shipment points for cannabis consignments from Morocco destined for Europe. According to Spanish police officials, drug traffickers transport cannabis and other narcotic drugs along the Mediterranean coast (see para. 244 above).

588. Albania continues to be a major exporter of cannabis herb. Albanian cannabis is smuggled by land through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria into Turkey, as well as into Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia and then into Western Europe. Illicit cannabis plant cultivation has also been reported in Bulgaria. About half of the cannabis illicitly cultivated in Bulgaria is destined for the illicit market in that country. Polish authorities have reported the illicit cultivation of cannabis plants in central, south-eastern and western Poland, hidden in grain fields, in gardens and in greenhouses; about 45 per cent of the cannabis produced locally is exported, mainly to Western Europe. While in Europe cannabis abuse is usually associated with cannabis resin, the market for cannabis herb is also significant. For example, in the Czech Republic and Estonia, the market for cannabis herb is larger than the market for cannabis resin.

589. Cocaine trafficking increased sharply in Europe in 2005. Traffickers have been increasingly using routes leading through Portugal and Spain to smuggle cocaine into other countries in Europe. The authorities in Spain have identified three main routes used by traffickers to smuggle cocaine into Europe: the north route, leading from the Caribbean to the Azores, Galicia (in Spain), Portugal and the coast of the Cantábrico (in Spain); the central route, leading from South America to the European coast, from Cape Verde or Madeira and the Canary Islands, the most frequently used route by sea; and the African route, leading from South America mainly to the countries in Western Africa and the Gulf of Guinea then to Galicia or northern Portugal, either by air or by sea. Cocaine seizures in Portugal increased by 125 per cent in 2005 compared with 2004. According to the Government of Portugal, 19 tons of cocaine were seized in that country in 2005, 20 per cent of the total amount of cocaine seized in all the member States of the European Union. Authorities in Portugal are particularly concerned

about the growing importance of Western Africa in international drug trafficking (see paras. 245-247 above).

590. During the Sixth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 February 2005, concerns were expressed about the potential development of new trafficking routes through Eastern Europe and the potential risk that cocaine could be smuggled by traditional heroin trafficking groups operating along the Balkan route.

591. In 2005 and 2006, the Italian police led several operations involving law enforcement agencies from other countries that resulted in major seizures of cocaine. One of the operations, carried out in late 2005, involved five countries (Argentina, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain) and resulted in the seizure of approximately 1.5 tons of cocaine and over 120,000 tablets of MDMA and the arrest of more than 60 people. In October 2005, Italian Carabinieri dismantled an international drug trafficking network based in southern Italy; over 40 individuals were arrested and about 100 others were investigated.

592. In August 2005, police in the Netherlands seized 4.5 tons of cocaine in Rotterdam, the largest cocaine seizure ever made in that country. The investigation involved close cooperation with the drug enforcement agencies of Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and the United States. In October 2005, Spanish police seized 3.5 tons of cocaine on a fishing boat bound for Spain. In September 2006, French and Spanish police, in a joint operation, seized 3.3 tons of cocaine hidden on a boat off the coast of Spain. Cooperation among the police in Germany, the Netherlands and Spain led to the seizure of 1.6 tons of cocaine at the port of Rotterdam in November 2005. The Government of Greece has confirmed that the amount of cocaine seized in 2004 increased by 474 per cent compared with 2003.

593. Most of the heroin found in Europe comes from Afghanistan. According to the *World Drug Report 2006*, in Europe seizures of opiates rose by 49 per cent⁴⁶ in 2004 to 29 tons, the highest figure ever recorded. The increase in seizures of opiates in Europe was mainly attributable to the fact that such seizures doubled in South-Eastern Europe, especially in

Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. Record seizures of opiates were also made in the Russian Federation. Most of the heroin continues to be smuggled in trucks. The heroin on the illicit market in Europe is mainly smuggled from Turkey along the Balkan route, via Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. In addition, a southern branch of the Balkan route has developed: heroin and other opiates from Turkey are smuggled via Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia into Albania, Italy, Austria and Germany. There have been reports of shipments of opiates from Afghanistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran being smuggled through the Caucasus into Ukraine and then into Romania before reaching their final destinations in Western Europe. The northern route through Central Asia is increasingly being used to transport heroin to other major illicit markets for heroin, such as the Russian Federation and countries in Eastern Europe. A new route for smuggling heroin from East Asia into the United Kingdom was recently uncovered, resulting in the interception of heroin consignments at ports in the United Kingdom.

594. Large heroin seizures have been recorded in the following European countries (listed in decreasing order): United Kingdom, Italy, Netherlands, Germany, France and Russian Federation. Increased seizures of opiates were also reported in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Spain and Sweden. Clandestine heroin laboratories were detected and destroyed in Moldova and the Russian Federation.

595. According to government reports, in 2006 the market for illicit drugs in Belarus experienced a major shift, from heroin to synthetic drugs. The availability of methadone and ATS on the local markets has gradually increased. Methadone has gradually replaced heroin as the most commonly abused substance. During the past two years, it was discovered that methadone was being illicitly manufactured on the premises of research institutes in Minsk, the capital.

596. In Georgia, the Government has launched a prevention campaign called "Anything but Subutex[®]" to raise awareness of the negative health effects of the abuse of buprenorphine. Since 2003, the number of registered drug abusers in Georgia has increased by 80 per cent, to 275,000.

⁴⁶ *World Drug Report 2006* ..., pp. 14 and 65.

597. In the United Kingdom, according to the sixteenth surveillance report on drug-related deaths, published in January 2006 by the National Programme on Substance Abuse Deaths, based at the International Centre for Drug Policy, St. George's, University of London, there was an increase in drug-related deaths involving the abuse of heroin/morphine and cocaine in the first half of 2005, compared with the same period in 2004. In particular, deaths due to polydrug use, particularly involving combinations of heroin/morphine and cocaine, have increased in the United Kingdom.

598. Estonia has one of the highest growth rates for HIV infection in Europe: an estimated 10,000 persons infected with HIV. Of the estimated 30,000 persons in Estonia who abuse drugs by injection, about 13 per cent are infected with HIV. In Latvia, there are an estimated 10,000 persons infected with HIV and 17 per cent of the estimated 12,000 persons who abuse drugs by injection are HIV-positive. In Lithuania, there are an estimated 3,300 persons infected with HIV. Of the estimated 11,000 persons who abuse drugs by injection in Lithuania, 3 per cent are infected with HIV.

599. According to government statistics, in the Russian Federation the number of HIV/AIDS cases among hospitalized drug abusers stabilized at about 6.8 per cent in the period 2003-2005. In 2005, persons who abused drugs by injection accounted for approximately 74 per cent of the total number of registered drug abusers, 9 per cent of whom were infected with HIV. HIV outbreaks have been observed in over 30 cities and in 82 out of 89 oblasts (regions) of the Russian Federation.

600. In Sweden, lifetime prevalence of drug abuse among youth declined by 35 per cent between 2001 and 2006. The drug abuse level in Sweden is currently about one third of the level in Europe as a whole, and HIV related drug abuse by injection is about one tenth of the European average.

601. According to estimates of the Ministry of Health of Albania, in January 2006 there were 30,000 drug abusers in the country, compared with 5,000 in 1995 and 20,000 in 1998, and 4,000 of the drug abusers currently in the country are in need of special treatment that cannot be sufficiently provided in the country.

Psychotropic substances

602. On 29 November 2005, as a result of a joint investigation of the national crime squad of Belgium and the tax investigation service of the Netherlands, a clandestine MDMA laboratory in Nederweert (southern Limburg Province), the largest ever found in the Netherlands, was dismantled. It is estimated that the laboratory had a manufacturing capacity of 20 million MDMA tablets. Six people were arrested, all of them from the Limburg Province. The investigation, which had begun in May 2005, was carried out in close cooperation with Belgian and German authorities. It was the first MDMA laboratory discovered in 2005; until then, only clandestine amphetamine laboratories had been dismantled during 2005.

603. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in Europe takes place mainly in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Moldova and Slovakia.

604. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria, as well as Montenegro and Serbia, have been identified as countries used as sources for the illicit manufacture of amphetamine. There have been reports of the illicit manufacture of P-2-P, a chemical used for the manufacture of amphetamine, in the Russian Federation and Ukraine; there are also indications that amphetamine is being illicitly manufactured in Estonia and Lithuania.

605. Population surveys carried out by EMCDDA show an increase in the abuse of amphetamine and MDMA among young adults in most countries in Europe. The exceptions are Germany and Greece, where the level of MDMA abuse has not increased, and the United Kingdom, where the abuse of that drug has recently stabilized at a high level.

Substances not under international control

606. EMCDDA has published *Hallucinogenic Mushrooms: an Emerging Trend Case Study*. According to the study, many young Europeans are currently experimenting with hallucinogenic ("magic") mushrooms. Since 2001, six member States of the European Union have tightened controls on hallucinogenic mushrooms in response to recent increases in their use: Denmark in 2001; the Netherlands in 2002; Estonia, Germany and the United Kingdom in 2005; and Ireland in 2006. In some countries, the stricter legislation is helping to prevent

diffusion of the trend. Reports in the United Kingdom, for example, suggest stricter legislation has had an impact on the availability of hallucinogenic mushrooms and the volume of such mushrooms sold through the Internet. The publication on hallucinogenic mushrooms is the first in a series of reports to be published under a new EMCDDA pilot project to help detect, track and understand emerging drug trends in Europe.

Missions

607. The Board sent a mission to Belarus in May 2006 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 continues to be committed to fighting drug trafficking and abuse and gives high priority to improving in a timely manner the legislative bases and updating its drug control policy, as reflected in the adoption of a new national drug control programme in 2006, and the initiatives of Belarus to improve regional cooperation.

608. The Board notes with appreciation that Belarus has built up a strong law enforcement system and attaches great importance to efforts to resolve the problem of increasing trafficking in synthetic drugs and precursors. A number of well-coordinated law enforcement activities have taken place in Belarus, resulting in the detection of some illicit laboratories with substantial capacity for manufacturing methadone and ATS. The Board encourages the Government to continue its efforts in that area, with a view to addressing the increasing activities of organized criminal groups, especially those activities related to drug trafficking. The Government should further strengthen customs and border guard services in order to increase their capabilities to prevent the smuggling of illicit drugs into Belarus, in particular through the Russian Federation, with which Belarus shares an unguarded border, and through other neighbouring countries.

609. The Board shares the concern of the Government of Belarus over the worsening drug abuse situation in the country, particularly with regard to the significant increase in drug abuse by injection and heroin addiction. Noting that access to treatment is often difficult for drug abusers in Belarus, the Board strongly encourages the Government to accord higher

priority to the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers and to increase the resources, as well as the efficiency, of such treatment services.

610. In May 2006, a mission of the Board visited Estonia. The National Strategy on the Prevention of Drug Dependence 2004-2012 and its action plans covering long-term and mid-term objectives are ambitious programmes calling for numerous activities at different levels and within different time frames. However, the implementation and monitoring of those programmes require additional efforts, including more frequent meetings of the coordinating committee.

611. Estonia is currently experiencing a shift among drug abusers, from the abuse of natural products (such as cannabis) to synthetic drugs (such as amphetamines and MDMA). Fentanyl and 3-methylfentanyl have, to a large extent, replaced heroin on the illicit drug market in Estonia; the higher potency of those substances has led to a rise in the number of drug-related deaths. One matter of particular concern is the increasing prevalence of the abuse by injection of heroin, amphetamines and illicitly manufactured fentanyl and 3-methylfentanyl, which has contributed to an increase in HIV infections. Estonia, like the other Baltic countries, is confronted with a specific phenomenon involving drug tourism: Finnish drug addicts travel to Estonia to purchase pharmaceutical preparations containing buprenorphine and oxycodone. In response, Estonia has strengthened drug control requirements and the conditions under which such preparations can be prescribed.

612. In May 2006, a mission of the Board visited Latvia. The Board notes that the Government of Latvia has shown the political commitment and the will to deal with drug abuse, drug trafficking and organized crime. Drug control policies, national drug control legislation and the institutional framework to carry out those policies and implement that legislation are well developed. Under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of Latvia, a council for the coordination of drug control and the prevention of drug addiction has been established to ensure the effective implementation of the national programme for combating drug abuse. However, the implementation of the ambitious programmes of the Coordinating Council has been delayed because of insufficient funds. Additional funds are also required to enhance training programmes for

all law enforcement units and to improve technical equipment.

613. In Latvia, there has been an increase in the abuse of amphetamine and methamphetamine. Other major concerns of the Latvian authorities are the increasing polydrug abuse and the high drug abuse rates among adolescents. Former diversions and misuse of pharmaceuticals used in substitution therapy, particularly by tourists from Finland, have been countered by additional control measures. With regard to availability of narcotic drugs for treatment of pain, the Latvian authorities have considerably improved the situation by including morphine medications in the list of pharmaceuticals of their national health insurance system.

614. The Board sent a mission to Luxembourg in October 2006 to review the implementation of the international drug control treaties and maintain its ongoing dialogue with the Government on issues related to drug control. The Board notes with grave concern that a drug injection room has been in operation in Luxembourg since 2005, in violation of the provisions of the international drug control treaties. The Board urges the Government to close the facility immediately and to implement measures against the abuse of drugs that are in compliance with its international treaty obligations.

615. The Board recommends to the Government of Luxembourg that it improve coordination among the various ministries and agencies involved in drug control matters. Such coordination has not always been adequate; as a result, various reports required under the international drug control treaties have not always been submitted to the Board. The Board also recommends to the Government that it strengthen its efforts in collecting information on the drug abuse situation within the country, in view of the fact that there is no national survey on the subject. Finally, the Board notes the measures being taken by the Government to deal with the problem of diversion of methadone from substitution treatment and encourages the Government to continue strengthening its efforts in that area.

E. Oceania

Major developments

616. The majority of the cannabis abused in Australia continues to have been produced in that country.

617. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine continues to be a problem in Australia. Most of the pseudoephedrine used in illicit methamphetamine manufacture has been extracted from commercially available pharmaceutical preparations. The abuse (including by smoking) of methamphetamine among young drug abusers is increasing in Australia. There are indications that Oceania may be developing into a significant transit area and a potential consumption area for methamphetamine.

618. There was evidence of large-scale illicit manufacture of MDMA in Australia, particularly during the last quarter of 2005.

619. Oceania continues to be used as a major trans-shipment area for illicit drugs.

Regional cooperation

620. HIV/AIDS, organized crime, border management and money-laundering were among the important issues discussed at the annual meeting of the Regional Security Committee of the Pacific Islands Forum, held in Nadi, Fiji, in June 2006.

621. In March 2006, the eighth annual conference of customs heads of the Oceania Customs Organisation was held in Sigakota, Fiji. Strengthening trade security, combating transnational crime and strengthening regional cooperation were the key themes of the conference. The participants agreed on a workplan for the period 2006-2007, including activities related to law enforcement and security.

622. The seventeenth administrative meeting of contact points of the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific was held in Christchurch, New Zealand, in November 2005. The Minister of Customs of New Zealand highlighted the pre-eminent role of the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office in countering the smuggling of precursor chemicals.

623. Australia and New Zealand continued to provide capacity-building assistance to other countries in

Oceania. The Australian and New Zealand customs services have appointed, for a 12-month period, two senior officers as head and deputy head of the Tonga Customs Service, which is part of the joint New Zealand and Australian Finance and Economic Management Programme for Tonga. The objective is to promote secure trade and borders, including the prevention of drug trafficking. The New Zealand Customs Service is also strengthening customs support in Oceania by sponsoring the establishment of the Oceania Customs Organizations in Fiji. The Australian Federal Police continued to provide capacity-building assistance to Nauru, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

624. Drug control legislation in Fiji and Tonga has been based on the Illicit Drug Control Bill, which calls for drug control legislation in Oceania to be consistent with respect to offences, penalties, classes of illicit drugs, investigations and law enforcement. The bill was drafted by a joint working group established to devise a common approach to illicit drug control in the region.

625. The collaboration among the New Zealand customs and police, the National Drug Intelligence Bureau of New Zealand and the Narcotics Bureau of the police of the Hong Kong SAR of China led to the seizure in May 2006 of approximately 95 kg of methamphetamine and 150 kg of pseudoephedrine (used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine), the largest haul of those types of drugs ever made in New Zealand. New Zealand customs and police authorities seized shipments of methamphetamine and pseudoephedrine originating in China. Seven suspects have been arrested in connection with the seizures.

National legislation, policy and action

626. The Board welcomes the accession of Vanuatu to the 1988 Convention and encourages it to accede to the 1961 Convention and the 1971 Convention without delay. However, the Board continues to be concerned by the low rate of accession to the international drug control treaties by countries in Oceania. As traffickers have been known to take advantage of loopholes in national legislation, the Board calls on those States in the region that have not yet done so to ratify the treaties without further delay.

627. In December 2005, the New Zealand Customs Service updated the focus of its drug law enforcement

strategy for the next five years. The recently published national drug law enforcement strategy will support the efforts of the New Zealand Customs Service aimed at protecting communities and reducing the supply of illicit drugs, within the framework of the national drug control policy. The five-year strategy updates the 1988 customs drug strategy, building on study findings from 2002. The main objectives of the new strategy include maintaining an overview of up-to-date national and international intelligence about the illicit drug scene, combating the smuggling of drugs and precursors into and out of New Zealand by using new and existing interdiction and investigative techniques, identifying and targeting emerging drug threats and actively contributing to international efforts to combat the illicit drug trade.

628. Police in New Zealand continued to give high priority to substance-related offences, targeting illicit drug manufacturers, importers and dealers in 2005. High-quality intelligence was also a factor in several successful operations, leading to the disruption of illicit drug supply chains, particularly those with a transnational dimension, where strong links with overseas law enforcement agencies proved to be highly effective.

629. Australia has been promoting a campaign to prevent illegal sales of pseudoephedrine. In January 2006, national legislation to tighten controls on pseudoephedrine went into effect.

630. In September 2006, the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat established a Pacific Anti-Money Laundering Programme to assist Governments in preventing money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, pursuant to the relevant United Nations conventions and Security Council resolutions. The Government of Australia will be providing additional funding over the next five years to fight serious tax fraud and money-laundering. In particular, the funds will be used to detect and dismantle organized criminal enterprises involved in serious tax fraud and money-laundering.

Situation with regard to drug trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

631. The majority of the cannabis abused in Australia is produced locally; cannabis plants are illicitly

cultivated in all states and territories in that country. In New Zealand the large-scale cultivation of cannabis plants is taking place in a number of rural areas, including Northland and the Bay of Plenty. In addition, outdoor cultivation of cannabis plants in New Zealand has recently been supplemented by operations that use sophisticated indoor hydroponics to produce cannabis. Cannabis plants are also illicitly cultivated in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga.

632. There have been reports of barter trade involving the exchange of illicit drugs for arms in the coastal cities of Lae, Madang, Wewak and Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea.

633. The largest seizures of opium, heroin and cocaine in Oceania were reported in Australia. In May 2006, as a result of cooperation between the Australian Crime Commission and the federal and regional police and customs, four suspects were arrested and over 3 kg of heroin were seized, together with cash and other evidence, in raids in Sydney and Melbourne targeting an international syndicate trafficking in heroin. Large seizures of heroin have recently been made in Fiji and Vanuatu.

634. The total amount of cocaine seized in Australia in 2005 was the lowest since 1999. While the number of cocaine consignments detected at the Australian border decreased during the period 2004-2005, most of the cocaine entered the country through the postal system.

635. Cannabis continued to be abused in many countries in Oceania. Cannabis remained the drug of choice among drug abusers in Australia, Micronesia (Federated States of), New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. However, a survey conducted by the Department of Health and Ageing of Australia found that fewer children in secondary schools are abusing cannabis. In 2005, 18 per cent of such children had abused cannabis, compared with 35 per cent in 1996. Micronesia (Federated States of) and Papua New Guinea have the highest prevalence of cannabis abuse in the region.

Psychotropic substances

636. In Australia, ATS are supplied predominantly by clandestine laboratories operating within the country itself, which primarily manufacture methamphetamine. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine seems to

be increasing in New Zealand, where 204 laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine were dismantled in 2005, compared with 182 in 2004. Organized criminal groups use Oceania as a trans-shipment area for ATS, including methamphetamine and MDMA.

637. In Australia, there was a sharp decrease in the total amount of ATS seized in 2005 compared with previous years. Police in New Zealand have been seizing larger amounts of methamphetamine. In New Zealand, authorities seized 8.1 kg of methamphetamine concealed in water filters from China in January 2006 and 95 kg of the substance in May 2006. In April 2006, following a joint operation involving the Australian Crime Commission and police, three suspects were arrested and 2 kg of methamphetamine were seized. In November 2005, as a result of joint law enforcement partnerships among the Australian Crime Commission, the Australian Tax Office, the Queensland police and the Crime and Misconduct Commission, a person was convicted and sentenced to 15 years of prison for trafficking in and possession of methamphetamine and the convicted person's considerable assets were confiscated.

638. South East Asian methamphetamine is smuggled through Oceania to Canada and, to a lesser extent, the United States.

639. The total amount of MDMA seized in Australia in 2005 was 1,365 kg, the highest amount reported in the past six years. Almost two thirds of that total (820 kg) was discovered inside an oven in an air cargo consignment from Germany. During the last quarter of 2005, six MDMA manufacturing sites were uncovered (compared with only three sites during the entire year in 2004). Large amounts of 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone were discovered at two of the sites, signalling a possible shifting towards local manufacturing of MDMA. The uncovering of tablet presses may also be an indication that some of the MDMA available in Australia has been illicitly manufactured in that country.

640. Australian customs authorities seized 12.5 kg of pseudoephedrine concealed in children's books. The books had been imported in seven separate postal items from Malaysia, which were intercepted at the Melbourne international mail centre between August and September 2005. Investigations resulted in the arrest of 16 people and the dismantling of nine

clandestine laboratories in South Australia that had been illicitly manufacturing methamphetamine. Two clandestine laboratories used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine were dismantled in 2005 in the Australian Capital Territory. There is evidence that most of the pseudoephedrine used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine had been extracted from commercially available pharmaceutical preparations.

641. The police in New Zealand continued to detect attempted diversions of consignments of medicines from China containing pseudoephedrine. The illicit market continued to be supplied with such medicines through the diversion of over-the-counter medicines and theft. During 2005, over 146 kg of pseudoephedrine and 20 kg of ephedrine were seized in New Zealand.

642. In Australia, the abuse (including by smoking) of methamphetamine among young drug abusers is increasing. Methamphetamine is the drug most commonly abused by injection in Australia. New Zealand published its findings on recent trends in the abuse of methamphetamine and other illicit drugs from the 2005 Illicit Drug Monitoring System, which were based on interviews with frequent methamphetamine abusers. The study found that, in addition to methamphetamine, the interviewed persons abused cannabis, MDMA, LSD, opiates, GHB and cocaine. The drugs most commonly abused by injection were opiates and methamphetamine. The high level of drug abuse by injection among frequent methamphetamine abusers might indicate that persons who traditionally abused opiates were turning to methamphetamine. Several of the interviewed persons reported increased abuse of methamphetamine that had been smuggled into New Zealand. An increasing number of people receiving treatment for drug abuse in New Zealand are identifying amphetamine as their primary drug of abuse; according to centres for the treatment of drug abuse, amphetamine is the third most commonly abused drug in the country, after alcohol and cannabis.

Substances not under international control

643. In New Zealand, 10 kg of *gamma*-butyrolactone (GBL) were seized in 2005. GBL is becoming increasingly popular among drug abusers in New Zealand. In addition, there are indications that the

abuse of “party pills” containing benzylpiperazine has become a growing problem in New Zealand; the pills are rapidly gaining popularity as an alternative to MDMA and methamphetamine. In Australia, seizures of khat have increased.