

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.