

341. The mission examined with the authorities steps against the illicit cultivation and abuse of cannabis in Ethiopia. Also discussed were measures against drug trafficking, including the transit traffic through the international airport in Addis Ababa. The Board encourages the Government to carry out periodic studies on the prevalence of drug abuse and to strengthen its capacity for the treatment of drug addicts. The Board invites the Government to promote the rational use of opioid analgesics, in accordance with the guidelines issued on the subject by WHO.

342. The Board sent a mission to Mauritius in October 2008. Mauritius is a party to all of the international drug control treaties and has adopted comprehensive drug control legislation. The Board encourages the Government to set up a mechanism for sharing information, as well as coordinating machinery, involving all bodies, services and agencies involved in drug control activities. With respect to the smuggling of buprenorphine (Subutex®) to Mauritius, the Board invites the Government to continue to cooperate with European countries in an effort to address that problem effectively.

343. The abuse of drugs, particularly heroin, by injection is a problem in Mauritius. The Board commends the Government for offering a large variety of drug demand reduction services to drug abusers. The Board recommends that more psychosocial support be provided to drug abusers and trusts that measures taken to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS will not promote or facilitate drug abuse.

## **B. Americas**

### **Central America and the Caribbean**

#### **1. Major developments**

344. Trafficking in controlled substances containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine is increasing in Central America. Since Mexico strengthened its regulations to prevent the diversion of those precursors, criminal organizations have been taking advantage of the lax control of sales near the southern border of Mexico to acquire drugs containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine and establishing methamphetamine laboratories in the subregion.

345. The region of Central America and the Caribbean continues to be a major trafficking route for illicit drugs originating in South America and destined for North America and Europe. Despite the authorities' efforts to combat the problem, there are indications that drug trafficking is increasing in areas in Central America and in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. As a result of growing drug trafficking, drug abuse is on the rise in the Dominican Republic and crime has also escalated in the country.

346. The Board acknowledges the increasing number of regional cooperation activities organized by Governments, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and UNODC, as well as the increasing assistance from countries outside the region of Central America and the Caribbean. The Board welcomes the declaration of the eighteenth Ibero-American Summit, held in San Salvador in October 2008, in which members of the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) agreed to strengthen the role of education as a tool for development in the region and to enhance technical cooperation to combat organized crime.

347. In Central America, *maras* (street gangs) continue to be associated with international drug trafficking networks. About 5,000 gangs from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras operate in Mexico, where some of them have become involved in criminal operations with Mexican drug trafficking organizations. According to Mexico and countries in Central America, organized criminal groups based in Mexico have been recruiting gang members from El Salvador and Guatemala since 2007.

348. The increase in deportations in the United States during the past three years has forced more gang members to return to countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Seventy-five per cent of the gangs in Central America have links with other gangs and criminal groups in the United States. The deported gang members usually attempt to return illegally to the United States. Those who succeed extend and reinforce their operational networks in activities such as drug smuggling, thus strengthening international criminal associations.

349. Corruption, poorly funded judiciary systems, lack of public trust and weak law enforcement have undermined efforts to strengthen drug control policy in

Central America and the Caribbean. Money-laundering has had an impact on criminal activity at the national and regional levels. In Caribbean countries, measures are being taken to counter money-laundering and, in some cases, to ensure the seizure of proceeds of drug-related crime. However, national legislation needs to be updated and implemented at a faster pace. The Board encourages the authorities of countries in the region that have not done so to pass legislation introducing civil forfeiture and anti-corruption programmes to strengthen financial institutions and to expand and continue activities in the field of drug control.

## 2. Regional cooperation

350. In August 2007, CICAD, with the assistance of the Government of Spain and UNODC, organized a mock investigation in Antigua, Guatemala, focusing on an actual case involving money-laundering. The purpose of the investigation was to improve coordination between law enforcers, prosecutors and intelligence analysts. The participants included experts from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

351. CICAD, in partnership with a strategy centre based in the United States, began to implement a pilot programme in Costa Rica on the culture of lawfulness, a school curriculum for teenage students to promote respect of law. In Guazapa, El Salvador, technical and financial support was provided to a youth outreach centre that provides job training, family counselling and intervention, as well as resources, to prevent drug abuse and violence. By the end of 2007, CICAD had trained 500 counsellors in drug abuse treatment in El Salvador and 150 in Guatemala.

352. The CICAD demand reduction programme initiated in 2008 a professional certificate programme at the Université Quisqueya in Haiti. The CICAD Lions prevention programme, developed by the Lions Clubs International Foundation, is a school-based drug abuse prevention programme based on teaching life skills that has been operating in different member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) since 2005. The programme was launched in the Dominican Republic in the period 2007-2008 under the auspices of CICAD. Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, the Dominican Republic and Panama received technical assistance from CICAD for the drafting of

their national drug control plans and strategies. In addition, Caribbean countries received training on methodology for project management to strengthen human resources in national drug control commissions.

353. In 2007, CICAD celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), an instrument designed to measure the progress of Government action using evaluations. Implemented by CICAD, MEM has, during the past 10 years, proved to be an effective tool for use by countries in Central America and the Caribbean in addressing the drug problem. MEM reports are published periodically on the CICAD website. During the second half of 2007, MEM members visited Panama to promote the Mechanism in that country and to provide training for national institutions active in the field of drug control. MEM representatives participated in a meeting of Caribbean drug observatories held in Grenada in September 2007. The meeting was organized in partnership with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The purpose of the meeting was to review research and practice regarding drug abuse policy. MEM representatives also held a training workshop in Haiti for national institutions working with the Mechanism (see paragraph 478 below).

354. The first interregional forum of CICAD and the European Union twin-city initiative was held in Santo Domingo in April 2008. The twin-city initiative teams up European cities with cities in Latin America and the Caribbean to find joint solutions to improve strategies for drug abuse treatment. Twenty-four cities in Latin America and the Caribbean sent representatives and 18 delegations from European cities attended the forum about public policy on drug abuse.

355. In 2007, CICAD worked with organizations, councils and centres based in the Caribbean, including the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council in Saint Lucia and the Regional Drug Law Enforcement Training Centre in Jamaica, to establish programmes and initiatives aimed at helping member States to reduce illicit drug manufacture, distribution and availability. In April 2008, 16 law enforcement officers from Jamaica and 18 others from other Caribbean countries attended a two-week training course in Kingston on topics related to precursor control. The course was a collaborative effort involving the Government of Jamaica, OAS and CICAD, as well as

the Government of Canada (in the form of support from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police).

356. In September 2007, the Governments of Jamaica and the United States signed an agreement modifying and amending the 2001 counter-narcotics agreement between the two Governments. As part of the agreement, Jamaica is to receive an additional US\$ 35 million from the United States to fight the illicit trade in narcotic drugs. A total of US\$ 14 million will go towards training, equipment and vehicles to enhance air and seaport security.

357. The “Cuscatlán joint group” is a task force created by authorities from El Salvador and Guatemala, with the assistance of the United States, to enable vessel registration, surveillance and air and sea patrols to intercept illicit drug consignments on the coast of El Salvador. The Executive Secretariat of the Commission against Addictions and Illicit Drug Trafficking of Guatemala signed an agreement with the non-governmental organization Anti-Drugs Foundation of El Salvador (FUNDASALVA) to provide a one-year training programme in treating drug abuse for 38 specialists in El Salvador, with the support of the United States.

358. As part of the Merida Initiative, an initiative of the presidents of Mexico and the United States that was incorporated into law in June 2008, the Government of the United States will provide US\$ 65 million to the Governments of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, as well as the Governments of countries in Central America, for 2008. The funds are mostly to be used for equipment and training in several areas of drug control. In addition, the programme includes funds to support the drug demand reduction efforts of CICAD (see paragraph 421 below).

359. In June 2007, the OAS General Assembly adopted a resolution to promote cooperation, including at the regional level, in addressing the problem of criminal gangs. In the resolution, the Assembly resolved to instruct the Permanent Council to establish a contact group of member States concerned about the phenomenon of criminal gangs and to hold a special meeting with member States, other inter-American agencies, international organizations and representatives of civil society to analyse the criminal gang problem using a multidisciplinary approach.

360. From 1 January to 31 July 2007, investigators, prosecutors and judges from the Dominican Republic participated in the UNODC Legal Advisory Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean, which included training on trial techniques, case management, circumstantial evidence and special investigative techniques. The International Association of Drug Treatment Courts, which is promoting the drug treatment court approach in the region, was also involved in the training.

361. The Government of Honduras participated in a project on substance control involving the Meso-American Control Group on Narcotics, Psychotropics and Precursor Chemicals, implemented in Central America by UNODC with the support of the Government of Mexico and the Permanent Central American Commission for the Eradication of the Illicit Production, Traffic, Consumption and Use of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (and agreed to by the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama). The Commission held a meeting in Panama City in January 2008 to draft a regional action plan for the period 2009-2013.

362. Coordination and cooperation between forensic science institutes in a number of countries in Central America, including Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras, were enhanced through their representation at the Ibero-American network of forensic science institutes (the Latin American Academy of Criminalistics and Forensic Studies (AICEF)) and through the exchange of expertise with forensic science institutes in other Latin American countries, Portugal and Spain.

363. At a meeting held in Belize in June 2007, the Presidents of Belize and Mexico agreed to strengthen the rule of law in the common border and to enhance cooperation in fighting common threats such as drug trafficking, terrorism and contraband. Both Presidents declared their commitment to reinforcing cooperation against international crime through a treaty on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

364. In Trinidad and Tobago, capacity-building projects have been taking place under the auspices of the Dublin Group. The projects, which are aimed at supporting the Special Anti-Crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago, focus on law enforcement and target lawyers, prosecutors and judges.

365. A Regional Summit on Drugs, Security and Cooperation was held in Santo Domingo in March 2007. Representatives of Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago participated in the summit. The meeting dealt with issues such as cooperation and exchange of information related to drug control.

366. CARICOM member States strengthened cooperation mechanisms for security and recognized drug trafficking as a major threat. As part of the security support for a major sporting event in 2007 (the Cricket World Cup), access to the INTERPOL document database was expanded to include offices in ports and a framework was established for the sharing of subregional information on maritime matters.

### 3. National legislation, policy and action

367. In Central American countries, measures are being taken to reduce the participation of youth gangs in international drug trafficking organizations. In 2007, the Nicaraguan Police had identified 21 gangs and 48 criminal groups associated with gangs. The Directorate of Young People's Affairs of Nicaragua sent multidisciplinary teams to work where those gangs were operating. As a result, 11 gangs with a total of about 800 members were dismantled in 2007. The Board notes with concern that, in spite of those efforts, the involvement of Nicaraguan gangs in criminal activity is increasing.

368. The Government of Honduras has addressed the youth gang problem through educational programmes. During the first half of 2007, almost 9,000 children, teenagers and parents participated in programmes on countering violence and preventing gang-related problems. The programmes were organized by members of the Preventive Police. Other courses were organized for judges, attorneys and law enforcement officers.

369. In addition, Governments, religious associations and other non-governmental organizations and charitable groups in Central American countries, such as Bienvenido a Casa and Homies Unidos in El Salvador, continue to work through existing programmes to help former gang members to reintegrate into society in their home countries following their deportation from the United States.

370. In August 2008, Guatemalan law enforcement authorities launched special operations to patrol their country's border with Mexico to detect illegal activities such as drug trafficking and arms trafficking. In May 2008, Guatemalan authorities started working on a new national drug prevention plan, targeting persons between 16 and 35 years old, which is the age group most affected by drug abuse and drug trafficking. In addition, the Government of Guatemala has established an office to provide legal assistance in cases involving corruption.

371. On 19 June 2008, the Ministry of Health of Belize issued a ministerial decree to strengthen controls over ephedrine. According to the new legislation, special authorization is required to trade in ephedrine and pre-export notifications must be sent to importing countries. The legislation also prohibits the importation or exportation of pseudoephedrine in bulk quantities and in pharmaceutical doses. On 13 August 2008, the Government of El Salvador issued a regulation on the handling and control of pseudoephedrine as a raw material and in pharmaceutical products. Furthermore, manufacturers of pharmaceutical preparations in El Salvador have been given 12 months to find a substitute for pseudoephedrine in medicines sold over the counter. In 2007, the Government of Nicaragua included ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in the list of substances controlled by the law on medicaments and pharmacies. The Board strongly encourages the Governments of all countries in Central America and the Caribbean to adopt and implement legislation to control the increasing diversion of precursors in the region.

372. To build the capacity of forensic services in Guatemala, a forensic science institute (the Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Forenses) was created in 2006. The institute officially began its work in July 2007, with significant assistance from various donors, including Germany and the European Commission. It is currently guided by a scientific committee of forensic experts from Colombia and Spain, as well as Puerto Rico.

373. The Government of Honduras set up a task force in the Mosquita area, an area used for cocaine trafficking by sea and air. Within 18 months, the task force seized 11 tons of cocaine. The Counter-Narcotics Directorate, attached to the Ministry of Public

Prosecution of Honduras, has set up a special division to investigate maritime drug trafficking.

374. In 2008, a pilot project developed by a CICAD task force was started to estimate drug abuse among prisoners in Costa Rica. During the past three years, Costa Rica has successfully implemented a comprehensive model for the treatment of drug addiction.

375. In July 2008, the President of the Dominican Republic launched a strategic plan for national drug control for the period 2008-2012. The plan includes guidelines to strengthen institutions, revise the legal framework, implement public policy and create a national information and research institute. In addition, the Government implemented a plan for the security of citizens. A presidential decree was issued to create a national council for the security of citizens.

376. The Government of the Dominican Republic also established a special military unit to tackle trafficking in human beings, drugs and firearms in border areas. The unit, called Cuerpo Especializado de Seguridad Fronteriza, began operations in September 2007, when 200 soldiers were deployed along the country's border with Haiti. In addition, the Government of the Dominican Republic provided eight aircraft for fighting drug trafficking.

377. In order to ensure that information related to pre-export notifications of controlled substances was well managed, the directorate general of customs in the Dominican Republic initiated a process to implement the electronically operated single customs declaration procedure. The directorate general will invest more than US\$ 20 million in the development of an electronic processing system. The project, which includes the provision of new equipment, computer programs and training for personnel, is supported by the Economic Development Cooperation Fund of the Republic of Korea.

378. The Government of the Dominican Republic launched in 2006 an operation to fight corruption among drug control authorities. According to reports of the Government, 5,000 persons have been reprimanded and expelled from the National Drug Control Directorate as a result of the operation. Some of those persons have been charged with drug trafficking, although the operation also targeted indiscipline and incompetence. The Board notes the efforts of the

Dominican Republic to combat corruption, drug trafficking and violence.

379. In Haiti, security remains fragile in part because of the continuous trafficking in drugs and firearms. In its resolution 1780 (2007), the Security Council, *inter alia*, invited Member States, in coordination with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), to engage with the Government of Haiti to address cross-border trafficking in illicit drugs and arms and other illegal activities.

380. Efforts are under way in Trinidad and Tobago to eradicate illicitly cultivated cannabis. In November 2007, Government officials and representatives of non-governmental organizations participated in a workshop to finalize the drafting of a national drug control plan for the period 2008-2012.

381. In 2008, the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis passed legislation aimed at increasing the efficiency of the Financial Services Commission, empowering it to impose sanctions on financial institutions involved in money-laundering.

382. In Jamaica, after years of stalling in Parliament, the Proceeds of Crime Act was approved by the Senate. The Act, in effect since May 2007, incorporates elements of previous legislation against money-laundering and allows for the recovery of assets linked to criminal activity. The Government has pledged to reform the current justice system. In May 2007, the Jamaican Justice System Reform Task Force published a preliminary report and provided guidelines for improvement in areas such as accountability and transparency. To address the new threat posed by the use of the Internet as a means of advertising and acquiring controlled drugs, members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force have received training by experts on Internet investigations. The Jamaica Constabulary Force opened a new base of operations in Saint Thomas in December 2007 to maintain security on the eastern coastline and protect it against trafficking in illicit drugs and firearms.

383. The third anniversary of Operation Kingfish, a major initiative involving law enforcement agencies from Canada, Jamaica, the United Kingdom and the United States was celebrated in 2007. Through Operation Kingfish, over 2,000 operations have been conducted and more than 13 tons of cocaine and 12 tons of cannabis have been seized.

#### 4. Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

##### *Narcotic drugs*

384. The geographical location of Central America and the Caribbean makes it an important transit and storage area for South American drug consignments en route to Mexico, including those consignments having the United States and countries in Europe as their final destination. Drug trafficking has had an impact on both drug abuse and drug-related crime in the region and has also led to increased money-laundering activities, especially in the Caribbean.

385. Drug trafficking by land continues to pose a problem to national authorities in Central America. According to UNODC, 18 per cent of the cocaine smuggled into Mexico enters that country through Belize and Guatemala. There are indications that drug trafficking along that route is increasing and that Belize is being used as a trans-shipment area for cocaine consignments entering Europe via the West Africa route (see paragraph 324 above).

386. According to the Government of Belize, Mexican criminal organizations are increasingly making use of Belizean territory for stockpiling illicit drugs and coordinating drug trafficking operations. As part of its regional strategy for Central America and the Caribbean, UNODC is currently working with the Government of Belize to strengthen the rule of law and fight organized crime.

387. Since maritime drug trafficking routes are increasingly being monitored, drug traffickers have been using low-flying light aircraft, in addition to other aircraft. Speedboats continue to be used to smuggle drugs across the Caribbean. Illicit drug consignments are usually concealed in personal luggage, canned food or industrial containers. However, the use of "mules", people who smuggle drugs by ingesting them, continues.

388. Jamaica continues to be the main producer and exporter of cannabis in Central America and the Caribbean. Despite the eradication efforts and significant seizures and arrests, cannabis is illicitly cultivated in most parts of the country. Consignments of cannabis from Jamaica are sent through the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Haiti to countries in North America or Europe. Cannabis is produced for domestic consumption in other countries

in the Caribbean, such as Barbados, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. According to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, cannabis plants are illicitly cultivated on about 145 ha in the country.

389. Guatemala is the only country in Central America and the Caribbean in which there is significant illicit opium poppy cultivation. According to the Government of Guatemala, the total amount of opium poppy eradicated in 2008 increased compared with the total amount eradicated in 2007, and illicit opium poppy cultivation also increased in 2008. The Board urges the Government to provide it with detailed information regarding the total area of illicit opium poppy cultivation in the country, as well as the total area eradicated.

390. According to Guatemalan authorities, the amount of cocaine seized during the first quarter of 2008 was more than the amount seized in 2006 and 2007 combined. In a single operation, the Guatemalan army and police seized 1,136 kg of cocaine in the area of San Andrés, Petén. The drug was found on a small aircraft headed towards Mexico. The Government of Guatemala reported that between January and April 2008, 1,511 kg of cocaine, over 59,000 cannabis plants and more than 161 million opium poppy plants were seized.

391. In the first half of 2007, the authorities of Panama reported having seized 17,872 kg of cocaine, 1,221 kg of cannabis and about 31 kg of heroin. In a joint operation, the authorities of Costa Rica, Nicaragua and the United States seized 250 kg of cocaine in Nicaragua in November 2007.

392. The authorities of Costa Rica have reported a marked increase in seizures of cocaine and heroin, mainly on maritime routes. Colombian drug traffickers continue to hire fishermen from Costa Rica and use the fishermen's vessels in their operations. In 2007, 2 tons of cocaine were confiscated in Europe in a total of 146 seizures involving consignments from Costa Rica. The majority of the seizures originating in Costa Rica were reported by Spain, followed by the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium. Most of the seizures involved mail shipments.

393. There has been an increase in drug trafficking in Honduras principally in the north (Cortés, Colón, Atlántida) and along the border of Honduras with

Nicaragua. The largest amounts of drugs enter Honduras through the department of Gracias a Dios, usually by sea or by air. In March 2007, 1,350 kg of cocaine were seized on a small aircraft coming from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and 3,200 kg of cocaine were seized on a fishing boat in May 2007.

394. Haiti is used as a major trans-shipment area for consignments of South American cocaine bound for the United States. Drug trafficking has increased along the border of Haiti with the Dominican Republic. In May 2007, Haitian authorities and United Nations police (UNPOL) arrested 10 people, including 4 police officers, and seized almost 420 kg of cocaine, one of the largest cocaine seizures in that area in the past decade.

395. Between January and October 2008, authorities in the Dominican Republic seized 2,467 kg of cocaine, 220.1 kg of cannabis, 95.7 kg of heroin and 15,949 units of "ecstasy". During the same period 17,378 people were arrested for drug-related offences.

396. The Government of the Bahamas reported the seizure of 193,902 kg of cannabis and 189.5 kg of cocaine during 2007 as a result of Operation Bahamas, Turks and Caicos (OPBAT).

397. In 2007, the Government of Cuba reported having seized 3,074.6 kg of narcotic drugs, of which 2,126.9 kg was cannabis. Cannabis and cocaine are abused in small amounts, mainly in Havana. The Government addresses the problem of drug abuse through drug abuse prevention and treatment programmes under the supervision of the National Drug Commission, with the participation of political and civil organizations.

398. The availability of drugs in the streets of the Dominican Republic is a growing problem, as indicated by the fact that drug abuse is on the rise. About 20 per cent of the narcotic drugs trafficked in the country are used to pay drug traffickers. Instead of receiving money, traffickers are paid in drugs, thus expanding the local drug trafficking networks and increasing local demand. The growing illicit drug market mainly affects the poorest segment of the population and is reflected in the increasing violence and criminal activity in the country. The homicide rate in the Dominican Republic increased by 66 per cent from 2000 to 2007.

399. According to the latest available UNODC data, in 2006, the annual prevalence rate of cocaine abuse among the population aged 15-64 in Haiti was 0.9 per cent.

400. In 2007, the Ministry of Health and Environment of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines launched the Global School-based Student Health Survey to measure the abuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances, together with other indicators such as physical activity and mental health. The results showed that 19.9 per cent of students 13-15 years old had abused drugs at least once during their lives.

401. In Trinidad and Tobago, cannabis is the most abused drug. Cannabis plants are mainly cultivated locally, although more potent varieties of cannabis are brought into Trinidad and Tobago from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. According to the National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Programme, there are only a few cases of heroin abuse in the country. Several demand reduction initiatives are currently under way. Those initiatives include programmes in prisons, public awareness campaigns and school-based programmes. In addition, the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) programme in Trinidad and Tobago is being implemented.

402. The DARE programme is also being implemented in the following other countries in Central America and the Caribbean: Barbados, El Salvador, Grenada, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

403. The Board notes with concern the lack of published studies on drug abuse in Central America and the Caribbean. Therefore, the Board welcomes the initiative of the Inter-American Observatory on Drugs, which has announced that it is preparing a comparative report on drug abuse among school students in the Caribbean and a comparative study of the drug situation in Central America.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

404. The Board notes with concern the increase in the abuse of MDMA ("ecstasy") in countries in Central America and the Caribbean, particularly in El Salvador and Guatemala. MDMA abuse is also increasing in Jamaica, especially in the tourist areas of Negril and Montego Bay. The "ecstasy" found in the region continues to be smuggled from European countries or,

more recently, from Canada (see paragraphs 419-457 below).

405. According to the most recent data provided by UNODC, the Dominican Republic is the Caribbean country with the highest annual prevalence of abuse of amphetamines (excluding “ecstasy”): 1.1 per cent. During the first nine months of 2007, 18,347 “ecstasy” tablets were seized in that country.

406. According to UNODC, in Barbados the annual prevalence of abuse of amphetamines (excluding “ecstasy”) among persons aged 15-64 was reported to be 0.2 per cent in 2007. The rate for abuse of “ecstasy” was reported to be 0.5 per cent among persons in the same age group.

407. The authorities of Cuba have reported the abuse of psychotropic substances in that country; they have also noted that the level of abuse is decreasing due to new control measures. In Trinidad and Tobago, the National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Programme has reported evidence of the abuse of “ecstasy” in that country.

408. There are reports indicating that methamphetamine laboratories are being established in Central America. Two clandestine laboratories for manufacturing “ecstasy” were seized and dismantled in Tegucigalpa in August 2008.

#### *Precursors*

409. Recent measures adopted in Mexico to limit the availability of pseudoephedrine have had an impact on trafficking in precursors in Central America. Honduran law enforcement officers have reported an increase in demand for medicines containing pseudoephedrine that can be sold over the counter. In particular, nationals of other countries have been buying significant amounts of those medicines. In June 2008, Honduran authorities seized 1.2 million tablets of pseudoephedrine at the airport at Tegucigalpa.

410. The authorities of El Salvador have also reported an increase in demand for pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine. The authorities have reported that nationals of El Salvador and Guatemala have been allegedly supplying Mexican cartels with precursors.

411. In 2007, Panama reported the seizure of 10,000 kg of ephedrine and over 1,000 litres of

hydrochloric acid. Costa Rica reported the seizure of 2.8 kg of pseudoephedrine. In Belize, the health authorities have noted an increase in the importation of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine and are currently monitoring their distribution to prevent diversion.

412. In Central American countries, measures are being taken to address the increasing diversion of precursors used in illicit drug manufacture; and some Caribbean countries, such as Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Grenada, have mechanisms for regulating the use and distribution of controlled chemicals. In the region as a whole, however, the movement of precursors is poorly monitored and regulated due to weak infrastructure and insufficient funding. The Board encourages the Governments of countries in Central America and the Caribbean to adopt and strengthen legislation and to establish a regional cooperation mechanism for preventing trafficking in and diversion of precursors.

## **North America**

### **1. Major developments**

413. The major challenge in the region of North America is the domination of illicit drug production and trafficking by organized crime and the growing violence in fighting among drug cartels and between drug traffickers and law enforcement officers, particularly in Mexico. On the demand side, a significant shift of consumption patterns towards the abuse of prescription drugs can be observed in the United States. Canada has changed its role as a traditional importer and consumer of “ecstasy” to a major manufacturer and exporter of that drug.

414. The Government of Mexico faces violent opposition by drug cartels to its attempts to fight organized crime and drug trafficking. The Government has deployed more than 12,000 military troops and has employed forces from seven Government agencies, spending more than US\$ 2.5 billion in 2007 (an increase of 24 per cent over the spending level in 2006) to improve security and reduce drug-related violence. Drug cartels have responded with unprecedented violence and the number of homicide victims, including top-level federal police officers, in 2007 and 2008 has more than doubled compared with previous



years, as federal intervention is taking place in states where corruption had allowed drug traffickers to operate relatively undisturbed.

415. Organized criminal groups continue to control drug trafficking in North America, the strong presence of Mexican drug syndicates being felt in Mexico and the United States and the increasing influence of Asian drug trafficking organizations noticeable in Canada and the United States. Colombian drug trafficking organizations continue to focus their operations on cocaine and heroin trafficking, but Mexican syndicates have taken over from Colombian organized criminal groups the smuggling and distribution of heroin and cocaine from South America to the United States. In addition, Mexican drug trafficking organizations are heavily involved in the distribution of methamphetamine from Mexican-operated illicit drug manufacture and cannabis cultivation and trafficking within and into the United States. Asian drug trafficking organizations operating from Canada are involved in the illicit cultivation of high-potency cannabis in Canada and the United States and are illicitly manufacturing methamphetamine for the illicit market in Canada and the United States.

416. In 2007, an estimated 35.7 million citizens in the United States, or 14.4 per cent of the population aged 12 or older, had consumed illicit drugs (annual prevalence). One encouraging sign is the decline in overall illicit drug use among youth and young adults in the United States. Since 2001, there has been a decrease of 24 per cent in drug abuse among persons aged 12-17 years. That drop is mostly attributed to a decrease in the abuse of cannabis; however, there has also been a decrease in the abuse of almost all other drugs. Similarly, the abuse of drugs among young adults (persons aged 18-25 years) has decreased in all drug categories except pain relievers.

417. The decrease in the abuse of cannabis in the United States is related to the perceived risks of smoking cannabis, which increased between 2002 and 2007, and strong parental disapproval of drug abuse. The increase in the perceived risks may be attributed to educational campaigns in the United States. Despite that significant decline, the problem of substance abuse among United States teenagers continues to be widespread, as nearly half of United States students aged 17-18 (47 per cent) have tried an illicit drug by

the time they have finished secondary school (lifetime prevalence).

418. In Canada and Mexico, the abuse of cocaine, cannabis and methamphetamine has increased. Mexican authorities are concerned over the fact that the age of initiation of drug abuse has decreased to 8-10 years and over the increased risk of drug abuse associated with the use of tobacco and alcohol at an early age (before reaching age 17). The abuse of prescription drugs is also a recognized abuse problem among senior citizens in Mexico.

419. Canada has become the primary source of supply of MDMA ("ecstasy") found on the illicit market in that country and the United States. There is wide availability and stable use of MDMA in Canada: past-year prevalence is 4.4 per cent among youth and young adults (persons 15-24 years old). Canadian law enforcement authorities report continued smuggling of precursors from China into Canada for use in illicit drug manufacture in that country. Unprecedented quantities of Canadian "ecstasy" were seized in other countries, reflecting the increased significance of the country in "ecstasy" manufacture and trafficking.

420. A recent household survey showed that in Mexico the accumulated incidence of cocaine doubled between 2002 and 2008. The use of methamphetamine and "crack" cocaine (a cocaine derivative converted from cocaine hydrochloride), while showing a lower prevalence, has increased during the same period. The difference between the rates of male and female abusers has declined.

## **2. Regional cooperation**

421. For many years, cooperation projects have been carried out in the countries in North America. A new major step in regional cooperation in 2008 is the Merida initiative, an example of security cooperation involving Mexico and the United States, as well as the countries in Central America, to combat drug trafficking, transnational crime and terrorism (see paragraph 358 above). The initiative combines national efforts with regional cooperation and supports coordinated strategies to counteract the power of criminal organizations. The initiative will support border, air and maritime controls and improve the capacity of judicial systems to conduct investigations and prosecutions. The United States Congress approved in June 2008 US\$ 465 million in assistance,

primarily for Mexico but also for Central American countries.

422. Progress is also being made in other cooperation projects. United States law enforcement agencies are supporting their Mexican counterparts by providing training in precursor detection, investigative techniques and methamphetamine investigations in the main areas of illicit methamphetamine manufacturing in Mexico. Support in the form of specialized equipment, vehicles and computers is being provided to the new federal police corps and its special investigative units. In 2007, a multi-year effort was initiated in Mexico to help the Secretary of Public Security carry out reform. In addition, specialized training was provided to the new federal police in such areas as addressing cybercrime and handling explosives and incendiary devices and to the Mexican Navy. Since 2007, prosecutors from Colombia, Mexico and countries in Central America have strengthened their exchange of police and financial intelligence in judicial investigations and interception operations.

423. Cooperation between Canada and the United States is progressing and bilateral forums, such as the Cross-Border Crime Forum and Project North Star, have increased information-sharing and joint training among law enforcement officers. Under the Border Enforcement Subgroup of the Forum, agreement is being sought on the Integrated Marine Security Operations programme, known as Shiprider. The Shiprider programme will allow officers from one country to operate from vessels (or aircraft) of another country, thereby permitting a single vessel to patrol both Canadian and United States waters. The pilot programme of the border enforcement security task force will complement the existing integrated border enforcement team initiative and enable comprehensive border control, not only between ports of entry but also at ports of entry. Canada has expanded its cooperative efforts in the transit zone from South America to North America and deployed "Maritime Patrol Assets" in support of the Joint Interagency Task Force South.

424. As many samples of seized MDMA contain methamphetamine, United States law enforcement agencies and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have stepped up their intelligence-sharing and coordinated law enforcement operations to fight criminal organizations manufacturing "ecstasy". Canadian and United States law enforcement agencies are also

enhancing their coordination through the National Methamphetamine Chemicals Initiative.

### 3. National legislation, policy and action

425. The Government of Mexico has continued to take action against corruption, including by improving pay and benefits, introducing stricter criteria for the selection of new employees and using more modern investigative techniques. In Mexico, drug control operations have been launched in 11 states and the investment in security forces has been increased. Furthermore, the Government of Mexico, in cooperation with the Governments of Colombia and countries in Central America, has developed a regional security plan to improve drug control operations throughout the Americas.

426. In Mexico, Congress approved legal and constitutional reforms unifying the federal police into one force and allowing proactive investigation, increasing the discretion of prosecutors and the modification of the code of criminal procedures.

427. Complementary legislation on mandatory minimum prison sentences for convictions of serious drug-related crime was introduced in Canada. Such serious drug-related crime includes growing cannabis and manufacturing and dealing in "crystal" methamphetamine and "crack" cocaine.

428. In order to respond to the increasing abuse of prescription drugs, several measures have been introduced in the United States, such as point-of-purchase messages on prescription drugs with high abuse potential. Several states in the United States have introduced prescription monitoring programmes such as the Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS), available via a secure website 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Critics had feared that the introduction of the system would reduce the number of prescriptions issued, but that was not the case. In fact, physicians have stated that they find OARRS reports useful for the validation of information provided by patients.

429. The Government of Canada launched its revised National Anti-Drug Strategy, which combines treatment and prevention, including public awareness campaigns, and stricter law enforcement measures targeting illicit drug manufacturers and traffickers. The new strategy in Canada provides 100 million Canadian

dollars for personnel dedicated to tackling the illicit production of cannabis and the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants. In addition, it includes measures to strengthen precursor control and border control, as well as to improve cooperation with authorities of the United States. Resources allocated to prevention focus on youth and programmes in schools and resources allocated to treatment focus on the development of national benchmarks for evaluation and data collection, enhancing treatment for indigenous populations and youth offenders in the criminal justice system. The goal is to reduce illicit drug use among Canadian youth aged 10-24, including high-risk youth, focusing on risk and protective factors before drug use begins.

430. The Board is concerned that distribution of “safer crack kits” has continued in several cities in Canada and that a Supreme Court of British Columbia issued a decision in May 2008 permitting a “drug injection room” in Vancouver, the first “drug injection room” in the Americas, to continue to operate. The Board views such programmes with great concern and considers that they violate the international drug control treaties.

431. Canada is one of the few countries worldwide that allows cannabis to be prescribed by doctors to patients with certain illnesses. There are currently over 2,200 patients in Canada for whom cannabis is prescribed. Initially, only state-run institutions could make cannabis available for medical purposes. However, subsequent regulations allowed patients to grow a small amount of cannabis for their own use and provided for private persons to obtain licences for growing cannabis to be used for medical purposes. According to current regulations, each of those private persons may supply cannabis to only one patient. In Canada, the Federal Court ruled in January 2008 that the provision that a supplier could only provide cannabis to one patient unduly restricted the patient’s access to cannabis used for medical purposes and unreasonably slanted the market in favour of the Government’s chosen supplier. The Government has appealed the ruling. Article 23 of the 1961 Convention stipulates specific requirements that a Government must fulfil if it is to allow the licit cultivation of cannabis, including the establishment of a national cannabis agency to which all cannabis growers must deliver their total crops. The Board encourages the Canadian authorities to respect the provisions of article 23 and fulfil those requirements.

432. The Board is concerned that in the United States, the disagreement between the Government and several states regarding the use of “medical cannabis” continues. The question whether the “medical use” of cannabis should be made legal has been put to a referendum in several states (most recently in Massachusetts and Michigan). While the Government maintains that the consumption and cultivation of cannabis are illegal activities, several states have passed laws by referendum that ease or eliminate sanctions for the “compassionate/medical use” of cannabis. In California, for example, legislation allows the use of “medical cannabis” for a variety of indications, as well as the cultivation of the plant by designated growers of cannabis. That has led to a proliferation of cannabis cultivation in California and to the establishment of cannabis “vending machines” as well as other reported methods of abuse. The Board is concerned that that practice may lead to a further increase in cannabis abuse in the United States and may affect other states. The Board calls upon the authorities of the United States to continue its efforts to stop that practice, which is in contradiction to national law and is in violation of article 23 of the 1961 Convention.

433. The Government of Mexico has developed standards and norms to be followed for the treatment of drug abuse at the national, state and local levels. Those standards and norms are contained in the official norms for the prevention, treatment and control of addiction and the criteria of minimum standards of quality for the administration of treatment in medical and residential establishments. In Mexico, the National Council against Addictions (CONADIC) and the Secretariat of Health are both responsible for maintaining a national registry of services and treatment programmes and the names of the institutions permitted to conduct such programmes. A process is under way to create a national network of facilities for the treatment of drug abuse, comprising 300 new treatment centres (70 of which have already been built) in addition to the existing 96 programmes for outpatient treatment and 6 programmes for inpatient treatment. Both types of treatment programmes are public programmes available to the entire population for the treatment of drug abuse.

434. The Government of Mexico has increased the share of the budget earmarked for reducing drug demand and, with the participation of the main

Government ministries, including the Ministry of Health, has launched a national programme. In addition, the national system for family development is supporting a national programme for drug abuse prevention in communities. The Ministry of Social Development is supporting, with the active involvement of the community and the assistance of the police, a social programme aimed at making public places in communities safer environments. Furthermore, the Ministry of Public Education, in close collaboration with the Attorney General's Office and the police, has launched a new prevention programme as part of an integrated approach to dealing with the drug problem.

435. In the United States, the number of persons aged 12 or older receiving treatment at a facility specializing in the treatment of substance abuse in 2007 was 2.4 million, or 1 per cent of population aged 12 or older. One cause for concern is that the share of the national drug control budget allocated to drug abuse prevention has continued to decline. According to the 2009 budget summary of the National Drug Control Strategy, 11 per cent of the US\$ 14.1 billion requested for the 2009 national drug control budget is allocated to prevention, compared with 20 per cent in 2001. Slightly less than 25 per cent of the budget is allocated to treatment. A major share of the budget is allocated to supply reduction. The Board encourages the authorities of the United States to seek an even balance between demand and supply reduction programmes and to provide adequate funding to demand reduction measures.

#### **4. Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse**

##### *Narcotic drugs*

436. North America remains one of the main areas of cannabis illicit production and abuse, the largest producer country being Mexico (about 7,400 tons), followed by the United States (about 4,700 tons) and Canada (about 3,500 tons). Despite the efforts of the Government of Mexico to eradicate cannabis, the total area under illicit cannabis cultivation increased. In 2007, the Mexican military took over from the Attorney General's Office the sole responsibility for eradicating cannabis and opium poppy. Due to the realignment of responsibilities for aerial eradication efforts, the total eradicated area of illicitly cultivated

cannabis declined (to 21,357 ha) in 2007 compared with the figure for 2006 (30,158 ha).

437. In Canada, 61.4 per cent of youth and young adults (aged 15-24) have used cannabis at least once in their lives, 37 per cent have used it at least once in the past 12 months and 8.2 per cent have used it on a daily basis. Illicit cannabis growers utilize advanced methods of cultivation to meet the high demand for cannabis in Canada and on the illicit market in the United States. Annual cannabis production in Canada is estimated to range from 1,399 to 3,498 tons. One cause for concern is the very high THC content of a limited number of samples in Canada and the United States, proving that criminal organizations in both countries are able to produce high-potency cannabis. Illicit cannabis cultivation continues to thrive in Canada, partly because of the absence of laws providing strict punishment for such activity. The majority of the illicit cannabis growing operations in that country are carried out by organized criminal groups.

438. In the United States, cannabis remains the most commonly abused drug: 25.1 million persons (or 10.1 per cent of the population aged 12 or older) used cannabis in 2007. The illicit market for cannabis is supplied by an increasing number of domestic indoor and outdoor cannabis cultivation sites. Cannabis is also smuggled into the United States out of Canada, Colombia, Jamaica and Mexico. While most of the cannabis available in the United States has a lower potency and is produced in Mexico, United States authorities are concerned about the high potency of some cannabis grown indoors in Canada and the United States under hydroponic conditions. Largely as a result of those innovations, the average THC content of all cannabis samples tested in the United States increased to 8.77 per cent in 2006, nearly twice the figure obtained in 1996 (4.5 per cent). Individual samples may have an extremely high THC content: cannabis seized in Atlanta that had been grown indoors had a THC content of over 18 per cent.

439. Cocaine continues to be easy to obtain on the illicit market in Canada, where 5.5 per cent of the population aged 15-24 years has abused cocaine in the past 12 months. The total amount of cocaine seized in Canada increased slightly from 2,556 kg in 2005 to 2,676 kg in 2006. Most of the cocaine in Canada has been smuggled over land routes leading through countries in Central America, Mexico and the United

States. In addition, cocaine continues to be smuggled into Canada on direct flights from South America, as well as through various transit countries in the Caribbean, such as Antigua and Barbuda, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago. Colombian drug traffickers have attempted to escape detection by routing cocaine consignments through countries neighbouring the countries of destination. Cocaine is also smuggled through Canada into other countries such as Australia. "Crack" continues to be abused throughout Canada. Cocaine laced with methamphetamine (to increase demand), has been identified as an emerging trend in Canada.

440. In the United States, the annual prevalence of cocaine abuse in 2007 was 2 per cent among persons 13-14 years of age, 3.4 per cent among persons 15-16 years of age and 5.2 per cent among persons 17-18 years of age, and the annual prevalence of "crack" cocaine among teenagers ranged from 1.3 to 1.9 per cent. The annual prevalence of cocaine abuse among the general population in 2007 was 2.3 per cent (5.7 million cocaine abusers, compared with more than 6 million in 2006). In 2007, domestic and international law enforcement efforts resulted in large cocaine seizures in the Eastern Pacific, which contributed to the cocaine shortage in the United States, which in turn contributed to the decline in the annual prevalence rate in that country for 2007. In addition, intensified efforts by the Mexican authorities to fight drug cartels resulted in a decline in cocaine deliveries across the border to the United States. Law enforcement reports indicated that, between January and September 2007, there was a sustained cocaine shortage in 38 cities in the United States with large illicit markets for cocaine, while the price of a gram of pure cocaine nearly doubled. The shortage of cocaine was also reflected in workplace drug testing and in a lower percentage of cocaine-related emergency room visits in 2007 compared with the data for 2006.

441. Notwithstanding the successful law enforcement activities mentioned above, the estimated amount of cocaine from South America smuggled into the United States remained significant. United States authorities estimate that 530-710 tons of cocaine left South America for the United States in 2006, an estimate similar to the estimate for 2005. About 90 per cent of the cocaine smuggled out of South America and into the United States has passed through the Central

America corridor, the majority of it being shipped through the Eastern Pacific vector.

442. In Canada, heroin abuse continues to be the least common form of drug abuse (lifetime prevalence: 0.9 per cent). Heroin is mostly supplied by countries in South-West Asia; India continues to be the primary source or transit country. There have been no changes with regard to the availability and purity of heroin in Canada. Most of the heroin in Canada has been smuggled into the country by air passengers or through postal or courier services. In Canada, heroin abuse has been at least partly replaced by the abuse of prescription opiates. The total amount of opium seized increased considerably from 16 kg in 2005 to about 124 kg in 2006. India was the primary source of the opium seized; however, the most significant individual seizures involved consignments transited through Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Turkey. In Canada, opium is mainly abused by older members of some ethnic groups.

443. In the United States, heroin abuse is stable at a relatively low level (lifetime prevalence: 1.5 per cent), despite the fact that heroin is easily available in most large urban areas and in some suburban and rural areas, mostly in the north-eastern part of the country. However, there has been some increase in heroin abuse among young adults in suburban and rural areas. The concentration of heroin abuse in the north-east is partly the result of abusers of prescription opiates switching to heroin because of its lower cost and higher purity level. Heroin continues to be abused by youth in the United States: the annual prevalence of heroin abuse is currently 0.9 per cent, which is significantly below the peak level of 2000, when 1.5 per cent of all persons aged 17-18 reported having abused heroin during the previous year. However, United States authorities are concerned that the high level of abuse of prescription opiates may lead to increased heroin abuse among adolescents. In the United States, a combination of Mexican "black tar" heroin and over-the-counter medication containing diphenhydramine hydrochloride is being sold under the street name "cheese heroin".

444. Most of the heroin abused in the United States is illicitly manufactured in Colombia or Mexico. Mexico experienced a continuous decline in eradication levels, the total area eradicated dropping from 21,609 ha in 2005 to 16,831 ha in 2006 and only 7,784 ha in 2007. That decline was partly the result of unfavourable

climate conditions and the realignment of responsibilities for aerial eradication in Mexico (see paragraph 436 above).

445. In the United States, the number of persons who abuse prescription drugs is now greater than the total number of persons who abuse cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, “ecstasy” and/or inhalants. Prescription drugs are the second most abused category of drugs, surpassed only by cannabis. In 2007, about 16.3 million persons reported having abused prescription drugs in the previous year (6.6 per cent of the population aged 12 and above), compared with 14.8 million in 2002. About 6.9 million of those who abused prescription drugs in the past year are “current users” (persons who abuse such drugs at least once a month). Most of those who abused prescription drugs in the past month are abusers of pain relievers: they numbered 5.2 million in 2007, compared with 4.4 million in 2002.

446. One matter of particular concern is the high rate of abuse of prescription drugs among youth. The non-medical use of prescription pain relievers among young adults (aged 18-25) in the past month increased from 4.1 per cent in 2002 to 4.6 per cent in 2007. About 15 per cent of students aged 17-18 reported the non-medical use of at least one prescription medication within the past year. The annual prevalence of abuse of narcotic drugs other than heroin among secondary school students is 9.2 per cent. More than 5 per cent of students aged 17-18 have tried oxycodone (Oxycontin®) at least once in the past year and nearly 10 per cent have tried hydrocodone (Vicodin®), 7.5 per cent have tried amphetamines, 6.2 per cent have tried sedatives and 6.2 per cent have tried tranquillizers.

447. According to the 2006 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study parents in the United States talk to their children less about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs than about the dangers of abusing heroin, cocaine, “crack”, MDMA, cannabis or alcohol, although a significant percentage of parents consider the abuse of prescription drugs to be a growing problem. Subsequently, a large portion of adolescents associate no particular risk with the non-medical use of pain relievers such as Vicodin® or Oxycontin®.

448. Concerned with the increasing abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing internationally controlled substances, the Board has, for a number of years, called on the competent authorities of the United

States to investigate possible ways and means of preventing the advertisement of controlled substances to the general public, in conformity with the provisions of article 10, paragraph 2, of the 1971 Convention. In May 2008, a bill was introduced in the United States House of Representatives to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to drug and device advertising. The bill, once it becomes law, would establish limitations on advertising directed at potential consumers and would require the prominent display of the side effects of drugs in such advertisements. However, the Board notes that the bill would not prohibit the advertisement of controlled substances to the general public, as required by the provisions of article 10. Advertising through the United States media reaches consumers not only in the United States. Due to technological progress, such advertisements also reach the general public in all countries where such advertising is prohibited in line with article 10. The Board, therefore, reiterates its concern that direct-to-consumer advertising aimed at increasing the consumption of internationally controlled substances is not in line with article 10 of the 1971 Convention and may promote medically unjustified consumption of those substances in the United States, as well as in other countries.

449. In the United States, the abuse of prescription drugs has caused a significant number of deaths among drug abusers. According to the Florida Medical Examiners Commission, autopsies conducted in 2007 revealed that prescription drugs had caused death in three times as many cases as had all illicit drugs combined. The increase in the number of deaths caused by oxycodone was more than 2.5 times the increase in deaths caused by heroin. While legislation allowing prescription drug monitoring programmes has been adopted in 38 of the 50 states in the United States, Florida has still not adopted such legislation due to privacy concerns.

450. In the United States, methadone-related deaths and overdoses increased sharply (by 390 per cent) from 786 in 1999 to 3,849 in 2004, according to the most recent national-level data available. Data from states with a traditionally high number of methadone-related deaths suggest that that increasing trend has continued. The licit distribution of methadone to pharmacies, hospitals, teaching institutions and practitioners increased by nearly 500 per cent from 1999 to 2004.

451. The surge in the abuse of fentanyl in the United States, which resulted in the death of a large number of abusers, was reversed after a large clandestine laboratory manufacturing fentanyl in Mexico was dismantled in 2006. While the abuse of fentanyl has occurred periodically in the United States, the last large outbreak, which began in late 2005, was the most significant, geographically diverse and most long-lasting one. By mid-2007, the number of fentanyl-related deaths had decreased to the levels before 2005.

452. In 2007, the Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States initiated 1,736 criminal and complaint investigations targeting trafficking in controlled pharmaceuticals, including by Internet companies. The Drug Enforcement Administration issued immediate suspension orders to 10 Internet pharmacies operating in the State of Florida that had illegally distributed millions of dosage units of hydrocodone throughout the United States. The number of Internet pharmacies selling controlled prescription drugs increased by 70 per cent, from 342 in 2006 to 581 in 2007, the majority of them selling prescription drugs without the required prescription.

453. In Canada, diverted prescription drugs are mostly obtained from domestic sources. The abuse of oxycodone remains a cause for concern in Canada, and oxycodone continues to be smuggled out of Canada and into the United States. However, there is some indication that pharmaceuticals smuggled into Canada may be contributing to the supply of pharmaceuticals to the illicit market.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

454. Methamphetamine abuse remains a problem in Canada and traffickers continue to adulterate “ecstasy” and cannabis with methamphetamine in order to increase the illicit demand for methamphetamine. Most of the methamphetamine on the illicit market in Canada is supplied by laboratories in that country, which are increasingly being used as a source for illicit markets in other countries, including the United States. Significant seizures of methamphetamine of Canadian origin were effected in 2006 by authorities in Japan and New Zealand (see paragraph 755 below).

455. In the United States, the abuse of methamphetamine in 2007 was slightly less than in previous years: 0.2 per cent of the population are current abusers. There has been a steady decline in the

abuse of methamphetamine by youth at all age levels. The abuse of “crystal” methamphetamine (commonly called “ice”) among youth reached its lowest level since 1992.

456. Mexico continues to be the primary source of the methamphetamine trafficked in the United States. In 2007, Mexican authorities dismantled 26 clandestine laboratories for processing drugs, 9 of which were classified as methamphetamine “super laboratories” (that is, having the capacity to produce at least 10 pounds (4.54 kg) of methamphetamine per processing cycle).

457. Canada, traditionally an importer and consumer of MDMA, has become a major manufacturer and exporter of “ecstasy” (see also paragraphs 404 above and 755 below). The increased illicit manufacture and trafficking in MDMA in Canada is reflected in the unprecedented quantities of Canadian “ecstasy” seized in other countries, such as Australia and the United States. While the number of seized MDMA laboratories decreased slightly, the manufacturing capacity of the laboratories and their level of sophistication increased, indicating the involvement of organized criminal groups. The manufacture of all clandestine MDMA laboratories combined is estimated to exceed 2 million tablets per week. There is no requirement for the registration of tablet presses in Canada.

458. Total seizures of MDMA illicitly manufactured in Canada increased significantly in the United States, from 1.1 million doses in 2004 to 5.2 million in 2006. A significant proportion of the samples of seized MDMA (more than 50 per cent) contained methamphetamine, increasing the danger of the doses. The abuse of MDMA has increased among secondary school students: the annual prevalence of abuse of MDMA among students aged 17-18 is 4.5 per cent. That development may be related to the decline in the perceived risk and the disapproval of MDMA abuse. Considering that changes in attitudes often indicate an imminent change in abuse patterns, United States authorities are concerned that the number of initiates to MDMA abuse will increase.

459. As the smuggling of MDMA from Canada into the United States began to increase, the importance of European sources of MDMA decreased. In the United States, the illicit manufacture of MDMA within the country remains limited.

460. *Gamma*-hydroxybutyric acid (GHB) continues to be abused in Canada and is mostly supplied by clandestine laboratories in that country. However, small quantities of GHB are occasionally smuggled into the country.

461. In the United States, LSD and psilocybin, supplied by clandestine laboratories within the country, continue to be abused. The annual prevalence of LSD abuse among youth is low. Psilocybin is the hallucinogen most widely abused in that country.

#### *Precursors*

462. Organized criminal groups in Canada smuggle ephedrine, a precursor required for the manufacture of methamphetamine, from China and India into Canada. While the number of seizures of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories seized in Canada has continued to decline, the manufacturing capacity of those seized laboratories has increased. In response, in at least eight provinces in Canada, medications containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine have been removed from grocery and convenience stores and have been made available only at the counter in pharmacies. The illicit manufacture of MDMA in Canada is supported by the smuggling of large amounts of the precursor 3,4-MDP-2-P from China. The precursor *gamma*-butyrolactone (GBL), used in the illicit manufacture of GHB, is obtained from sources within Canada or outside the country via the Internet or the postal system.

463. In the Synthetic Drug Control Strategy of the United States, authorities in that country set the goal of reducing by the end of 2008 (using data for 2005 as a baseline) methamphetamine abuse by 15 per cent. The goal of reducing the number of incidents involving methamphetamine laboratories by 25 per cent was reached already in 2006, when the number of such incidents declined by 48 per cent. The significant decrease in the number of incidents involving such laboratories was attributed to the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005, which established stricter national controls over the sale of products containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine.

464. Drug trafficking groups in Mexico have responded to the strong restrictions on the import and

sale of precursors of methamphetamine in Mexico<sup>79</sup> by smuggling those precursors using new routes leading from China and India, importing non-restricted chemical derivatives instead of those precursors and using alternative manufacturing methods. That has ensured a stable level of illicitly manufactured and smuggled methamphetamine in the United States.

#### *Substances not under international control*

465. While the main transit countries used for smuggling khat into Canada remained the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, seizures of khat smuggled into Canada from other transit countries, such as France, Germany, Italy and the United States, increased slightly. In Canada, khat is mainly used by members of ethnic communities located throughout the country.

466. Ketamine continues to be abused in Canada, where it has gained popularity as a new “club drug”. Ketamine is not only abused for its hallucinogenic effects, but has also been found to be an active ingredient in seized MDMA tablets. In Canada, ketamine is either diverted from licit distribution channels in the country or is smuggled into the country, where it is abused or trans-shipped to the United States.

467. The over-the-counter cough and cold medicines abused in the United States mostly contain dextromethorphan. In 2007, the annual prevalence of abuse of those drugs was 4 per cent among students aged 13-14, 5.4 per cent among students aged 15-16 and 5.8 per cent among students aged 17-18. Students may not recognize the potential dangers of the abuse of dextromethorphan, as the drug is available in more than 140 cough and cold medications without prescription. Several states and metropolitan areas in the United States are concerned about the abuse of dextromethorphan by youth and young adults, as the number of poison control calls related to the abuse of dextromethorphan continues to increase.

468. The abuse of inhalants by youth has been rising in the United States since 2003. The highest annual prevalence of abuse of inhalants is among students aged 13-14: 8.3 per cent. United States authorities are

<sup>79</sup> See also *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2008* ... .



concerned about the decline in the perceived risk of abuse of inhalants. An average of 593,000 adolescents aged 12-17 use inhalants for the first time each year, the most frequently mentioned types of inhalants being glue, shoe polish, gasoline (petrol), lighter fluid and spray paint.

## South America

### 1. Major developments

469. In 2007, the total area of illicit coca bush cultivation increased in all three of the main countries in which coca bush is illicitly cultivated (Bolivia, Colombia and Peru) to 181,600 ha, 16 per cent more than in 2006. The potential illicit manufacture of cocaine in the region remained stable.

470. According to UNODC, in Colombia, despite the continuation of eradication efforts, illicit cultivation of coca bush increased by 27 per cent. Moderate increases, not exceeding 5 per cent, were noted in Bolivia and Peru. Colombia accounted for 55 per cent of the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in South America; that country was followed by Peru (29 per cent) and Bolivia (16 per cent).

471. The overall increase in illicit coca bush cultivation in the Andean subregion in 2007 was offset in part by decreased yields of coca leaf in some of the areas of cultivation. As a result, potential global manufacture of cocaine increased over the previous year by only 10 tons, to 994 tons. The Board is concerned that the recent growth in illicit coca bush cultivation in the subregion may lead to further increases in illicit cocaine manufacture.

472. The area of illicitly cultivated coca bush that was eradicated in the three main countries producing coca leaf in 2007 totalled 238,300 ha (5,500 ha more than in the past year): 153,100 ha were eradicated by aerial spraying and 85,200 ha by manual eradication. In Colombia alone, 220,000 ha of illicit coca bush were eradicated. Small areas under illicit coca bush cultivation were also eradicated in Ecuador.

473. International criminal groups continued to use the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as one of the main departure areas for illicit drug consignments leaving the region of South America. According to UNODC,

the smuggling of cocaine through that country has increased significantly since 2002.

474. South American countries participated in the Drug Treatment City Partnership initiative, focusing on the establishment of a network between cities in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Europe to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices regarding drug control policies. The objective of the initiative, which is being funded by the European Commission and executed by CICAD, is to contribute to the improvement of treatment and rehabilitation programmes for drug abusers and demand reduction programmes for different groups of people in the participating countries.

475. The Board appreciates the importance given by the Governments of South American countries to drug demand reduction programmes and preventive approaches in their national drug control strategies and policies. However, according to the latest Hemispheric Report of CICAD, in which progress in drug control was evaluated in countries in the western hemisphere in the period 2005-2006, the budget allocated by the Governments of some of those countries is insufficient to develop demand reduction activities.

476. In 2008, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay presented a study on drug use in the southern part of South America entitled "Guiding elements for public policy on drugs in the subregion", which was conducted in cooperation with UNODC and CICAD. As part of the study, for the first time, the same methodology was applied to determine different aspects of drug use among the general population (persons aged 15-64) in the region. According to the study, cannabis is the most abused drug in the countries surveyed. Past-year prevalence of cannabis abuse was 4.8 per cent, higher than the global average of 3.8 per cent.

477. Large quantities of precursor chemicals frequently used in the illicit manufacture of drugs continue to be seized in South America. For example, in 2007, Colombia seized 144 tons of potassium permanganate. The origin of seized chemicals often remains unknown. The Board reiterates its call to the Governments of countries in the region to urgently devise strategies to address the smuggling of precursor chemicals into areas in which cocaine is illicitly manufactured.

## 2. Regional cooperation

478. CICAD remains the main regional forum for coordinating drug control issues in the Americas. In 2007, a decade after the creation of MEM, CICAD presented the report entitled *Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) Achievements, 1997-2007*. The report summarizes the progress made by each country in the region, as well as advances in the region as a whole, regarding the development of policies and programmes to combat illicit drugs between 1997 and 2007. As regards strengthening institutions, the report highlights the importance of established national drug control authorities and drug observatories that assist Governments in implementing their national drug control strategies. In terms of prevention, it points to progress in developing minimum treatment standards and drug control programmes that target different segments of society. The report also reflects the progress made in reducing illicit crops and tackling the demand side, as well as in implementing drug control measures.

479. At the Seventeenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Quito from 15 to 19 October 2007, participants made recommendations on combating illicit cannabis cultivation and trafficking, money-laundering and trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants in the region. During the meeting, experts from the Netherlands held a training workshop on the detection and dismantling of clandestine laboratories manufacturing amphetamine-type stimulants.

480. The Government of Colombia hosted the Ibero-American Workshop on Drug Policies in the Local Context in Cartagena de Indias from 29 October to 2 November 2007. Workshop participants discussed experiences and best practices to increase the participation of subnational and local authorities in the planning and management of national drug control policies and activities.

481. Representatives of the drug control and judicial authorities of Mexico and Peru held a preparatory working meeting on coordinated action in fighting drugs in Peru on 29 October 2007. The authorities discussed issues concerning the harmonization of legal documents related to synthetic drugs and mechanisms for sharing experiences and knowledge regarding drug trafficking organizations.

482. The Tenth High-Level Specialized Dialogue on Drugs between the Andean Community and the European Union was held in Bogota on 1 and 2 November 2007. Representatives of Bolivia, Colombia and Peru presented their national strategies for alternative development and eradication of illicit crop cultivation, while the representative of Ecuador reported on preventive alternative development programmes implemented in the northern areas of that country along its borders with Colombia. According to the Andean Community, although cannabis continued to be the most abused drug in the subregion, the abuse of coca base was increasing steadily. The meeting concluded that measures related to demand reduction and drug abuse needed to be strengthened further.

483. On 8 and 9 November 2007, the Government of Uruguay hosted in Montevideo the Twelfth Meeting of the Specialized Drug Network of MERCOSUR Countries. The objective of the network is to promote activities and programmes of cooperation and prevention of drug abuse and treatment of drug abusers. The participants adopted the Declaration of the Presidents of MERCOSUR and Associated Countries, which stressed the importance of the shared responsibility of the countries in combating illicit drugs.

484. In July 2007, UNODC launched a project on law enforcement and intelligence cooperation against cocaine trafficking from Latin America to West Africa. The aim of the project is to stimulate cooperation between the national law enforcement agencies of countries in South America (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)), the Caribbean (Trinidad and Tobago) and West Africa (Cape Verde, Ghana, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Togo) by gathering and sharing drug-related intelligence (see paragraph 300 above).<sup>80</sup>

485. At a meeting of the Intelligence Sharing Working Group held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 13 and 14 November 2007, the participants, representing 22 countries and territories in Latin America and of 4 European Union member States, were informed of the above-mentioned UNODC project. The participants also reviewed recent drug trafficking routes leading from Latin America and the

<sup>80</sup> See *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2007...*, para. 299.

Caribbean through Africa and discussed the role of national forensic authorities in combating drug trafficking.

486. Chile hosted the Ninth Meeting of the Expert Group on Drug Demand Reduction in Santiago from 13 to 15 November 2007. The Meeting was attended by representatives of 22 countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The Meeting, which focused on issues related to the abuse of drugs in the work environment, concluded that drug abuse worsened the work environment, reduced overall production capacity and was a cause of increased work-related accidents and absence from work.

487. Corruption seriously affects many South American countries and reduces the impact of drug control efforts in the region. According to Transparency International's *Global Corruption Report 2007*, Chile and Uruguay are the only countries in the region with a corruption perceptions index of over 5.0. Countries that score under the index are considered to have a serious corruption problem. During the reporting period, South American countries launched a number of initiatives to address the problem. For example, 18 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were represented in the Regional Conference on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption held in La Paz in December 2007.

488. At a workshop held in Lima on 6 and 7 December 2007, Government representatives and experts from Bolivia, Colombia and Peru discussed their experiences in the field of alternative development and proposed guidelines to optimize the role of international cooperation in support of Government policies.

489. In July 2008, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, in cooperation with the European Union, launched a project to provide support to the Andean Community in the area of synthetic drugs, aimed at developing methodologies to obtain objective data on demand for and supply of synthetic drugs and their impact on society in the countries concerned. The data will help the Governments concerned to prepare their national strategies and programmes to combat trafficking in and abuse of synthetic drugs.

490. High-level representatives of 25 countries of Central America, the Caribbean and South America met in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 30 July to 1 August 2008 at the Regional Summit on the World Drug Problem, Security and Cooperation. Participants adopted the Cartagena Declaration, in which they emphasized the importance of a balanced approach to implementing drug supply and drug demand strategies. In the area of drug supply reduction, the Declaration highlighted the importance of preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals by using the internationally established control mechanisms. In the area of drug demand reduction, it called for further enhancement of prevention, education, treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration activities.

491. On 1 August 2008, the National Council for Control of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (CONSEP) of Ecuador and the National Commission for Development and Life without Drugs (DEVIDA) of Peru signed an agreement providing a framework for joint activities and cooperation in the areas of prevention, interdiction and sustainable alternative development, including preventive alternative development programmes.

### 3. National legislation, policy and action

492. In 2008, the Government of Bolivia initiated a study on coca leaf in Bolivia, the objective of which is to produce quantitative and qualitative data on the use, marketing and production of coca leaf in the country. The study is expected to be conducted over a period of 18 months. The Board hopes that the results of the study will assist the Governments of Bolivia and the other countries concerned in the implementation of the provisions of the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, in particular the provisions on the production and use of coca leaf.

493. The Brazilian authorities continued to participate in the Drug Abuse, HIV/AIDS and STD (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) Prevention Project, aimed at increasing access by the HIV/AIDS population to related health services and promoting prevention activities targeting vulnerable groups, including an estimated 193,000 persons who abuse drugs by injection. According to UNODC, the incidence of AIDS cases related to drug abuse by injection fell from 23.6 to 9.3 per cent among men and from 12.6 to 3.5 per cent among women between 1996 and 2006.

494. In November 2007, the Government of Colombia convened a national workshop in Bogota to examine procurement and distribution systems for opioid analgesics so as to facilitate patient access to those essential pain-relief medications in the country. The meeting was attended by representatives of the national regulatory authorities, and also of several international organizations, including WHO and the Pan American Health Organization. Later in 2008, the Government of Colombia adopted a resolution guaranteeing the availability of opioids 24 hours a day in at least one pharmacy in every department in the country.

495. In 2007, the Government of Peru promulgated a series of laws aimed at strengthening the prevention, investigation and prosecution of organized crime, as well as strengthening the control of precursor chemicals, including Decree No. 928, which criminalizes activities that impede the eradication of illicit crops. In 2008, the Government also promulgated a new civil asset forfeiture law, aimed at seizing illicit assets of drug cartels and of those involved in forms of organized crime other than drug trafficking. A similar civil asset forfeiture law has been submitted to the Constitutional Assembly in Ecuador for its adoption.

496. In 2008, the government of the region of Puno, Peru, passed a resolution declaring coca leaf a regional, cultural, medicinal and industrial heritage and a symbol of the Quechua-Aymara people and demanded a stop to forced eradication of coca bush in that part of the country. The Government of Peru referred the case to the Constitutional Court, which declared the resolution unconstitutional.

497. A number of countries in South America devote special attention to problematic drug users. In December 2007, the competent authorities of Paraguay published a national programme for treatment of problematic drug users, which gathers experiences from different national and international institutions and experts involved in drug abuse prevention programmes, including programmes for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers.

498. According to the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, over 180 airstrips used for drug trafficking were detected in that country in 2007. Ninety of those airstrips were destroyed during the law enforcement activities. Pursuant to the national drug control plan for the period 2008-2013, the Government has initiated a series of measures aimed at protecting

its territory and national air space from drug smuggling. Those measures include the destruction of non-authorized airstrips and the installation of a radar system for air traffic control, in particular in the areas of the country that are most affected by trafficking, such as the country's border with Colombia. In addition, the Government imposed restrictions on the use of airports for private flights. The drug control strategy also includes measures to reinforce the participation of the community in combating drugs, including in prevention of diversion of precursor chemicals, in cooperation with the chemical industry.

499. The Board notes that, in 2008, the Governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru participated in Operation "Ice Block", which focused on the monitoring of trade in precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants. The Board wishes to encourage the Governments of Latin American countries to remain vigilant with regard to shipments of precursor chemicals and to adopt further measures to enhance their controls.

#### **4. Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse**

##### *Narcotic drugs*

500. According to UNODC, the annual illicit production of cannabis in South America is estimated at about 10,000 tons, almost 25 per cent of global illicit production in 2006. Paraguay, whose illicit production of cannabis is estimated at 5,900 tons, is the main country producing cannabis in the region.

501. According to law enforcement agencies in South America, most illicit cannabis cultivation occurs in remote and inaccessible areas. The organized criminal groups established in the region take advantage of the lucrative cannabis trafficking operations and are often involved in other types of criminal activity.

502. Brazil continues to report the largest seizures of cannabis in South America. In 2007, Brazilian authorities seized almost 200 tons of that narcotic drug. During 2007, Colombia seized 183.2 tons of cannabis, the largest amount of the substance seized in the country in the previous 10 years. In Peru, seizures of cannabis remained relatively stable between 2004 and 2007, ranging from 1.1 to 1.5 tons. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, cannabis seizures have

gradually increased since 2003; in 2007, authorities in that country seized over 25 tons of cannabis.

503. According to the first comparative study on drug abuse among the general population in six South American countries, the highest lifetime prevalence of abuse of cannabis, 27.1 per cent, was found in Chile and the lowest, 4.0 per cent, in Peru. In Chile, the past-year prevalence of cannabis abuse was significantly lower (7.5 per cent) and was comparable with that found in Argentina (7.2 per cent). According to UNODC, in Uruguay, cannabis abuse, which had grown rather modestly in the 1990s, increased noticeably in the period 2001-2007: the annual prevalence of cannabis abuse among the general population quadrupled, from 1.3 per cent in 2001 to 5.3 per cent in that country in 2007.

504. According to UNODC, in Bolivia, the cultivation of coca bush increased slightly for the second consecutive year, amounting to 28,900 ha. The illicit cultivation was concentrated in the Yungas and Chapare regions, which accounted for 69 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively, of the total illicit coca bush cultivation in the country. In most of the Chapare region, farmers cultivate coca bush on an area averaging one *cato* (0.16 ha), the largest area allowed according to an agreement reached between the Government and coca grower's organizations in that region in 2004. In September 2008, the Government of Bolivia signed an agreement with coca bush growers of the Yungas allowing them to cultivate coca bush in that area. The Board expects that the Government, when addressing the existing cultivation of coca bush in the Yungas, will comply with its obligations under the treaties.

505. According to the provisions of the 1961 Convention, all coca bush cultivation is illicit unless it is destined for medical, scientific or specific industrial purposes. As that continues not to be the case in Bolivia, the Board urges the Government, when addressing the existing cultivation of coca bush in the country, to bear in mind the above and to do its utmost to comply with its obligations under the 1961 Convention.

506. A study of coca leaf yield conducted in the Yungas region in 2006 confirmed that farmers cultivating coca bush employed sophisticated agricultural techniques, such as the use of agrochemicals and mechanical irrigation, to improve

the yield. In 2007, the Government of Bolivia reported the manual eradication of over 6,200 ha of coca bush, 24 per cent more than in 2006. Ninety-five per cent of that eradication was carried out in the Chapare region. In Bolivia, potential cocaine manufacture in 2007 increased by 9 per cent over the previous year, to 104 tons.

507. Colombia continues to be the world's largest producer of coca leaf. In 2007, the illicit cultivation of coca bush increased there by 27 per cent, to 99,000 ha. Illicit coca bush cultivation increased above all in low-yield areas, such as the Pacific region, which yields about 2,600 kg of fresh coca leaf per hectare each year. In regions in which production is high, such as Meta-Guaviare, in which the coca leaf yield is about four times higher than in the Pacific region, the area under illicit coca bush cultivation has decreased slightly. As a result, in 2007, potential cocaine manufacture in Colombia did not increase; it amounted to 600 tons, 10 tons less than in 2006.

508. In 2007, about 67,000 ha of illicitly cultivated coca bush were eradicated manually in Colombia and a further 153,000 ha were subject to aerial spraying. The forced manual eradication was carried out by mobile eradication groups with the assistance of the police and the army. Those eradication efforts were hampered by violent attacks by armed and criminal groups using firearms and anti-personnel mines to protect illicit crops.

509. According to UNODC the cultivation of coca bush in Peru increased in 2007 by 4 per cent, to 53,700 ha. For three years, such cultivation increased in the areas bordering Bolivia. In 2007, estimated cocaine manufacture in Peru was 290 tons, and Peru accounted for 29 per cent of potential global manufacture of cocaine, a level 4 per cent higher than in 2006 and the highest level since 1999.

510. According to DEVIDA, there has been an alarming increase since 2004 in attacks by armed groups and drug traffickers against workers eradicating illicit coca bush, in particular in areas without permanent police protection. In mid-2008, the Federation of Coca Farmers in Peru initiated a strike and demanded the suspension of the eradication of coca crops in the Upper Huallaga area. In 2007, eradication in Peru decreased by 5 per cent to 12,072 ha, of which 8 per cent was eradicated voluntarily and 92 per cent was eradicated by force. In

the first half of 2008, a further 5,100 ha of illicitly cultivated coca bush were eradicated.

511. The world's main cocaine trafficking routes continue to run from countries in the Andean subregion, notably Colombia, to the United States. In the past few years, the amount of cocaine from South America smuggled via West Africa into Europe has increased dramatically (see also paragraphs 242-246 above).

512. According to Europol, drug trafficking networks in South America cooperate in temporary joint ventures established on an ad hoc basis, making use of specialists in all sectors of their criminal activities, ranging from chemists for processing the cocaine, skippers, pilots and trained couriers for the transportation of drugs to financial experts for the laundering of their criminal proceeds. The South American trafficking organizations also exploit the unstable social and economic situation and the weak drug control mechanisms in some African countries. They have established bases in West Africa and have set up a variety of businesses to justify their presence in that subregion and to conceal their criminal activities and their cooperation with African criminal groups.

513. UNODC estimates that the global rate of interception of cocaine consignments is currently about 40 per cent. In 2006, the South American countries accounted for 45 per cent of cocaine seizures worldwide. Large seizures continue to be concentrated in a few countries. In 2007, cocaine seizures increased in Bolivia, Brazil and Colombia and decreased in Ecuador and Peru.

514. Drug seizures in Bolivia have followed an upward trend that started several years ago. In 2007, seizures of cocaine hydrochloride doubled over the level of the previous year, reaching 2.9 tons, and seizures of cocaine base tripled compared with 2002, amounting to 14.9 tons. In accordance with the national drug control strategy for the period 2007-2010, which provides for further measures to combat drug trafficking, drug control operations in Bolivia have been further reinforced. In the first half of 2008, seizures of cocaine increased by one third compared with the same period in 2007.

515. In 2007, seizures of cocaine hydrochloride and cocaine base in Colombia increased slightly, to

181 tons, accounting for one fourth of potential manufacture of cocaine in the country. The Colombian authorities estimate that of the illicit drugs leaving their country about 80 per cent is smuggled by sea through the Mexico-Central American corridor, the Euro-African corridor and the Caribbean corridor, in that order. Most of the drugs are trafficked by sea on board speedboats capable of carrying a load of between 1 and 1.5 tons. The use of submersible vessels for drug trafficking, which had been noted in the past, was reported in 2007 as well. More illicit drugs are trafficked by sea than by air. Drugs are smuggled across borders by air (on board aircraft) rather than by land.

516. After an exceptionally large amount of cocaine was seized in Peru in 2005 and 2006, the amount seized in 2007 decreased to 8.1 tons, about half the amount seized in the previous year. The decrease in the amount of cocaine seized was offset in part by an increase in the amount of coca paste seized, which amounted to 6.3 tons. According to UNODC, about 5 per cent of potential manufacture of cocaine hydrochloride in Peru is destined for use in that country. The remainder is smuggled into North America and, increasingly, Europe. Approximately 40 per cent of that amount is smuggled by maritime routes and the rest mainly over the borders with Ecuador, Chile and Brazil, in that order.

517. In Brazil, the competent national authorities seized a total of 18.2 tons of cocaine, including coca paste, in 2007. In Argentina, the smuggling of coca leaves from the southern part of Bolivia has increased. During 2007, Argentine police at the Bolivian border seized 44 tons of coca leaves and 3.3 tons of cocaine.

518. Ecuador is affected by not only drug trafficking, but also drug stockpiling, the diversion of precursor chemicals and to some extent illicit drug production. In 2007, more than 25 tons of cocaine base and cocaine hydrochloride were seized. According to the Ecuadorian authorities, drug trafficking and money-laundering are accompanied by an increased level of other forms of serious crime, including robbery, extortion and kidnapping, which destabilize the national economy and undermine security.

519. Between 2002 and 2007, the authorities of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela seized an average of 35 tons of cocaine each year. In 2007, the amount of cocaine seized in that country totalled 31.8 tons.

European countries, in particular Spain, have been identified as the main countries of destination for some 70 per cent of the drugs smuggled through the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The number of persons arrested in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in connection with drug trafficking increased from 809 to 4,150 between 2006 and 2007.

520. Although Guyana and Suriname are not associated with significant production of illicit drugs, both countries are used as trans-shipment areas for a significant amount of cocaine en route to Europe and North America, partly through Africa.

521. In Colombia, traditional use of coca leaf is marginal and statistically insignificant: virtually the entire coca leaf production is destined for illicit cocaine manufacture. It is estimated that Colombian farmers process half of their coca leaf production into cocaine base to gain a higher income per hectare of cultivated area. The last step in the process of manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride is usually carried out by traffickers in clandestine cocaine laboratories. Although several countries in South America regularly report on the number of laboratories manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride that have been destroyed on their territory, most of the destroyed laboratories are reported by Colombia. Of the 2,500 clandestine laboratories destroyed in Colombia in 2007, 11 per cent were processing cocaine hydrochloride and the rest were processing coca paste or cocaine base.

522. The number of laboratories illicitly processing coca leaf identified in Bolivia has gradually increased in recent years. Between 2000 and 2007, the number of destroyed coca maceration pits increased from 790 to 6,525 and the number of laboratories destroyed for processing coca paste and cocaine increased from 628 to 4,087. The Bolivian authorities destroyed over 4,000 laboratories for processing coca paste and cocaine in 2007 and 2,000 such laboratories in the first half of 2008.

523. The destruction of 16 laboratories manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride in Peru in 2007, in addition to over 600 laboratories processing coca paste and cocaine base, confirms the capacity to manufacture cocaine hydrochloride in the country. In the first half of 2008, 12 more cocaine hydrochloride laboratories were destroyed in Peru. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 13 laboratories illicitly manufacturing

cocaine were dismantled in 2007 in the states of Zulia and Táchira, close to the Colombian border.

524. In the past few years, most South American countries have reported increasing abuse of cocaine, probably a spillover effect of the drug trafficking throughout the region. Several countries in the southern part of South America previously used as transit areas by drug traffickers have been used more and more for drug processing. That shift has resulted in the increased availability of inexpensive semi-refined cocaine derivatives, such as cocaine base and coca paste, in the local markets. Changes in drug abuse patterns, including increased abuse of *paco* (coca paste), were reported, for example, by Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay.

525. The first comparative study on drug use in six countries of South America has shown that the average past-year prevalence of cocaine abuse in those countries was 1.4 per cent, which is 0.3 per cent higher than the global average. The prevalence of cocaine abuse ranged from 0.1 to 2.7 per cent. The prevalence was highest in Argentina, followed by Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. Argentina reported the lowest age of initiation for the abuse of cocaine among the surveyed countries: 25 per cent of cocaine abusers in Argentina are 16 years old or younger. Between 42 and 46 per cent of cocaine abusers in Argentina, Ecuador and Peru showed signs of drug dependency. The higher level of cocaine abuse has resulted in increased demand in the region for treatment for cocaine abuse. According to UNODC, treatment for cocaine abuse accounted for 48 per cent of all drug-related treatment in 2005; that figure increased to 54 per cent in 2006.

526. Illicit cultivation of opium poppy in South America accounts for less than 1 per cent of illicit opium poppy cultivation worldwide. In Colombia, the main country of illicit cultivation of opium poppy in the region, such cultivation has declined 10-fold during the past decade. In 2007, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in Colombia was about 700 ha, or 1.4 tons of potential heroin manufacture. In the past, opium poppy was eradicated on small cultivation sites in Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). In 2007, Peruvian authorities eradicated a total of 28 ha of opium poppy.

527. In 2007, two heroin laboratories were destroyed in Colombia. During 2007, the largest seizures of

heroin in South America occurred in Colombia (over 500 kg), followed by Ecuador, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Brazil. There are indications that heroin found in South America could also be coming from West Asia. In 2008, the Government of Pakistan reported that traffickers were exchanging heroin for cocaine in that country.

528. According to the latest UNODC data, the annual prevalence of abuse of opiates in South America is 0.3 per cent, which is 0.1 per cent lower than the global average. The highest annual prevalence of abuse of opiates in the region was found in Brazil (0.5 per cent) and the lowest (less than 0.1 per cent) was recorded in Bolivia and Suriname. Most of the reported abuse of opiates in the region involves the abuse of opioids diverted from licit sources. The Board notes with concern that, contrary to the situation in other South American countries, in Uruguay the relative number of females who abuse drugs by injection is high; consequently, there is an increasing number of cases of HIV infection among pregnant women who abuse drugs by injection and among newborn babies of women who abused drugs by injection during pregnancy.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

529. Several countries in South America reported an increase in the non-medical use of psychotropic substances, in particular sedatives and tranquillizers, in the past year. Those countries, including Argentina, expressed their concern at the increased abuse of so-called “date rape drugs”, which are often administered by criminals to victims of sexual assault or other types of crime. Use of such drugs, in particular in combination with alcohol, may result in rapid loss of resistance, impaired judgement and amnesia. GHB, flunitrazepam and ketamine (a substance not under international control) are among the substances most often used by criminals for such purposes.

530. In 2007, the National Secretariat on Drug Policies (SENAD) of Brazil initiated a study on the use of alcohol and other psychoactive substances, including cannabis, cocaine, amphetamines and benzodiazepines, in road traffic accidents in Brazil. The aim of the study is to measure the impact of the abuse of those psychoactive substances on private and professional drivers in the country.

531. In Argentina, the lifetime prevalence of abuse of stimulants and tranquillizers without medical prescription by people aged 15-64 was 1.6 and 3.6 per cent, respectively. According to the latest study relating drug abuse to emergency room admissions in Argentina, anxiolytics, sedatives and tranquillizers were together the third most frequently used psychoactive substances (after alcohol and tobacco) among patients treated in emergency rooms in public hospitals. Although some South American countries, including Argentina, Chile and Peru, reported increased abuse of MDMA (commonly known as “ecstasy”) in 2006, seizures of the substance continued to be low in the region.

#### *Precursors*

532. Large-scale diversion of precursor chemicals continued to be reported in South America. In 2007, over 14,000 tons of chemicals were reported to have been seized in the region. Acetone and sulphuric acid were the most frequently seized precursor chemicals under international control. Between 2000 and 2007, global seizures of potassium permanganate, the key chemical used in the illicit manufacture of cocaine, totalled about 850 tons. Over 90 per cent of the seizures of potassium permanganate were made in Colombia. The Board is concerned that traffickers have found ways to circumvent international trade controls, for example, by illicitly producing potassium permanganate in Colombia, by diverting the substance from domestic trade and by smuggling within the region. The Board reiterates its request to the Governments of all countries in the Americas to urgently devise strategies to address the smuggling of precursor chemicals into the area in which cocaine is illicitly manufactured, utilizing, where appropriate, the experiences gained in the framework of Project Cohesion in targeting acetic anhydride in Central and West Asia.

533. The Board notes that imports of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in some South American countries, including Argentina, have significantly increased in the past several years. The Board is concerned that the increased imports may indicate increased interest among drug trafficking organizations in obtaining the key chemicals to meet the needs of the clandestine methamphetamine laboratories in countries in North America, in particular Mexico, as well as in South America. In 2007, seizures of pharmaceutical



preparations containing pseudoephedrine were reported in Peru. In July 2008, the Argentine authorities identified a case involving the diversion of ephedrine on a large scale and destroyed a methamphetamine laboratory in their country. The Board requests the Governments of all countries in South America to continue monitoring the licit trade in precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants, including ephedrine and pseudoephedrine traded as raw material or in the form of pharmaceutical preparations, in order to prevent the diversion of those precursors from licit channels.

## C. Asia

### East and South-East Asia

#### 1. Major developments

534. The Board noted the large-scale smuggling of illicit drugs into East and South-East Asia from outside the region, mainly from Canada and countries in West Asia. In 2007, Japanese law enforcement authorities reported a number of seizures involving consignments of drugs, including cannabis, methamphetamine and MDMA, hidden in sea and air freight originating in Canada. In October 2007, China reported its largest single seizure of drugs from West Asia, and law enforcement authorities in the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang seized heroin and cannabis that had been concealed in a shipment originating in Kazakhstan and destined for Canada. Also in 2007, Thailand reported that the amount of heroin from West Asia exceeded the amount from the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand. In March and April 2008, customs officers at Hong Kong International Airport seized a significant amount of heroin purportedly originating in West Asia, part of which was seized from passengers arriving from the Philippines and part of which was seized from passengers arriving from India and the United Arab Emirates.

535. The Board notes that Governments of States in East and South-East Asia have continued to strengthen national drug control legislation and improved the provision of treatment and rehabilitation services for drug abusers. In particular, China has adopted a law that includes provisions on voluntary community-based treatment and rehabilitation for drug abusers.

536. The unsafe practice of sharing needles among drug abusers remains one of the main causes of HIV transmission in many countries in South-East Asia. The Australian Agency for International Development launched the HIV/AIDS Asia Regional Program in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in April 2008, to help stop the spread of HIV/AIDS in South-East Asia through advocacy, knowledge-sharing and strategic partnerships. The Program, which is expected to last eight years, involves Governments, regional agencies, civil society organizations and drug abuse prevention networks in controlling the spread of HIV transmission associated with drug abuse in Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

537. National authorities of countries in East and South-East Asia continued to report significant seizures of drugs smuggled through the postal system. Large amounts of benzodiazepines and cannabis were seized, but the most often seized drug was methamphetamine. In particular, in 2007, it was noted that illicit drugs from Thailand were being smuggled through the postal system into the United Kingdom. Traffickers also smuggled drugs from Canada, China and the United States into the Republic of Korea through the postal system.

538. While heroin continued to be the most widely abused drug in China (including in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR)), Malaysia and Viet Nam, a significant increase in the abuse of non-controlled substances was also reported. Ketamine was reported to be the most commonly abused psychotropic substance in China (including in the Hong Kong SAR). In the Hong Kong SAR of China, ketamine is the drug of choice for 73 per cent of drug abusers under the age of 21.

#### 2. Regional cooperation

539. The Board notes with satisfaction that the countries in East and South-East Asia continued to cooperate in the field of drug control through bilateral, multilateral and regional organizations.

540. During the thirteenth Summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), held in Singapore in November 2007, ASEAN member States (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam)