

III. Analysis of the world situation

A. Africa

1. Major developments

292. Drug trafficking in Africa has gained international attention in recent years. This is demonstrated by the fact that the Security Council has repeatedly discussed the issue of the smuggling of cocaine through countries in West Africa, notably Guinea-Bissau, in particular the threats posed by such smuggling to regional stability and the possible impact on international security. In July 2009, the Executive Director of UNODC presented to the Council a report on transnational trafficking and the rule of law in West Africa. In November 2009, the Council welcomed the progress in implementing the West Africa Coast Initiative (involving the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), UNODC, other United Nations entities and INTERPOL) and urged the Government of Guinea-Bissau to take action within the framework of the ECOWAS plan of action against drug trafficking and organized crime. Also in November 2009, the Executive Director addressed the Security Council on the problem of drug trafficking in Guinea-Bissau and elsewhere in West Africa and was subsequently requested to provide the Council with updates, starting in December 2009, on progress made by West African States in dealing with drug-related organized crime.

293. Since 2004, drug trafficking organizations have been increasingly using West Africa as a transit area for smuggling large amounts of cocaine from South America into Europe and, to a lesser extent, North America, taking advantage of the fact that certain problems in West African countries, such as conflict, lack of rule of law, corruption and poverty, have made those countries more vulnerable. Most of the cocaine transiting West Africa is transported across the Atlantic on large ships and then off-loaded to smaller vessels along the West African coast; from there, the cocaine is smuggled northwards by a variety of means, including boats, land vehicles and air couriers. While until 2007, the amount of cocaine seized, either on the high seas en route to West Africa or in the subregion itself, increased markedly every year, there has been a decline in the number of seizures of cocaine in West Africa since 2008. The decline in the number of

cocaine seizures might suggest that the smuggling of that drug through the subregion is decreasing, as a result of action taken by African Governments with the support of the international community. Despite that development, the smuggling of cocaine through West Africa continues to be a serious problem that is contributing to an increase in the abuse of cocaine in the subregion.

294. Africa continues to be vulnerable to the diversion of precursor chemicals, notably ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. While most of the ephedrine and pseudoephedrine smuggled through Africa into Central America and North America, for use in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine, some illicit methamphetamine manufacture and abuse are also occurring in countries in Africa, in particular in South Africa. In the past few years, a number of large suspicious shipments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine have been stopped on their way to African countries, including Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Togo, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. Since 2008, the smuggling of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine through Africa has markedly decreased, which might be attributable to, inter alia, action taken by some African countries to better control the importation of those precursor chemicals. However, the seizure in Guinea in July 2009 of large amounts of chemicals and equipment suspected of being intended for use in the processing of illicit synthetic drugs such as MDMA (“ecstasy”) shows that the region remains at risk of being used by traffickers for the diversion of precursor chemicals and underscores the urgent need for African countries to improve their national mechanisms for precursor control, with the support of the international community.

295. The continued availability of illicitly manufactured or diverted pharmaceutical products containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances on unregulated markets presents a serious public health problem in many African countries. Because of weaknesses in national systems for the control of the licit manufacture and distribution of pharmaceutical products, internationally controlled substances can be obtained without prescription or on unregulated

markets in most countries in Africa. The Board urges the Governments concerned to design and implement policies to effectively prevent diversion of internationally controlled substances from domestic distribution channels into unregulated markets, in conformity with Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 51/13, entitled "Responding to the threat posed by the distribution of internationally controlled drugs on the unregulated market".

2. Regional cooperation

296. Under the African Union's current Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention, the African Union Commission has strengthened its cooperation in the areas of drug control and crime prevention with relevant international organizations, such as INTERPOL, the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and UNODC, and with the European Commission within the framework of the Africa-European Union Strategic Partnership.

297. The regional economic communities in Africa are to play a key role in the implementation of the African Union Plan of Action. In that regard, particular progress has been made by the member States of ECOWAS, which adopted a subregional action plan on drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse in 2008 and, at the mid-year summit meeting of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government held in Abuja in June 2009, endorsed an operational plan to combat drug trafficking and related organized crime, and a mechanism elaborated by the ECOWAS Commission for monitoring and evaluation, including by reporting progress at the level of the Security Council. The Board notes that the Security Council has called on the international community to continue to support the implementation of the ECOWAS Plan of Action and the Guinea-Bissau operational plan.

298. In April 2009, UNODC, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Office for West Africa and INTERPOL launched a joint programme to build national and regional law enforcement capacity including in the areas of drug interdiction, forensics, intelligence, border management, money-laundering and criminal justice. One of the key elements of the programme is the establishment of specialized units to counter

transnational crime, initially in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In 2009, West African countries benefited from two regional training activities on identifying and securing physical evidence at the scene of a crime. The activities were conducted in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria and sponsored by the INTERPOL Providing of Operational Assistance, Services and Infrastructure Support to African Police Forces (OASIS Africa) programme.

299. In order to strengthen transatlantic cooperation between Latin American and West African drug law enforcement agencies, ECOWAS member States were invited to attend the Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held on Isla Margarita, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in September 2009. Drug law enforcement agencies of Latin American and West African countries subsequently signed a memorandum of understanding to promote the joint investigation of specific cases at a meeting organized by UNODC in Bogota in November 2009.

300. The Board notes the activities undertaken by UNODC to assist the countries of West Africa in their efforts to combat drug trafficking. For instance, UNODC launched in 2007 a project on cooperation in the areas of law enforcement and intelligence to combat the smuggling of cocaine from Latin America into West Africa, with the aim of establishing interregional law enforcement and exchange of intelligence in the area of drug interdiction. In addition, transatlantic cooperation is to be promoted under the ongoing UNODC-World Customs Organization Container Control Programme and the Airport Communication Project recently developed by UNODC. Within the framework of South-South cooperation, Brazil, through UNODC, has been assisting Guinea-Bissau in the implementation of a drug control programme in Guinea-Bissau by providing specialized training to the Judicial Police of that country and by assisting in the establishment of a national police academy.

301. The Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa, was held in Windhoek in October 2009. The participants examined the current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation in countering drug trafficking and formulated strategies to improve cooperation and mutual support in drug interdiction efforts.

302. In July 2009, INTERPOL convened its twentieth African Regional Conference in Cairo. Some 160 law enforcement officials from 40 countries and 8 international organizations took part in the Conference, which addressed, inter alia, drug trafficking, maritime piracy and counterfeit medicines. INTERPOL cooperates with African law enforcement authorities in combating drug trafficking, notably through its projects White Flow, COCAF and Proteus, and provides assistance in the investigation of major drug seizures, such as the cocaine seizures effected in 2009 in Angola (57 kg), Ghana (71 kg) and South Africa (270 kg).

303. A regional workshop for drug law enforcement officers was held in Tripoli in December 2008 as follow-up to the Tripoli Action Plan on Countering Drug Trafficking and Money-Laundering using the Mail, which had been adopted in November 2007. The workshop participants adopted the Tripoli Recommendations, a set of recommendations to further strengthen communication and cooperation with regard to drug-related matters between drug law enforcement agencies operating in the region. The Tripoli Recommendations have been communicated to the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior for further follow-up.

304. In February 2009, a regional expert meeting, convened jointly by the Government of Kenya and UNODC in Nairobi, elaborated a programme for East Africa for the period 2010-2012, the aim of which is to promote the rule of law, health and human security in that subregion.

305. The Board notes that steps have been taken by Governments of African countries and relevant international organizations, such as INTERPOL and WHO, to strengthen cooperation in combating the problem of counterfeit goods, notably counterfeit medical and health products, in the region. In November 2008, some 150 representatives of police, customs and drug regulatory authorities of 26 East and Southern African countries took part in training workshops on intellectual property crime; the workshops were co-hosted by INTERPOL and the Kenyan police in Nairobi. In December 2008, the third annual meeting of the WHO International Medical Products Anti-Counterfeiting Taskforce (IMPACT) was held in Hammamet, Tunisia. The objective of the meeting, which was supported by INTERPOL and

which brought together 100 representatives from 40 countries, was to raise awareness of the dangers of counterfeit medical products and to counter their manufacture and distribution.

306. In May 2009, the Governments of the Niger and Nigeria signed a protocol of cooperation in combating drug trafficking, money-laundering and related fraudulent practices.

307. African Governments continue to take efforts to counter money-laundering in cooperation with the relevant subregional groups, notably the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG) and the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA). In Namibia, to counter money-laundering legislation (the Financial Intelligence Act) entered into force in May 2009, while Senegal recently adopted legislation aimed at combating the financing of terrorism, supplementing its existing legislation against money-laundering. Malawi and Senegal were admitted as members of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units in May 2009. The Board encourages the countries of Central Africa to take appropriate measures to make the Action Group against Money Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC) fully operational. The Board also encourages the Governments of Angola, Burundi, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar and Rwanda to join ESAAMLG as soon as possible.

3. National legislation, policy and action

308. A number of African countries have taken steps to strengthen their national drug control legislation and to improve their mechanisms for administrative monitoring and control in implementation of the international drug control treaties.

309. The Government of Ethiopia has adopted a national drug control master plan and is now in the process of establishing an inter-ministerial body to facilitate implementation of that plan.

310. The Government of Kenya has introduced a drug control component in its system for the performance appraisal of civil servants, who are now required to carry out a drug control activity as one of their duties. This measure is expected to contribute significantly to advocacy, training and drug abuse prevention in

several sectors, including in schools and the workplace.

311. A number of African countries have established or are in the process of establishing integrated national programmes to combat drug trafficking, drug abuse and associated transnational organized crime. The programmes, which have been developed by UNODC in partnership with national authorities, tackle a variety of issues such as capacity-building in law enforcement, drug supply and demand reduction, treatment for drug abusers, criminal justice, regional cooperation and activities to counter money-laundering, and are currently being implemented in Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Mali. Integrated programmes have been developed for Mauritania, the Niger and Togo, while those for Benin, Burkina Faso and Ghana will be prepared later in 2009.

312. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency of Nigeria achieved a significant increase in drug seizures in 2007 and 2008. The total quantity of cannabis seized in 2008 exceeded 335 tons, an increase of 62 per cent compared with 2007, when a total of 210 tons was seized. Also in 2008, a total of 530 kg of psychotropic substances and 365 kg of cocaine were seized. Most of the cocaine was seized at the main international airports in the country.

313. In 2009, the law enforcement authorities of Lesotho and Nigeria conducted successful operations to combat the problem of counterfeit medical products. In a police operation in Lesotho conducted with the support of INTERPOL in June 2009, large amounts of counterfeit and illicit medical products were seized, including products subject to medical prescription that had been illegally repackaged for sale on the streets. In Nigeria, similar activities were conducted by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control in May 2009. The Agency continues to enforce a zero-tolerance policy with regard to counterfeit drugs and foods marketed under counterfeit brand names, in view of the serious danger posed to public health by such counterfeit products.

314. In South Africa, the Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act, 2008, was adopted in April 2008. The Act regulates the establishment, registration and management of treatment centres and inpatient, outpatient and community-based services for drug abusers and defines the mandate of the Central Drug Authority, whose responsibility is to monitor and

oversee the implementation of the national drug control master plan. Moreover, in view of the large-scale diversion of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine for use in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in South Africa, those substances have now been placed under stricter control in that country. Specifically, the Government of South Africa has amended the national drug control legislation, placing the substances under the same national controls as psychotropic substances, which are subject to import and export authorization and medical prescription (see paragraph 324 below).

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

315. Cannabis production, trafficking and abuse have been reported in practically all countries in Africa. Cannabis herb continues to be the illicit drug most frequently abused in most countries in the region. The production of cannabis resin is concentrated in countries in North Africa, mainly Morocco. Seizure data indicate that most of the cannabis resin produced in that country is smuggled into Europe. The drug is also smuggled into or through North African and sub-Saharan countries. In 2008, as in previous years, Morocco seized more cannabis resin than any other African country, reporting 114 tons as the total quantity seized. The Government of Morocco estimates that the area under illicit cannabis cultivation in that country has been significantly reduced, from 134,000 ha in 2003 to 60,000 ha in 2008, which represents a decrease of 55 per cent. The Government also estimates that the total amount of illicitly produced cannabis resin fell from 3,070 tons in 2003 to 877 tons in 2008, a decrease of 71 per cent. Eradication measures in Morocco have been supplemented by alternative livelihood programmes in rural areas in the country's northern provinces and local awareness-raising campaigns. The Board encourages the Government of Morocco to continue its efforts against illicit cannabis cultivation.

316. Cannabis herb is illicitly produced in all subregions of Africa. In North Africa, it is produced on a large scale in Egypt and Morocco. In West and Central Africa, cannabis plants are cultivated for commercial purposes in Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Cannabis plants are also cultivated in most countries of East Africa, especially in Comoros, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Uganda and

the United Republic of Tanzania, while in Southern Africa, cannabis plants are cultivated on a significant scale in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa and Swaziland. While cannabis herb is usually trafficked within Africa for local consumption a proportion is smuggled into other regions, mostly Europe.

317. Large consignments of cannabis herb are seized in Africa, which in 2007 accounted for 11 per cent of global seizures of that illicit drug. The amount of cannabis herb seized in Morocco has increased significantly in recent years, from 116 tons in 2005 to 222 tons in 2008. Large consignments of the drug have been seized in several countries in East Africa. The number of drug seizures and related arrests at the international airports of Nairobi and Addis Ababa continued to rise in 2008. The United Republic of Tanzania continues to report the largest seizures of cannabis herb in East Africa. Most of the cannabis herb produced in West Africa is trafficked and abused within the subregion. In 2008, several tons of cannabis herb seized in two separate incidents in Europe were traced to Ghana, where the Ghanaian authorities were able to identify and arrest the persons involved in supplying and smuggling those consignments.

318. There have been no reports of coca bush cultivation or cocaine manufacture in Africa. Since 2005, however, West Africa has increasingly been used as a transit area for cocaine consignments bound for Europe and, to a lesser extent, North America. That is evidenced by large seizures of cocaine, effected either on the high seas en route to West Africa or in the subregion itself, which have totalled several tons per year, according to UNODC data. The cocaine seized in Africa originates mainly in Colombia and Peru and, in many cases, has been smuggled through Brazil and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Since 2004, at least 1,400 couriers on commercial flights from West Africa to Europe have been arrested for carrying cocaine.

319. Since 2008, Africa appears to have declined in importance as a transit area for cocaine trafficking, as reflected in the reduced number and size of seizures effected in 2008 and the first half of 2009. In 2008, there was a sharp decrease in seizures in Europe of cocaine originating in Africa. No large seizures of cocaine that could be traced to Africa were reported in 2009. That decline may be attributed in part to

increased international drug control efforts in the region. However, according to UNODC data, cocaine worth an estimated 1 billion United States dollars continues to be trafficked through the region each year, and West African distribution networks in Europe appear to have remained intact. That concern is supported by evidence uncovered in Guinea in July 2009 suggesting that some degree of processing of cocaine may have taken place in that country.

320. Some cocaine is smuggled into countries in Southern Africa, notably South Africa, to be abused locally or to be smuggled into other countries. Cocaine from South America is also smuggled through the United Arab Emirates into Zimbabwe. Mozambique has emerged as an area where cocaine enters into Africa to be smuggled through South Africa into the United Kingdom and other European countries. The subregion of East Africa continues to be used as a transit area for cocaine consignments destined for illicit markets in Europe.

321. Opium poppy cultivation in Africa is confined to Algeria and the Sinai peninsula in Egypt and is thought to be limited in scale in both countries. In Algeria, about 80,000 opium poppy plants are eradicated every year. The opium produced is abused locally, and there is no evidence of it being used for the manufacture of heroin.

322. Heroin continues to enter Africa mainly through the countries in East Africa. Countries in that subregion have been identified as both countries of destination of heroin consignments and transit countries; moreover, trafficking in and abuse of heroin have recently increased. Most of the heroin seized had been transported by passengers on commercial flights arriving at or departing from the international airports of Addis Ababa and Nairobi; both airports provide flight connections between West Africa and heroin-manufacturing countries in South-West and South-East Asia. From West Africa, heroin is frequently smuggled into Europe and North America in operations often organized by West African criminal organizations. Heroin smuggled by sea enters East Africa through the ports of Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania. In addition, postal and courier services are increasingly being used to smuggle heroin.

323. Heroin traffickers in Africa also use land routes, taking advantage of the porous borders and weak

border control of many countries in the region. There is evidence of an increase in the smuggling of heroin to the islands of the Indian Ocean, particularly Mauritius. Opiates from India and Pakistan are smuggled into Mozambique and then South Africa and from South Africa into Europe, as well as into East African countries, notably Mauritius and Seychelles. Mauritius now has one of the highest levels of opiate abuse in Africa, a spillover effect of the heroin trafficking in that country. While the number and size of heroin seizures reported in West Africa each year remain very small, organized crime networks based in the subregion are playing a key role in supplying heroin to countries throughout the world and are involved in both importing heroin and street-level dealing in heroin. Côte d'Ivoire is considered a significant transit country for heroin trafficking.

Psychotropic substances

324. The illicit manufacture of psychotropic substances, notably methaqualone (Mandrax), methamphetamine, methcathinone and MDMA ("ecstasy") remains limited to South Africa and some countries in Southern and East Africa, where those substances are also abused. About 30 laboratories illicitly manufacturing drugs, mainly methamphetamine and methcathinone, are dismantled every year in South Africa. The precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of those drugs, namely ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, are imported legally into South Africa on a large scale. However, a proportion of those imports are diverted from domestic distribution channels for use in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants. In an effort to stem such diversion, the Government of South Africa has recently tightened national measures to control ephedrine and pseudoephedrine (see paragraph 314 above).

325. Preparations containing buprenorphine continue to be smuggled into and abused in Mauritius. In 2008, customs officers in Mauritius seized 21,727 tablets containing buprenorphine (Subutex) from a passenger arriving from France by air.

326. In many African countries, the availability of a wide range of preparations containing psychotropic substances on unregulated markets continues to be a cause for concern. The psychotropic substances in question include benzodiazepines (notably diazepam,

clonazepam, lorazepam, clorazepate), phenobarbital, slimming tablets and analgesics. Such preparations are often counterfeit products. Large seizures of such tablets are reported in the region each year.

Precursor chemicals

327. In recent years, Africa has become an area used for the diversion of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, often in the form of pharmaceutical preparations, mainly for use in illicit methamphetamine manufacture in Central and North America. However, analysis of trafficking trends indicates that the diversion of those substances in Africa is decreasing. While a total of 75 tons of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine was prevented from being diverted through African countries in 2007, only 22 tons were stopped in 2008 and none was stopped in the first nine months of 2009. In 2008, customs officers in Côte d'Ivoire seized a total of 159 kg of ephedrine from a vehicle arriving from Ghana. It appears that most illicit shipments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are being smuggled into Central America and North America through Europe, as had been the case in earlier years. Meanwhile there has been a decline of up to 40 per cent in licit exports of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine to Africa since 2008.

328. In addition, Africa has been used for the diversion of acetic anhydride (a key chemical used in the illicit manufacture of heroin) into illicit channels. For instance, in December 2008, a shipment of 15 tons of acetic anhydride was stopped en route from Italy to Egypt, and two shipments of acetic anhydride totalling 36 tons were suspended in early 2009 while being transported from India and Iran (Islamic Republic of) to Djibouti. There is also concern regarding the threat posed by transnational organized criminal groups involved in the manufacture of and trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants and psychotropic substances. For instance, in January 2009, a planned export of 2 kg of ergotamine (a precursor chemical that can be used in the illicit manufacture of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD)) from the Czech Republic to Guinea-Bissau was stopped when the competent authorities of Guinea-Bissau failed to respond to a request by the Board to confirm the legitimacy of the transaction. In July 2009, significant quantities of chemicals suspected of being intended for use in the illicit manufacture of drugs were seized in Conakry. Most of those chemicals were solvents commonly used

for licit industrial purposes but which could be used in the illicit manufacture of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine or methaqualone. Large amounts of sassafras oil and 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone (3,4-MDP-2-P) — precursor chemicals used in the synthesis of MDMA (“ecstasy”) — and laboratory equipment were discovered together with other chemicals indicating that those chemicals were intended for use in the illicit manufacture of drugs.

329. In countries throughout Africa, there is a demonstrated need among law enforcement authorities for exchanges of experts, awareness-raising with regard to precursor control and training initiatives, including training in forensic skills. There is also a need to improve the reporting of precursor-related data to the Board and to enhance cooperation in the area of investigations. The Board therefore calls upon the Governments of all African countries and the regional economic communities to improve their national mechanisms for precursor control and encourages the regional economic communities in Africa to consider a coordinated response in that regard.

Substances not under international control

330. Khat, which is not currently under international control, continues to be cultivated in some countries of East Africa and in parts of the Arabian Peninsula and is commonly chewed as a stimulant in those areas. Although khat consumption is associated with health risks and may have detrimental social consequences, the prohibition of khat in the region is limited to some countries in East Africa, such as Eritrea, Madagascar, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania. As a result of an increase in the smuggling of khat into countries in Europe and the Americas, khat has also been prohibited in a number of countries in Europe and in Canada and the United States.

5. Abuse and treatment

331. Most African States continue to lack proper systems for monitoring drug abuse and are therefore unable to gather sufficient data on the extent and patterns of drug abuse or to carry out accurate assessments of prevalence rates. The only systematic monitoring of drug abuse in the region is taking place in South Africa, through the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU), a

drug abuse monitoring system based on demand for treatment. Consequently, neither the success of prevention campaigns nor the need for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers can be properly assessed. Most national estimates of the prevalence of drug abuse are based only on rapid assessments of drug abuse among specific groups within the drug-abusing population and a limited number of school surveys. The cross-country comparability of national drug abuse estimates is therefore severely limited in Africa.

332. Furthermore, in most countries in Africa, national health-care systems are not able to meet needs of the population with regard to the treatment and rehabilitation of drug-dependent persons. National medical facilities for such treatment and rehabilitation are often seriously inadequate or simply non-existent. Frequently, only small numbers of drug-dependent persons can be accommodated in the psychiatric wards of general hospitals. Treatment and rehabilitation of drug-dependent persons in Africa often depend on assistance provided by relevant international organizations, such as WHO and UNODC, and non-governmental organizations. The Board therefore encourages the Governments of African countries to undertake systematic assessments of the extent of drug abuse on their territory and to give priority to the development of programmes for drug abuse prevention and demand reduction, particularly programmes targeting young people, including out-of-school youth. The Board also urges those Governments to provide adequate support to existing treatment services and medical structures in order to ensure proper treatment for drug-dependent persons, to provide the support necessary to establish and maintain suitable rehabilitation facilities for such persons and to evaluate the quality of the treatment.

333. Cannabis is generally regarded as the most problematic illicit drug in Africa, where an estimated 8 per cent of the population use cannabis and where that drug accounts for an estimated 64 per cent of the demand for treatment of drug abuse. Available information suggests that cannabis abuse is continuing to increase in Africa, albeit at a slower pace than previously. The widespread abuse of cannabis by children is of particular concern; in some countries, even children 7-10 years old are reported to have abused cannabis.

334. Cocaine abuse appears to be rising in Africa, particularly along emerging cocaine trafficking routes in West and Southern Africa. Data on treatment for drug abuse in South Africa show a strong increase in cocaine-related treatment between 1998 and 2008. In 2008, demand for treatment for cocaine abuse fluctuated between 11 and 25 per cent of total treatment demand in different provinces of that country.

335. Heroin abuse also appears to be increasing in Africa. Heroin is the drug most commonly abused by problem drug abusers in countries such as Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. Rwanda and Seychelles have also reported an increase in the abuse of heroin. In South Africa, heroin abusers frequently use a mixture of poor-quality heroin and cocaine commonly called “sugar”, which is administered mostly by smoking. Drug abuse by injection is still limited in South Africa and other countries in the region. UNODC recently estimated the number of persons in Africa who have abused opiates at least once in the past year at between 1 million and 2.8 million or between 0.2 and 0.5 per cent of the population 15-64 years of age.

336. Between 1.4 million and 4 million persons in Africa are estimated to have abused amphetamine-type stimulants at least once over the past 12 months. Nigeria and South Africa have reported the highest annual prevalence rates of abuse of such stimulants. Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Sierra Leone and several other African countries have also reported the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants; however, no reliable quantitative estimates have been available in recent years. The abuse of methaqualone and methamphetamine remains of concern in South Africa; the abuse of methamphetamine occurs predominantly in and around Cape Town. The abuse of over-the-counter and prescription medicines, such as slimming tablets, analgesics and benzodiazepines (including diazepam and flunitrazepam) continues to be a problem in many African countries.

337. The Board notes that the international network of drug dependence treatment and rehabilitation resource centres (Treatnet) was recently launched jointly by UNODC and WHO to improve the quality of treatment for drug-dependent persons through cooperation, information exchange and the empowerment of

selected resource centres in all regions of the world. In Africa, Cape Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia are currently participating in Treatnet. In addition, capacity-building initiatives have been launched in Algeria, Egypt and Morocco to provide a comprehensive response to drug abuse and HIV/AIDS, including community outreach services for drug abusers, drug abuse prevention services and treatment services for drug abusers, including prison inmates. In East Africa, an opiate substitution programme is being implemented in Mauritius, while treatment for drug abusers is being provided in Kenya, Seychelles and Uganda. In 2009, a programme for opioid substitution therapy was launched in Morocco.

B. Americas

Central America and the Caribbean

1. Major developments

338. The region of Central America and the Caribbean continues to be used as a major trans-shipment area for consignments of drugs originating in South America and destined for North America and Europe. Impunity, corruption and weak institutions undermine drug control efforts and the rule of law in the region, despite attempts to reform judicial systems. Drug trafficking activities are often carried out under the protection of local gangs (*maras*) operating in border areas, especially in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. There are indications that criminal associations have been established between members of Mexican drug cartels and gang members. Furthermore, the region is becoming used for trafficking in precursor chemicals. Despite new regulations banning ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in several countries, the region continues to be used as a trans-shipment area for the smuggling of precursor chemicals into Mexico, where the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants continues. The Board notes that precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants are increasingly being trafficked in the form of pharmaceutical preparations.

339. Drug trafficking by sea remains a major problem in countries in Central America and the Caribbean. In El Salvador, for example, 85 per cent of the trafficked cocaine is transported along sea routes. Furthermore,

light aircraft, operating from clandestine airstrips and landing in remote areas, are increasingly being used to transport cocaine. Drug traffickers are increasingly using stolen or falsified aircraft registration numbers when transporting illicit consignments by air. The Board encourages Governments to monitor the sale and movement of light aircraft more closely, step up airspace security and strengthen control of privately owned landing fields.

340. Drug trafficking has become a major security threat and is contributing to an increase in drug abuse. The number of homicides linked to organized crime has risen in areas where criminal groups fight to gain control of local drug distribution. The increase in criminal acts, such as robbery and kidnappings, may be linked to the increasing availability of drugs, which in turn may be attributable to the fact that drug traffickers are frequently paid in drugs rather than cash. Moreover, major tourist areas in the Caribbean continue to be a hub for drug abuse. There are indications that the abuse of psychotropic substances, particularly benzodiazepines, is increasing in the region. In view of the lack of up-to-date data on drug abuse and the treatment of drug abusers in the region, the Board strongly encourages all Central American and Caribbean States to improve their data collection systems, monitor trends in drug abuse and take appropriate prevention measures. The Board also invites Governments of countries in the region and the Pan American Health Organization to work together on training programmes for health authorities in order to ensure the proper prescription and adequate control of psychotropic substances and other controlled drugs.

2. Regional cooperation

341. The Board welcomes the recommendation of the Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Tegucigalpa in October 2008, that the Governments of countries in the region should take further steps to ensure that national legislation and administrative procedures are adequate and flexible enough to control internationally scheduled precursors and their substitute chemicals and thus prevent the establishment of the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants in the region. The Board has taken note of the recommendation by Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) experts on chemical substances and pharmaceutical products that a guide be

prepared on mechanisms to assess the national requirements for substances frequently misused in the illicit manufacture of drugs.

342. The Ministerial Conference on Illicit Drug Trafficking, Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism as Challenges for Security and Development in the Caribbean, organized by UNODC, was held in Santo Domingo in February 2009. In the Political Declaration on Combating Illicit Trafficking, Organized Crime, Terrorism and Other Serious Crime in the Caribbean, which was adopted at that Conference, Caribbean States pledged to continue to accord priority to the prevention of organized crime and drug trafficking and to implement related actions. They also undertook to conduct public awareness campaigns on drug abuse prevention, improve their law enforcement capacity and strengthen judicial cooperation. The Board highlights the important role of UNODC in the subregion and welcomes efforts to convene ministerial meetings and foster regional cooperation.

343. CICAD continued to organize regional cooperation activities in Central America and the Caribbean. In particular, CICAD conducted training and organized workshops in Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Panama to strengthen those countries' capacity to investigate, prevent and prosecute drug-related crime. Within CICAD, the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism continues to promote the exchange of information among countries in the region, to stimulate the adoption of joint measures and the application of inter-American legislation and to facilitate the provision of technical assistance to Governments at their request.

344. In March 2009, a meeting on standards of care at treatment and rehabilitation facilities for substance abusers was held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, under the auspices of CICAD and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The meeting established the basis for the development of common subregional guidelines for standardized procedures to be followed by professionals working at facilities for the treatment and care of drug abusers. The guidelines are expected to be finalized by 2010. The Board welcomes this initiative and encourages States to establish a harmonized regional system for epidemiological surveillance to detect and diagnose disease and illness linked to drug addiction.

345. Under the Drug Treatment City Partnership initiative, which is implemented by CICAD and funded by the European Union Commission, European, Latin American and Caribbean cities continued to cooperate in developing policies on drug demand reduction at the local level, and seminars and forums were organized in several countries of Central America and the Caribbean, such as Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.

346. In March 2009, the European Union launched a project entitled "Prevention of the diversion of drug precursors in the Latin American and Caribbean region" (PRELAC). The objectives of the project are to strengthen the capacity of national authorities responsible for precursor control and to improve communication and cooperation between countries through greater exchange of information on national drug control systems and trends in the diversion of precursor chemicals in the region.

347. On 24 April 2009, the Vice-Presidents of Belize, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama gathered together in Antigua, Guatemala, to discuss mechanisms for combating organized crime, drug trafficking, corruption, human rights violations and money-laundering. The Vice-Presidents agreed to establish a regional technical secretariat tasked with strengthening existing regional mechanisms in order to tackle those issues and increase transparency in public administration.

348. The fifth annual international Anti-Gang Conference was held in San Salvador in April 2009. More than 300 security experts from more than 12 countries gathered to establish strategies for combating the gang phenomenon and its expansion into the illicit traffic in drugs and arms. The participants agreed to implement a number of comprehensive initiatives, including prevention and intervention programmes.

349. A ministerial meeting was held in Managua in June 2009 under the auspices of the Central American Integration System (SICA) and UNODC. Ministers from Belize, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama declared their strong commitment to the fight against drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism and the financing of such crime. In the political declaration on illicit drug trafficking, transnational organized crime

and terrorism as challenges to security and development in Central America, the ministers emphasized the need to improve the prevention of drug abuse and the treatment of drug abusers and to strengthen the prevention and control of organized crime. The Board hopes that the political declaration will translate into effective regional cooperation in combating organized crime and drug trafficking.

3. National legislation, policy and action

350. The Government of Costa Rica launched a national drug control plan for the period 2008-2012, establishing a national policy on drug abuse prevention. The plan also targets vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities and farmers, whose livelihood depends on illicit cannabis cultivation.

351. In March 2009, the Attorney-General of the Dominican Republic established a national directorate for the prosecution of drug trafficking and complex crime. The role of the directorate is to support prosecutors leading investigations on drug-related crime by coordinating the activities of the relevant State institutions. The directorate is also responsible for developing institutional policies to combat and prevent drug trafficking and for coordinating training activities for investigative authorities.

352. The citizens' security council of the Dominican Republic, chaired by the President of that country, carries out investigations to identify officials involved in organized crime. In February 2009, the council reported the incarceration of 22 members of the National Police and three members of the National Drug Control Directorate for having links to organized crime.

353. In 2009, El Salvador issued a regulation revoking its new ban on ephedra, pseudoephedrine and ephedrine and establishing that ephedrine may continue to be sold subject to certain conditions, with the exception of injectable preparations containing ephedrine, such preparations being subject to special control. In order to continue to monitor the movement of preparations containing ephedrine, a list of enterprises and institutions acquiring and maintaining stocks of such preparations and the quantities acquired and stored is to be maintained and monitored. The Board notes that this change will affect precursor control efforts in Central America and the Caribbean and encourages the Government of El Salvador to

continue its efforts to strengthen the control of ephedra, pseudoephedrine and ephedrine.

354. In February 2009, the Government of Guatemala, following steps taken by Governments of countries in Central America and the Caribbean to ban ephedrine and pseudoephedrine as part of efforts to combat the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, imposed a nationwide blanket ban on pseudoephedrine. The Guatemalan authorities established 15 April 2009 as the deadline by which pharmacies were required to use up their stocks of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine.

355. In June 2009, the Government of Guatemala launched a programme entitled "Safe Schools" to prevent drug abuse and gang activity among schoolchildren. The plan includes the installation of surveillance equipment in schools and education for families on drug abuse prevention. Guatemala has also initiated a programme to evaluate standards for the treatment of drug abusers. The objective of the programme is to collect information on treatment institutions and their patients in order to standardize procedures for the medical treatment of drug abusers.

356. A new police force has been established in Guatemala with the assistance of the United States. The new body, called the counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism air intervention force, will focus on combating drug trafficking, particularly in the north-western and southern parts of the country.

357. In February 2009, the Government of Honduras issued a regulation prohibiting the import, export, possession, synthesis, use, manufacture, sale, storage, distribution and transportation of pseudoephedrine. The regulation entered into force immediately following its official publication.

358. The Government of Honduras has implemented drug abuse prevention programmes for primary and secondary school students and conducted workshops on drug abuse prevention for new students at the National University of Honduras as part of a project that the Government plans to expand to include other universities.

359. In December 2008, Nicaragua introduced new measures for the control of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. Under the measures, the acquisition and use of those substances are prohibited, except in the manufacture of pharmaceutical injections and in

research. The import and distribution of, or trade in, ephedrine are also prohibited.

360. On 17 June 2009, the President of Panama issued a decree aimed at eliminating barriers to the availability of and access to opioids for medical purposes, including those used in the treatment of pain. The decree recognizes the need for opioids in the treatment of pain in persons suffering from cancer or other conditions. Until the decree was enacted, opioids could be prescribed only by oncologists and anaesthesiologists.

361. Panama joined the Container Control Programme, which is coordinated by the World Customs Organization and UNODC. The programme is designed to assist port authorities in modernizing control techniques for the detection of illicit shipments, including illicit shipments of drugs and precursor chemicals, without disrupting licit commerce. The Board welcomes the opening by UNODC of a regional office in Panama, since the geographical location of that country makes it a major transit area for illicit shipments of drugs, precursor chemicals and weapons.

362. In December 2008, Panama issued a list of substances subject to national control. The list includes all 22 substances listed in Tables I and II of the 1988 Convention and certain substances included in the INCB limited international special surveillance list of non-scheduled substances. The substances included in the national list will be subject to strict trade, import and export controls. Companies engaged in their handling or trade must be registered, and a licence is required in order to trade in those substances.

363. In Trinidad and Tobago, officials and law enforcement personnel from the ministries of energy and energy industries, finance, health, national security and trade and industry received training in how to raise public awareness of the illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of synthetic drugs and the diversion of precursor chemicals and in how to identify such drugs and precursors.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

364. Jamaica continues to be a major producer and exporter of cannabis in the Caribbean, despite the efforts of its law enforcement agencies. In 2008,

Jamaican authorities stepped up eradication programmes and operations to combat drug trafficking, targeting major drug production areas, as a result of which 35,507 kg of cannabis herb were seized and street prices for cannabis herb increased.

365. Cannabis plants are also cultivated in other Caribbean countries, such as the Dominican Republic and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, where the cannabis produced is destined mostly for local markets. In 2008, authorities of the Dominican Republic reported a considerable decrease in cannabis trafficking in that country, a total of 379 kg having been seized in that year. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, however, an increase in cannabis trafficking was noted in 2008, over the course of which a total of 47 kg of cannabis was seized.

366. Illicit cannabis cultivation has decreased slightly in Honduras, where an estimated 102 ha of cannabis plants were illicitly cultivated in 2008. The ministries of security and defence of Honduras have carried out joint crop eradication operations. Both eradication and drought in illicit cultivation areas have caused the price of cannabis to increase by 40 per cent. In 2008, a total of 424 kg of cannabis was seized, half of which had been destined for Mexico and half for local markets.

367. Cannabis cultivation and trafficking appears to be decreasing in other countries in the region. In 2008, Cuba registered its lowest amount of drugs seized in 14 years. During that year, Cuban authorities seized 916 kg of cannabis, almost half the amount seized during 2007. In Costa Rica, a total of 1,397,449 cannabis plants were seized in 2008, representing a decrease of almost 50 per cent compared with 2007.

368. The authorities of Guatemala reported a decrease in illicit cannabis cultivation and trafficking in that country, particularly in the areas of Petén and San Marcos, which lie along the country's border with Mexico. Some 11 million cannabis plants and 709 kg of cannabis herb were seized in Guatemala in 2008.

369. Cocaine trafficking in Guatemala remained at the same level as in previous years, during 2008. A total of 2,200 kg of cocaine was seized, of which 80 per cent originated in Colombia and the remaining 20 per cent in Bolivia. Data obtained as the result of seizure operations indicate that in Guatemala, cocaine is trafficked mainly by sea using speedboats.

370. In 2008, the law enforcement authorities of Costa Rica seized 16,582 kg of cocaine, approximately half the amount seized in 2007. A marginal increase in drug trafficking by land and sea was reported in that country. The number of cases of trafficking by air registered in 2008 decreased by 26 per cent compared with the figure for 2007.

371. There is evidence that Belize is becoming a major trans-shipment area for cocaine consignments from Colombia destined for illicit markets to the north. Belizean authorities continue to find abandoned boats and aircraft suspected of having been used in criminal activity. The Board welcomes the fact that the Government of Belize has officially requested technical assistance from UNODC in order to fully implement its national security strategy.

372. Cocaine continues to be trafficked in large quantities in Nicaragua. Cocaine shipments enter Nicaragua through the southern part of the country, to be stored in clandestine warehouses along the coastal areas before being moved out of the country towards final destinations in North America and Europe. While the majority of cocaine seizures in 2007 occurred on the Pacific coast, trafficking organizations appear to have shifted their illicit activities to the Atlantic region, where most seizures took place in 2008.

373. The quantity of cocaine seized in El Salvador increased from 39 kg in 2005 to 108 kg in 2006 to 4,074 kg in 2007. That figure fell to 1,354 kg in 2008. The authorities in El Salvador have increased police operations and checks along highways and at borders, ports and the El Salvador International Airport. All of the cocaine seized in El Salvador originates in Colombia, and most of it is destined for the United States or countries in Europe, the remainder (some 10 per cent) being destined for local markets.

374. The number of incidents of cocaine trafficking by air in Honduras has increased. To date in 2009, several light aircraft, most of which were identified by their Venezuelan registration numbers and Venezuelan flag, have landed illegally or crashed on Honduran territory. For example, in May 2009, a light aircraft bearing a Venezuelan flag and operated by Colombian nationals crashed in the department of Islas de la Bahía. Approximately 1,647 kg of cocaine was seized at the scene of the crash.

375. There has also been an increase in drug trafficking by air in Haiti. The number of light aircraft landing on clandestine airfields has increased over the past three years. Haiti is used as a trans-shipment area for drug consignments bound for the Dominican Republic and Bahamas en route to North America and Europe. Cocaine from South America reaches Haiti mainly by air or via that country's border with the Dominican Republic or the southern Haitian coastline.

376. The Dominican Republic remains a major trans-shipment area for cocaine originating in Colombia, although Dominican authorities reported a decrease in cocaine trafficking in 2008, having seized a total of 2,723 kg of the drug in that year.

377. Jamaica appears to be gaining importance as a trans-shipment area for South American cocaine bound for the United States of America and the United Kingdom. In 2008, Jamaican authorities seized 266 kg of cocaine, almost three times the amount seized in 2007. In Jamaica, drugs are trafficked by local criminal groups, some of which are linked to Colombian or Haitian criminal organizations.

378. Cocaine is also trafficked in other Caribbean countries, but on a smaller scale. A total of 21.6 kg of cocaine was seized in Trinidad and Tobago in 2008, all of it having been bound for the United Kingdom and detected at Crown Point International Airport. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, a total of 3 kg was seized in 56 incidents. Authorities of that country noted a decrease in the number of cocaine trafficking incidents, believed to be the result of increased surveillance along the coastline.

379. Levels of opium poppy cultivation and heroin trafficking in Guatemala are significant. While cannabis cultivation and trafficking have diminished and cocaine trafficking remains essentially at the same level in that country, there is a rising trend in trafficking in opium and heroin, which the Guatemalan authorities attribute to the establishment in Guatemala of an armed group known as Los Zetas, which is linked to the Mexican Gulf Cartel.

380. In 2008, the Government of Guatemala eradicated almost 300 million opium poppy plants and seized 10 kg of heroin. In February 2009, it eradicated 596 fields of opium poppy plants, covering 739 ha, in the department of San Marcos during an operation conducted jointly with the United States authorities.

The number of opium poppy plants destroyed during that operation alone accounted for more than 60 per cent of the total number eradicated during 2008.

381. There was a significant increase in the number of cases involving heroin trafficking through the Dominican Republic in 2008, during which a total of 120 kg was seized. The largest heroin consignments were seized at airports, where the drug was concealed in luggage. All of the heroin seized had originated in Colombia and had been bound for the United States.

382. In February 2009, Costa Rican authorities informed the Board of the seizure of a laboratory where they had found a large amount of pharmaceutical preparations and cocaine hydrochloride. The preparations were in the form of tablets containing oxycodone, hydrocodone and codeine. The drugs were purportedly intended for sale over the Internet. The Board has been warning Governments of the dangers posed by illegal Internet pharmacies since 2006. The Board wishes to emphasize the importance of activating regional cooperation systems for the control of Internet pharmacies.

Psychotropic substances

383. MDMA ("ecstasy") continues to be trafficked in the Caribbean, particularly in tourist areas. In 2008, authorities of the Dominican Republic reported having seized 17,885 "ecstasy" tablets, 88 per cent of which originated in the Netherlands and was destined for local consumption. In 2008, Costa Rican authorities seized 342 "ecstasy" tablets, a significant decrease compared with 2007, when 19,021 tablets were seized.

384. There appears to have been a resurgence of LSD trafficking in Central America. Costa Rica reported its first four seizures of the drug, amounting to 117 doses, since 2001.

Precursors

385. Incidents of trafficking in pseudoephedrine and ephedrine have been reported in Guatemala, where 990,300 tablets of pseudoephedrine were seized in 2008. In February 2009, the Government of Guatemala adopted a new regulation to control the movement of both substances in that country. Guatemalan law enforcement agencies seized 3,900,000 pseudoephedrine capsules in February 2009

and a shipment of 17 million tablets of the substance in June 2009.

386. Honduras reported the seizure of a total of 2,000 kg of pseudoephedrine in 2008. All of the shipments seized had been bound for Mexico. Seizures of pseudoephedrine in tablet form have continued in 2009. In April 2009, Honduran authorities reported having seized a record amount of pharmaceutical preparations containing that substance in a consignment of more than 2 million tablets found in a private residence. The shipment had reportedly been imported from Bangladesh and had been addressed to a fictitious pharmacy in Tegucigalpa.

387. In 2008, El Salvador reported the seizure of 157,926 tablets, 219,065 capsules, 11,620 bottles and 1,078 envelopes containing pseudoephedrine, as well as the seizure of 3 kg of ephedrine. In the same year, the Dominican Republic seized 14 kg of pseudoephedrine and almost 1 million tablets of pharmaceutical preparations containing that substance, while Belize reported having seized more than 10 million such tablets.

5. Abuse and treatment

388. In Guatemala, the drug most commonly abused is cannabis, followed by cocaine and psychotropic substances. During 2008, Guatemalan authorities registered an increase in the use of heroin and cocaine. The number of Guatemalan nationals deported from Mexico and the United States has increased considerably over the past five years, and the drug abuse problem among that returning population is contributing to an increase in drug abuse in Guatemala. The increase in heroin abuse in particular is attributed to those returning migrants.

389. In 2008, a total of 3,500 people in Guatemala received treatment for drug abuse. Most of the patients were treated for cocaine addiction. The average age of the patients was 22.

390. In 2008, the Government of El Salvador conducted its second national survey on drug abuse prevalence among primary and secondary school students in cities with a population of more than 30,000. The preliminary results of the survey showed that the lifetime prevalence rate of cannabis abuse among persons aged 13-17 was 5.5 per cent. The second most abused drug type was the benzodiazepines

group (prevalence rate: 2.8 per cent), followed by inhalants (2.7 per cent).

391. In 2008, the Anti-Drugs Foundation of El Salvador (FUNDASALVA) treated 263 patients for drug abuse, 60 per cent of whom were first-time patients who were treated for cannabis and cocaine abuse.

392. In 2008, the Government of Honduras estimated the annual prevalence rate for the abuse of drugs among persons aged 13-25 in that country's Central District to be 1.1 per cent for cannabis abuse, 1 per cent for cocaine abuse and 2.7 per cent for the abuse of sedatives and tranquillizers.

393. There are indications that drug abuse is increasing in Nicaragua, in particular in the Atlantic region, where the increase in drug trafficking has led to increased availability of drugs. The Board invites the Government of Nicaragua to conduct an assessment of the drug abuse situation in the country and to take appropriate measures to remedy the situation.

394. The drug most commonly abused in Jamaica is cannabis, followed by cocaine. In 2008, the Government of Jamaica reported a slight increase in the abuse of those drugs. The most recent national assessment of drug abuse prevalence among the general population was carried out in 2001, and that among youth in 2006. The Board therefore encourages the Government of Jamaica to assess the extent of drug abuse in that country in order to develop a prevention strategy and prevent further increases.

395. In 2008, the Dominican Republic, with support of CICAD and the National Drug Council, conducted a drug use survey among the school population (students aged 12-18). Anxiolytics and hypnotics (mostly benzodiazepines) accounted for the highest lifetime prevalence rate (12.8 per cent). Abuse of stimulants (containing amphetamine and caffeine) accounted for the second highest lifetime prevalence rate (9.1 per cent). Forty per cent of the students who reported having abused medications containing such substances obtained the medications from their homes. The lifetime prevalence rate of cannabis abuse was estimated at 1.7 per cent and that of cocaine use at 0.8 per cent. The survey also revealed that approximately half of the students had never attended courses on drug abuse prevention. The Board invites the Government of the Dominican Republic to take

appropriate action with regard to its drug abuse prevention programmes.

North America

1. Major developments

396. The United States continues to be the world's largest market for illicit drugs and a major destination of illicit drug consignments. Except for cannabis and methamphetamine, illicit drugs are not produced domestically but are largely smuggled into the United States. Cannabis remains the most commonly abused drug. It is encouraging, however, that the abuse of cannabis and other illicit drugs among youth is declining in the United States. One matter of concern is the fact that in the United States, according to the latest national survey on drug abuse, the prevalence of abuse of prescription drugs containing controlled substances continues to be high and that such drugs are now among the most abused types of drug in the country, second only to cannabis.

397. In addition to being used as a major transit area for illicit drug consignments, Mexico is experiencing increasing problems related to the abuse of cocaine and other drugs. The level of drug-related violence in the country remains high. Between 2007 and 2008, the death toll doubled. Drug cartels, in addition to fighting each other, are violently resisting efforts of the Government to counter drug trafficking and organized crime. Anti-corruption measures and large-scale law enforcement operations in Mexico that include the deployment of military troops have resulted in the disruption of drug trafficking operations throughout North America and the arrest of a number of high-level drug traffickers. The Board recognizes the vigorous measures taken by the Government of Mexico to combat illicit drug production and trafficking.

398. Canada remains one of the primary countries supplying MDMA ("ecstasy") to illicit markets in North America and in other regions; it is also a source country of high-potency cannabis. One positive development is the decline in the abuse of drugs, in particular the abuse of cannabis, among adults and youth in Canada.

399. Organized criminal groups have maintained and expanded their control over drug trafficking operations in North America; that represents a major challenge to

the countries in the region. Drug trafficking organizations based in Mexico predominate in illicit drug production, trafficking and distribution in North America. They have expanded their control to cover the entire supply chain for illicit drugs, shipping illicit drugs from South America and distributing them in the United States. They are particularly involved in the smuggling and distribution of cocaine and heroin and the illicit cultivation of and trafficking in cannabis. In addition, organized criminal groups are engaged in the illicit cultivation of opium poppy and, albeit to a diminishing extent, the manufacture of and trafficking in methamphetamine. Drug trafficking organizations based in Canada are involved in the illicit production of and trafficking in high-potency cannabis and the manufacture of methamphetamine for the illicit markets in Canada and the United States. Violent gangs affiliated with drug trafficking organizations are largely in control of the distribution of illicit drugs at the street level in the United States and are increasing their position in the distribution of illicit drugs at the wholesale level.

400. While the consumption and cultivation of cannabis, except for scientific purposes, are illegal activities according to federal law in the United States, several states have enacted laws that provide for the "medical use" of cannabis.⁴¹ The control measures applied in those states for the cultivation of cannabis plants and the production, distribution and use of cannabis fall short of the control requirements laid down in the 1961 Convention. The Board is deeply concerned that those insufficient control provisions have contributed substantially to the increase in illicit cultivation and abuse of cannabis in the United States. In addition, that development sends a wrong message to other countries. The Board welcomes the reaffirmation by the Government of the United States that cannabis continues to be considered a dangerous drug. The Government has also underscored that it is the responsibility of the Food and Drug Administration to approve all medicines in the United States. The Board notes with appreciation that the Government, following new guidelines on prosecution, which stipulate that activities should not focus on individuals who comply with "medical" cannabis regulations in states, has confirmed that it has no intention to legalize

⁴¹ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2008 ...*, para. 432.

cannabis. The Board is concerned over the ongoing discussion in several states on legalizing and taxing the “recreational” use of cannabis, which would be a serious contravention of the 1961 Convention. The Board emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the Government of the United States to fully implement the provisions of the 1961 Convention with respect to all narcotic drugs, including cannabis (see paragraphs 61-64 above).

2. Regional cooperation

401. Cooperation efforts at the regional level to counter drug trafficking and related forms of organized crime have intensified. The Merida Initiative, a multi-year security cooperation programme involving Mexico, the United States and countries in Central America, is a major element in those cooperation efforts. In the short term, the Merida Initiative is to provide training and equipment to increase law enforcement capabilities. The long-term aim is to enhance the capacity of the judicial systems to carry out investigations and prosecutions through technical assistance. Within the framework of the initiative, the United States considerably increased its funding to Mexico, from US\$ 400 million in 2008 to US\$ 720 million in 2009 (an additional US\$ 65 million in 2008 and US\$ 110 million in 2009 were appropriated for Central America within the framework of the initiative). A letter of agreement between Mexico and the United States on implementing the first phase of the initiative was signed in December 2008. The first Merida Initiative projects included the establishment of a document analysis and verification laboratory, the funding of a bilateral conference to address arms trafficking and training for new correctional officers and federal police investigators. The issue of combating drug trafficking was a major point of discussion at a meeting between the Governments of Mexico and the United States held in April 2009.

402. At the forty-fifth regular session of CICAD, held in Washington, D.C., in May 2009, the discussion focused on the control of precursors, the progress made in the implementation of the Anti-Drug Strategy in the Hemisphere and the reinforcement of systems for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers. The CICAD Expert Group on Demand Reduction aims to link the scope and quality of treatment services with the general health-care system. Through its

Inter-American Observatory on Drugs, CICAD also supports countries in improving the collection and analysis of drug-related data.

403. In Operation All Inclusive 2008, an attempt was made to disrupt the flow of illicit drugs, money and precursor chemicals from South America through the transit zone into the United States. The investigative operation provided United States inter-agency analytical support to seven countries, resulting in considerable seizures of cocaine, cannabis and heroin and the arrest of nearly 1,300 persons, including several high-level drug traffickers. The operation resulted in the first seizure of a self-propelled semi-submersible vessel involved in drug trafficking; the seizure was effected by the Mexican Navy off the Pacific coast of Mexico in July 2008.

404. Cooperation between Canada and the United States continued through mechanisms such as the Cross-Border Crime Forum, which brings together senior law enforcement and justice officials. The cooperation involved joint operations, the exchange of intelligence and joint training activities. In 2008, representatives of Canada and the United States opened negotiations concerning a bilateral ship-rider agreement, which is intended to allow the exchange of ship-riders and improve maritime law enforcement operations along the maritime border. The highway enforcement programme in the United States expanded in 2008 to include coordinated operations involving Canadian and United States police forces along major corridors used for illicit drug transportation.

405. At the seventh Binational Drug Demand Reduction Conference: Unifying Efforts toward Best Practices, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in July 2008, participants from Mexico and the United States discussed measures to reduce illicit drug demand and promote best practices in the prevention and treatment of drug abuse.

406. In August 2009, the Governments of Colombia and Mexico agreed to strengthen their cooperation in combating drug trafficking. In accordance with the agreement, Colombian police forces will provide training to Mexican law enforcement officers on tactics for countering organized crime.

3. National legislation, policy and action

407. In Mexico, measures to fight corruption continue to be taken. In 2008, the Government launched Operación Limpieza, aimed at preventing corruption in law enforcement agencies responsible for combating drug trafficking. A number of Government officials, including high-level officials from the special unit for organized crime of the Attorney-General's Office, have been arrested for passing on information to drug cartels. In 2008, the Government introduced legislation to reorganize security forces and improve coordination of the local, state and federal law enforcement agencies in combating drug cartels and other organized criminal groups. The law established a national public safety council to support law enforcement institutions and evaluate the effectiveness of public safety programmes, as well as a national intelligence centre. Information exchange is facilitated through a case management system, which connects the databases of different agencies (Plataforma Mexico). Data-sharing agreements with all 31 states are currently in place. The Government has made proposals for reforming the judicial sector with a view to making it more expeditious and transparent. The proposals include provisions to introduce oral trials,⁴² plea-bargaining and alternative case resolution methods. The judicial reform is currently in the process of being discussed at the state level and is being implemented in some states.

408. In 2009, the Government of Mexico enacted legislation, according to which persons found to be in possession of a specified quantity of certain illicit drugs for personal and immediate consumption will no longer face criminal prosecution. The maximum quantities for the main illicit drugs are 2 grams of opium, 50 milligrams of heroin, 5 grams of cannabis and 500 milligrams of cocaine. The legislative measure is aimed at regularizing a legal practice. In addition, persons detained with quantities of illicit drugs below the limit for personal use will be encouraged to seek treatment; in the case of persons detained for a third time, treatment is mandatory. The Board is concerned that this legal act may give the wrong signal. The Board would like to remind the Government that

⁴² Within its civil-law system, Mexico, like most States in Latin America, has traditionally maintained the practice of written trials, both in civil and criminal matters. Oral trials correspond to adversarial jury trials provided for in countries with a common-law system tradition.

article 3, paragraph 2, of the 1988 Convention requires each party to that Convention to establish as a criminal offence under its domestic law, when committed intentionally, the possession, purchase or cultivation of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances for personal consumption contrary to the provisions of the 1961 Convention, the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol or the 1971 Convention.

409. Its national border with Mexico being a major point of entry for illicit drugs, the Government of the United States updated and expanded the National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy in 2009. The strategy is aimed at reducing the flow of illicit drugs, drug proceeds and illegal weapons by enhancing drug control capabilities, with a view to facilitating the prosecution of cases involving drug trafficking and disrupting the operations of drug trafficking organizations.

410. In the United States, 38 states had prescription drug monitoring programmes in 2008, compared with 15 states in 2001. The programmes monitor drug prescriptions with a view to preventing the diversion and abuse of prescription drugs. A prototype for a paperless prescription drug monitoring programme is currently being developed; it is to link physicians, pharmacists and patients in the process of prescribing and dispensing controlled substances.

411. In the United States, action has been taken to counter the widespread sale of prescription drugs through illegal Internet pharmacies. In September 2008, the United States Congress passed the Ryan Haight Online Pharmacy Consumer Protection Act of 2008, prohibiting the delivery, distribution or dispensing of prescription drugs over the Internet without a valid prescription. In order to obtain a prescription, at least one in-person medical evaluation of a patient by a practitioner is required. DEA is targeting the infrastructure of organizations that are engaged in drug trafficking and that use electronic media to divert drugs. The Internet Distributor Initiative of DEA is aimed at cutting supply lines from distributors to pharmacies where large-scale diversion appears to be occurring. The Board notes with satisfaction that measures targeting the illegal sale of prescription drugs through the Internet have been taken.

412. In the United States, Oregon, in an attempt to enhance the downward trend in methamphetamine

abuse, has passed state legislation making it illegal to purchase a product containing pseudoephedrine without a prescription. Other states are considering introducing such legislation. In September 2008, the Methamphetamine Production Prevention Act of 2008 was passed by the United States Congress, expanding logbook requirements for sellers and purchasers of precursors of methamphetamine.

413. In order to counteract the increasing use of self-propelled semi-submersible vessels to smuggle cocaine (see paragraph 420 below), the Drug Trafficking Vessel Interdiction Act of 2008 was signed into law by the President of the United States in October 2008. The act provides for the imposition of a fine or a prison term for operating or boarding a stateless submersible (or semi-submersible) vessel on an international voyage with the intent to evade detection; thus, the act allows for prosecution even when no illicit drugs are seized.

414. The Government of Canada continued to implement its National Anti-Drug Strategy, which consists of action plans to improve law enforcement, the prevention of drug abuse and the treatment of drug abusers. Law enforcement measures are aimed at reducing the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, the illicit cultivation of cannabis, drug trafficking and the cross-border movement of precursor chemicals by, for example, building the capacities of police, investigation and prosecution units and enhancing border control. The action plan on drug abuse prevention includes a national awareness-raising campaign involving mass media, youth, their parents and community-based projects on drug abuse prevention. Within the framework of the strategy, the Government has allocated the equivalent of US\$ 94 million to law enforcement (over a five-year period), US\$ 28 million to drug abuse prevention and US\$ 93 million to the treatment of drug abusers. The Board notes with appreciation the measures taken by the Government of Canada, in particular those aimed at reducing illicit drug manufacture and trafficking, and the action plans on the prevention and treatment of drug abuse.

415. Canada continues to be one of the few countries in the world that allows cannabis to be prescribed by doctors to patients with certain serious illnesses. In 2008, nearly 2,900 patients were authorized to possess cannabis for medical purposes. Until 2009, cannabis could be either obtained from a Government supplier

or grown in small amounts by the patient, or a person designated by the patient, with the sole limitation that only one patient could be supplied by a licensed supplier. In 2009, following court decisions stipulating that that approach unjustifiably restricted the patient's access to cannabis used for medical purposes, the Government increased the number of cultivation licences a person could hold from one to two. The Government intends to reassess the programme for controlling medical access to cannabis. According to article 23 of the 1961 Convention, a party to the Convention, if it is to allow the licit cultivation of cannabis, must fulfil specific requirements, including the establishment of a national cannabis agency to which all cannabis growers must deliver their crops (see paragraphs 61-64 above).⁴³ The Board therefore requests the Government to respect the provisions of article 23.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

416. The illicit cultivation of cannabis appears to be rising in the United States. It is estimated that the total quantity of cannabis illicitly produced in the United States may exceed the total quantity of cannabis in the country that had been illicitly produced elsewhere. In 2008, the total quantity of eradicated cannabis plants increased by about 14 per cent: over 7,562,300 of the plants had been grown outdoors and nearly 451,000 had been grown indoors. Until recently, much of the illicit cannabis in the United States was from Mexico, and smaller quantities of cannabis with a higher potency were smuggled into the United States out of Canada. In recent years, however, drug trafficking organizations have expanded their illicit cannabis cultivation operations in the United States, thus avoiding risky border crossings and keeping production sites closer to the market. Drug trafficking organizations based in Mexico have expanded their illicit cannabis cultivation sites on public lands, whereas criminal organizations based in Canada have set up operations for growing cannabis indoors, mainly in the north-western part of the United States, and are expanding their operations to include other geographical areas.

⁴³ Ibid., para. 431.

417. The potency of samples of cannabis seized in the United States continued to increase; the average THC content of seized cannabis exceeded 10 per cent in 2008, the highest level ever recorded in that country. That increase was mainly attributed to the use of technologically advanced methods to maximize the THC level of cannabis grown indoors in Canada and the United States. The potency of the cannabis seized at the south-west border of the United States, which has traditionally been low, has increased: the highest concentration of THC found among the 1,500 samples of seized cannabis was 27.3 per cent, and in 40 per cent of the samples the THC level was higher than 9 per cent.

418. While in 2007 more cannabis herb was seized in Mexico than in any other country in the world, the Government reported having seized less cannabis herb in 2008. Illicit cannabis production in Mexico declined to 22,275 tons in 2008, most of which was destined for the United States. The total area of illicitly cultivated cannabis eradicated in Mexico dropped from 21,357 ha in 2007 to 18,562 ha in 2008. Notwithstanding those declining figures, the quantity of cannabis seized along the south-west border of the United States in 2008 indicated a sustained flow of cannabis from Mexico.

419. Canada only supplies a small proportion of the total quantity of illicit cannabis used in the United States. British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec remain the primary areas of cannabis production in Canada. It is estimated that 37 tons of cannabis were seized in Canada in 2008. Law enforcement authorities reported an increasing number of operations for growing cannabis in rural communities and remote areas in the country.

420. The quantity of cocaine intercepted en route to the United States increased slightly to 209 tons in 2007. As a result of those seizures, coca bush eradication efforts in Colombia and increased pressure on drug cartels in Mexico, cocaine continued to be less available in some parts of the United States. In 2008, the total quantity of cocaine seized in the United States decreased by almost one half, from 97 to 50 tons, the lowest level since 1999, reflecting a decline in cocaine trafficking. The decline in cocaine trafficking in North America, the world's largest illicit market for cocaine, was also reflected in rapidly rising prices and falling purity levels. Mexican law enforcement authorities reported having seized 60 per cent less cocaine in 2008

than in 2007. Nevertheless, the estimated quantity of cocaine shipped from South America to the United States has remained significant. United States authorities have estimated that 545-707 tons of cocaine departed from South America for the United States in 2007, a figure slightly higher than the one for 2006. Of the cocaine shipments that are detected, approximately 90 per cent were being transported through the Mexican and Central American corridor, mainly through the eastern Pacific route. Illicit drug consignments are being transported by sea using speedboats, fishing vessels and, increasingly, self-propelled semi-submersible vessels.

421. Mexico's role as a transit country for cocaine destined for Canada has increased. Cocaine consignments are being transported by land (from Mexico to the United States and Canada through the highway corridor), by sea and by air.

422. Most of the heroin found on the illicit market in the United States originated in Colombia and Mexico. The Government of Mexico reported having eradicated 13,095 ha of opium poppy in 2008, an increase over the figure for 2007 (11,046 ha). Drug trafficking organizations selling "black tar" and "brown powder" heroin have expanded the distribution of those forms of heroin in what have traditionally been markets for "white heroin" in the eastern part of the United States, partly as a result of decreasing heroin manufacture in Colombia.

423. In Canada, the illicit heroin market is dominated by South-West Asian heroin. In 2008, 70 per cent of the heroin found on the illicit market in Canada originated in South-West Asia; it had been smuggled into the country mainly by air via India and Pakistan with the help of organized criminal groups in British Columbia and Ontario.

424. Internet pharmacies continue to be the main channel used for the illicit distribution of pharmaceutical preparations in the United States. However, authorities have reported that the number of Internet pharmacies decreased in 2008, owing to increased efforts by law enforcement agencies. The total number of Internet pharmacies offering controlled prescription drugs for sale (anchor sites) dropped by 15 per cent, from 187 in 2007 to 159 in 2008; almost all of them were operating illegally. In addition, according to law enforcement authorities, street and motorcycle gangs are becoming increasingly involved

in the retail-level distribution of diverted prescription drugs.

Psychotropic substances

425. In the United States, the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine decreased following the introduction of regulations to increase domestic control over the sale, at the retail level, of pharmaceutical preparations containing precursors of methamphetamine. The number of methamphetamine laboratories dismantled in the United States dropped by more than 70 per cent from 2004 to 2008. In Mexico, new control measures, including a ban on the import of medicines containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine and the prohibition of the use of those substances, contributed to a significant decrease in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine and a reduction in the quantity of methamphetamine smuggled into the United States in 2007 and 2008. However, data on seizures of methamphetamine in the United States suggest that illicit methamphetamine manufacture in that country is increasing in some areas. On the one hand, that development is attributable to a resumption of small-scale methamphetamine manufacture in response to the reduced supply of methamphetamine from Mexico. On the other hand, some drug trafficking organizations have shifted their methamphetamine manufacturing operations from Mexico to certain areas of the United States, particularly California. In order to obtain the required precursors, individuals and criminal groups are increasingly circumventing state and federal restrictions on the sale of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine in the United States; for example by making numerous small-quantity purchases from multiple retail outlets (“smurfing”) or paying individuals to carry out purchases on their behalf.

426. In Mexico, 21 laboratories illicitly manufacturing methamphetamine were seized in 2008; 5 of those laboratories had been manufacturing methamphetamine on a large scale (compared with 14 in 2007). Those figures reflect the fact that, in that country, the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine decreased and the precursors of methamphetamine became less available following the introduction of control measures by the Government.

427. Canada continues to be the primary source of MDMA (“ecstasy”) found on the illicit market in the United States and a major supplier of the growing

illicit markets for the substances in other parts of the world, in particular in Asia and the Pacific. Drug trafficking organizations manufacture “ecstasy” in large clandestine laboratories in Canada for distribution in the United States. One matter of particular concern is the increasing distribution of “ecstasy” tablets adulterated with other addictive drugs, particularly methamphetamine. According to law enforcement authorities, the number of “ecstasy” laboratories reported to have been seized in Canada in 2007 was 18, a figure equal to the highest number of such seizures ever recorded. All of the “ecstasy” laboratories seized were “super labs”, laboratories capable of manufacturing at least 5 kg of “ecstasy” in one manufacturing cycle. The quantity of Canadian “ecstasy” seized in the United States at the Canadian border increased by more than 10-fold from 2003 to 2007. Most of the seizures of “ecstasy” occurred in Washington, a state adjacent to British Columbia, where most of the “ecstasy” in Canada is manufactured.

Precursors

428. While the measures to control precursors of methamphetamine in Mexico have led to a decrease in the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in methamphetamine, drug trafficking organizations have reacted in two ways: by shifting their operations to other countries, such as the United States and countries in Central and South America, and by smuggling into Mexico diverted precursor chemicals, including chemicals from Central and South America.⁴⁴ In 2008, the multilateral initiative Operation Ice Block revealed that almost half of the suspicious shipments of precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants identified during the operation were destined for Mexico.

429. In Canada, the high level of illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants is fuelled by the acquisition of bulk quantities of precursor chemicals by organized criminal groups.

⁴⁴ *International Narcotics Control Board, Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2008 on the Implementation of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.XI.4), para. 49.

Substances not under international control

430. In the United States, ketamine continues to be among the active ingredients found in adulterated MDMA (“ecstasy”) tablets. The distribution of such tablets originating in Canada appears to be increasing.

431. In Canada, approximately 23 tons of khat were seized in 2008, less than the quantity seized in 2007. The majority of the seized khat shipments had arrived by courier package or had been concealed in air cargo. In Canada, the demand for khat is concentrated in urban centres with large East African communities.

5. Abuse and treatment

432. In 2008, an estimated 35.5 million persons in the United States, or 14.2 per cent of the population aged 12 or older, had used illicit drugs (annual prevalence). Thus, the overall declining trend in illicit drug use continued. That trend is also substantiated by results of workforce drug testing. In general, the drug test results indicate the lowest levels of drug abuse in the United States workforce since 1988. About 20.1 million persons, or 8.0 per cent of the population aged 12 or older, are “current users” — that is, they have abused illicit drugs in the past month.

433. The decline in the abuse of drugs, particularly cannabis, among youth in the United States is an encouraging sign. The use of illicit drugs among students aged 13-18 declined significantly during the period 1997-2008, according to the 2008 survey “Monitoring the Future”. Annual prevalence fell by 27 per cent: every fourth student reported having used illicit drugs in the previous year. The abuse of cannabis dropped by 29 per cent in the period 1997-2008, reaching an annual prevalence of 21.5 per cent. Even greater declines were recorded in the abuse of cocaine (-36 per cent), methamphetamine (-68 per cent) and MDMA (-52 per cent) compared with their respective peak levels during that period; the abuse of those drugs continued to fall in 2008. That indicates reduced drug abuse and its initiation during a critical age period. However, the abuse of OxyContin (annual prevalence: 3.4 per cent), a product containing oxycodone, and Vicodin (annual prevalence: 6.1 per cent),⁴⁵ a product

containing hydrocodone, remained close to the peak levels.

434. In the United States, cannabis remains the most commonly abused drug: 25.8 million persons (or 10.3 per cent of the population aged 12 or older) abused cannabis in 2008, slightly more than in 2007.

435. In 2008, past-year prevalence of the abuse of cocaine (including “crack”) among the United States population aged 12 and older was 2.1 per cent: 5.3 million cocaine abusers (compared with 5.7 million in 2007). The proportion of persons who tested positive for cocaine in workplace drug tests declined by 38 per cent from 2006 to 2008.

436. In the United States, heroin abuse is stable at a relatively low level, annual prevalence amounting to 0.2 per cent in 2008. Past-year heroin abuse among youth has remained at 0.8 per cent for some years, according to the annual survey “Monitoring the Future”. However, heroin abuse levels may increase, as more abusers of prescription drugs containing opiates are switching to heroin.

437. In 2008, the abuse of methamphetamine in the United States declined further: 0.3 per cent of the population were past-year abusers (compared with 0.5 per cent in 2007). The proportion of persons who tested positive for the abuse of methamphetamine dropped by about 50 per cent from 2006 to 2008. There has been a steady decline in the abuse of methamphetamine among all age groups in recent years.

438. In the United States, the number of persons who have abused prescription drugs declined for the second consecutive year. In 2008, about 15.2 million persons (or 6.1 per cent of the population aged 12 or above) reported having abused prescription drugs in the previous year; in 2007, the number was 16.3 million. About 6.2 million of those who abused prescription drugs in the past year were “current users”: persons abusing such drugs in the past month. Most of those who abused prescription drugs in the past year were abusers of pain relievers: they numbered 11.9 million in 2008, compared with 12.5 million in 2007. Notwithstanding those declines, the number of persons abusing prescription drugs remains greater than the total number of persons abusing cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens and/or inhalants. Prescription drugs are the second most abused category of drugs, surpassed

⁴⁵ Trade names are used in this particular case, since the survey “Monitoring the Future” collects and reports prevalence data for those specific preparations.

only by cannabis. Young adults (persons 18-25 years old) have by far the highest rate of abuse of prescription drugs, more than twice the level of abuse among youth (persons 12-17 years old) and more than three times the level of abuse among adults (persons aged 26 or older).

439. One matter of concern in the United States is that the number of first-time abusers of prescription drugs continues to be high. In 2008, 2.5 million people aged 12 or above reported having abused prescription drugs for the first time, over 300,000 more than the number of first-time cannabis abusers.

440. In the United States, the increase in the number of deaths due to overdose is to a significant extent related to the abuse of prescription drugs, in particular the abuse of opioid pain relievers such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, methadone, morphine and fentanyl. The number of deaths involving prescription opioids increased by two thirds from 2001 to 2005, reaching 5,789 in 2005.

441. According to the Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring Survey, which was newly introduced in 2008, the abuse of illicit drugs (including cannabis, cocaine, “crack”, methamphetamine, hallucinogens, MDMA (“ecstasy”) and heroin) among members of the population aged 15 and older declined significantly from 2004 to 2008. In 2008, 12.1 per cent of the population reported having abused illicit drugs in the previous 12 months (compared with 14.5 per cent in 2004). That development is attributable to a reduction in the abuse of cannabis (from 14.1 per cent in 2004 to 11.4 per cent in 2008) and cocaine and “crack” (from 1.9 to 1.6 per cent). By contrast, the levels of abuse of other drugs increased during the same period; for instance, the abuse of “ecstasy” increased from 1.1 to 1.4 per cent. In 2008, the abuse of illicit drugs was higher among men (15.3 per cent) than among women (9.1 per cent). The past-year use of prescription drugs, mainly opioid pain relievers but also stimulants and sedatives, was reported by 28.4 per cent of the population; however, only 0.6 per cent of the population (2.0 per cent of drug abusers) reported the non-therapeutic abuse of those preparations, stating that they would take prescription drugs “to get high”.

442. In Canada, past-year abuse of illicit drugs among youth (persons 15-24 years old) decreased from 37.9 per cent in 2004 to 34.0 per cent in 2008, but remains significantly higher than illicit drug abuse

among the adult population (persons 25 years old or older) (7.9 per cent in 2008). Past-year abuse of cannabis among youth declined from 37.0 to 32.7 per cent. The average age of initiation of cannabis abuse among youth remained stable at 15.5 years in 2008.

443. In Mexico, a national household survey conducted in 2008 showed a significant increase in cocaine abuse in the period 2002-2008: the lifetime prevalence rate almost doubled, reaching 2.4 per cent of the population aged 12-65. Lifetime prevalence of cannabis abuse increased from 3.5 to 4.2 per cent. In 2008, methamphetamine and inhalants were among the most commonly abused drugs in Mexico, second only to cannabis and cocaine. Drug abuse, which used to be limited to certain areas of Mexico, appears to be spreading throughout the country. That may in part be attributed to the spillover effect of drug trafficking, as well as to attempts by drug trafficking organizations to create local markets.

444. In Mexico, most drug-related deaths in 2008 were attributed to the abuse of cocaine (236 deaths). The Government reported a sharp increase in the abuse of cocaine, particularly “crack”, and methamphetamine in 2008. The abuse of sedatives and tranquilizers, in particular benzodiazepines, was stable. In 2008, the number of problematic drug abusers reached 428,819 (0.6 per cent of the population aged 12-65). The prevalence of drug abuse increased more sharply among women than among men.

445. In the United States, most treatment related to drug abuse in 2008 was received for cannabis abuse (947,000 persons aged 12 and older), followed by cocaine abuse (663,000). The proportion of persons admitted for treatment of cannabis abuse continued to increase. In addition, the number of persons admitted for treatment for the abuse of pain relievers increased significantly (to 601,000 persons compared with 360,000 in 2002). The number of persons admitted for heroin addiction (341,000 in 2008) may increase, according to the *National Drug Threat Assessment 2009*,⁴⁶ as more abusers of prescription opiates are switching to heroin, mainly because heroin is cheaper and easier to obtain. According to facilities for the

⁴⁶ United States of America, Department of Justice, National Drug Intelligence Center, *National Drug Threat Assessment 2009* (Johnstown, Pennsylvania, December 2008).

treatment of drug abuse, once a person switches from prescription opiates to heroin, it is unlikely that the person will switch back to abusing prescription opiates only. In some areas, the switching from prescription opiates to heroin led to an increase in heroin abusers seeking treatment in 2008.

446. Drug treatment courts have experienced significant growth in the United States. Their main objective is to divert non-violent, substance-abusing offenders from imprisonment into treatment with increased supervision, thus breaking the cycle of criminal behaviour and improving treatment outcome. In 2008, about 2,300 drug treatment courts, some for adults and others for juveniles, were operating nationwide. New drug treatment courts, including drug treatment courts targeting particular groups such as veterans, are being developed.

447. As part of the National Anti-Drug Strategy (see paragraph 414 above), the Government of Canada has created a programme to ensure funding to enable provincial governments to strengthen systems for the treatment of drug abuse. The Government has also initiated projects to improve the access of First Nations and Inuit families, in particular youth, to treatment for drug abuse. Drug treatment courts are operating in six cities in Canada; they deal only with cases involving non-violent accused persons whose criminal activity is driven by addiction. A judge may suspend the imposition of a sentence to allow the addicted person to undergo treatment under certain conditions.

448. In Mexico, most persons admitted for treatment for drug abuse are addicted to cocaine or methamphetamine. Although the number of persons seeking help for drug problems has risen, only one third of drug addicts actually receive treatment. The Government is attempting to expand the drug abuse treatment capacity in order to cope with the increasing demand for such treatment. A pilot programme involving drug treatment courts has been introduced in the State of Nuevo León with a view to developing procedures and instruments to replace penal procedures.

449. The strategy developed by the Government of Mexico for reducing illicit drug demand has enhanced the infrastructure for treatment. One of the core elements is the network of Nueva Vida centres, which provides treatment services for different groups of drug abusers in the country's main municipalities, in

cooperation with civil society organizations. Demand reduction initiatives also include a project for the development of the national network for technology transfer to combat addictions (RENADIC) — a platform for the exchange of medical information and education in cooperation with the United States.

South America

1. Major developments

450. South America continues to be the sole source of illicitly manufactured cocaine, which is smuggled primarily into North America and Europe. In 2008, potential manufacture of cocaine in South America was 845 tons, 15 per cent lower than potential manufacture in 2007 and the lowest since 2003. That significant decline in potential manufacture can, to a large extent, be attributed to a significant decrease in the total area under coca bush cultivation in Colombia in 2008. In Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Peru, the area under illicit coca bush cultivation increased for the third consecutive year. The Board, concerned about the continued increase in the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Peru, urges the Governments of both countries to take appropriate measures to reverse the trend.

451. In addition to the illicit production and smuggling of cannabis, cocaine and heroin, trafficking organizations in South America appear to be expanding into areas of illicit activity not previously associated with drug problems in the region. In recent years, the Board has noted an increase in attempts in the region to divert precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants, in particular ephedrine and pseudoephedrine (including in the form of pharmaceutical preparations). Governments of several countries in South America responded to the emerging trafficking trends by strengthening at the national-level measures to control ephedrines. Nevertheless, the smuggling of ephedrines, in particular into Mexico, continued. Moreover, in 2008, the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs emerged in the subregion, as evidenced by the laboratories illicitly manufacturing MDMA (“ecstasy”) and methamphetamine that were dismantled in Argentina and Brazil. The Board urges the Governments of the countries in the region to remain vigilant with regard to the diversion of precursors of amphetamine-type

stimulants, including in the form of pharmaceutical preparations.

452. The abuse of illicit drugs in several countries in South America, has continued to increase — a spillover effect of drug trafficking in the region. According to UNODC, nearly 1 million people in the region are treated annually for the abuse of illicit drugs. The demand for treatment for the abuse of cannabis has increased significantly in the region in the past few years. Using strategies ensuring a balance between reducing illicit drug supply and demand to tackle illicit drug problems is a widely recognized approach in the region. The Board notes, however, that in some countries demand-reduction activities, including education, prevention and rehabilitation programmes, remain underdeveloped. In 2009, the Organization of American States (OAS), through CICAD, began a review of the Anti-Drug Strategy in the Hemisphere (adopted in 1996), so that new developments in the area of drug control could be taken into account. It is anticipated that the new drug control strategy for the Americas will focus on the reduction of drug demand in the region.

453. The Board notes with concern that in countries in South America, such as Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (and in countries in North America, such as Mexico and the United States), there is a growing movement to decriminalize the possession of controlled drugs, in particular cannabis, for personal use. Regrettably, influential personalities, including former high-level politicians in countries in South America, have publicly expressed their support for that movement. The Board is concerned that the movement, if not resolutely countered by the respective Governments, will undermine national and international efforts to combat the abuse of and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs. In any case, the movement poses a threat to the coherence and effectiveness of the international drug control system and sends the wrong message to the general public.

2. Regional cooperation

454. At the forty-fourth regular session of CICAD, held in Santiago from 19 to 21 November 2008, participants reported on achievements and current challenges in drug control, including policymaking in the area of treatment and rehabilitation for drug abusers. At the session, experts on chemical substances

and pharmaceutical products discussed problems related to the growing number of imports of chemical substances in amounts exceeding legitimate requirements.

455. In 2007, the European Commission and OAS launched the European Union/Latin American and the Caribbean Drug Treatment City Partnership initiative, which paired cities in Europe with cities in Latin America and the Caribbean, forming partnerships to improve the treatment and rehabilitation of problem drug abusers and address other aspects of drug dependency at the municipal level. Under the initiative, a number of activities were organized in South American countries in 2008 and 2009. For example, representatives of participating cities attended a forum on local assessments and information systems in the treatment of drug abuse, held in Montevideo from 4 to 6 December 2008. The objective of the forum was to facilitate the exchange of experiences, from the perspective of municipalities, on demand for, and availability of, treatment services for drug abusers.

456. On 22 December 2008, Brazil and the European Union adopted a joint action plan at the second Brazil/European Union summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The action plan for the control of illicit drugs and drug-related crime recognizes the principle of shared responsibility and the need for an approach ensuring a balance between reducing the supply of and reducing the demand for illicit drugs, and promotes bilateral cooperation to combat drug trafficking and organized crime.

457. The project financed by the European Commission and UNODC for cooperation among national security offices to counter the smuggling of cocaine from South America through West Africa into Europe has the participation of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and, in West Africa, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Togo. At a training seminar held in Bogota in January 2009 as part of that project, police officers from 16 countries exchanged information on the smuggling of cocaine through West Africa to Europe with a view to optimizing drug law enforcement operations in those countries.

458. Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador and Peru participated in the activities of the project for support for the Andean Community in the

area of synthetic drugs (DROSICAN) launched in July 2008. The project, financed by the European Commission, supports institutions that focus on development, the control of synthetic drugs and the reduction of demand for those drugs in the Andean subregion. The project includes the establishment of a reference drug laboratory in Colombia to provide support for all countries in the subregion in the area of synthetic drugs. The heads of the drug control agencies of States members of the Andean Community reviewed the operational plan of the project for 2009 at the coordination meeting of the project held in Bogota in February 2009.

459. CICAD and the Government of Spain launched Health and Life in the Americas (SAVIA), a programme for the period 2008-2010 that provides direct support to local demand-reduction initiatives in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). At a workshop on the quality of local policies to reduce consumption of drugs in Latin America, held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 27 April to 1 May 2009, experts from the above-mentioned countries, as well as Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Spain, shared experiences in the decentralization of drug control policies in their countries and the implementation of programmes for the prevention of drug abuse.

460. The Eleventh High-Level Specialized Dialogue on Drugs between the Andean Community and the European Union was held in Quito in May 2009. Participants from 60 countries adopted the Quito Declaration, in which they reaffirmed the importance of cooperation in combating illicit drugs including in the areas of alternative development and preventive alternative development.

461. Drug-testing laboratories in countries in Latin America are participating in the international collaborative exercise, a component of the UNODC international quality assurance programme, which monitors the performance and capacities of forensic laboratories worldwide and provides tailored technical support and assistance. In March 2009, UNODC initiated a national collaborative exercise involving 35 drug-testing laboratories in Brazil.

462. In March 2009, Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), together with Jamaica, Mexico, Panama and Trinidad and Tobago, joined a

new project, co-financed by the European Commission, for the prevention of the diversion of drug precursors in Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC). That three-year project, which partly builds on the achievements of the completed project to counter the diversion of drug precursors in the region (PRECAN), will focus on preventing the diversion of precursors in Latin America and the Caribbean.

463. The Board notes that in 2009, the Governments of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) participated in Operation PILA, which focused on monitoring trade in precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants. In addition, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) participated in the second phase of Operation Dice, targeting trade in and diversion of acetic anhydride, the key precursor used in the illicit manufacture of heroin.

3. National legislation, policy and action

464. In December 2008, the Government of Argentina promulgated Decree No. 2094/2008, establishing the Interjurisdictional Committee of the National Register of Precursor Chemicals. The Board notes that a draft law on medicines banning the sale of pharmaceutical products through the Internet was submitted to the Congress of Argentina for approval.

465. Following the approval of the new constitution of the Plurinational State of Bolivia in January 2009,⁴⁷ the Bolivian Government notified the Secretary-General of its request to amend article 49 of the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, concerning the abolishment of coca leaf chewing.

466. In 2009, the Bolivian Observatory on Drugs conducted a study on the prevalence of drug abuse among students between the ages of 13 and 18 years to assist in planning future policies for the reduction of drug demand.

467. The Board wishes to remind the Governments of all countries concerned, in particular the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, that unless any

⁴⁷ The new constitution of the Plurinational State of Bolivia states that the State protects the original and ancestral coca as cultural heritage, as a natural and renewable resource of Bolivia's biodiversity and as a factor of social cohesion; in its natural state, it is not a narcotic drug.

further amendments to the 1961 Convention are put into effect, the use or importation of coca leaf from which cocaine has not been extracted, for purposes other than those allowed under the 1961 Convention, constitutes a breach of obligations under the Convention (see paragraphs 156-166 above).

468. The Government of Brazil is implementing measures to prevent the counterfeiting of pharmaceutical products in that country. In 2008, the National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) carried out inspections to verify the compliance of pharmacies with regulations concerning pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled substances. Starting in 2009, electronic tracing will be used with all medicines manufactured in Brazil. The Government of Brazil has also strengthened measures related to the dispensation and control of anorectics, which have high levels of consumption in the country.

469. In November 2008, the Government of Colombia launched the national plan for the reduction of drug consumption for the period 2009-2010. The plan, among other things, provides for the implementation of comprehensive care guidelines for use in the social security system that establish clinical standards for treatment and rehabilitation services. In January 2009, the Government published the executive summary of the 2008 national study of abuse of psychoactive substances in Colombia. The comprehensive survey is the first of its kind in more than 10 years, and the Government is committed to conducting such surveys every two years.

470. Governmental and non-governmental organizations and health-care professionals of Colombia participated in the first national conference on heroin abuse, held in Medellín on 4 and 5 December 2008. The objective of the conference was to raise awareness among health-care professionals concerning treatment, rehabilitation, prevention programmes and aftercare services for heroin abusers. In 2009, the Government of Colombia took further measures to ensure the availability of opioids for medical use in the country. Pain treatment medicine is now accessible at all times in at least one place in each state of Colombia.

471. Between August and December 2008, Argentina adopted several new regulations that significantly restricted trade in ephedrine and pseudoephedrine and their use in the manufacture of medicines. In Peru, cold

medicines containing pseudoephedrine, which had previously been sold over the counter, can now be purchased only with a medical prescription in pharmacies. The Government of Chile took further steps to enhance awareness among pharmacists and health-care professionals of the possible misuse of ephedrine in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants and proposed further control measures. In July 2009, the Government of Colombia adopted resolution No. 2335, which prohibits the manufacture and import of and trading in medicinal products containing pseudoephedrine and restricts trade in and use of ephedrine.

472. In 2008, a number of countries in South America, including Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), strengthened measures to tackle money-laundering. For example, in December 2008, the National Council of Justice of Brazil, by its resolution No. 63, established the National Seized Assets System, which consolidates data on assets seized during criminal proceedings related to the prosecution of money-laundering. Further, in September 2009, the National Secretariat of Justice of Brazil organized an international seminar on extinction of property rights.

473. In November 2008, the Government of Ecuador adopted a resolution approving the regulation of the control of substances subject to control and medicines containing such substances, thus strengthening control measures on substances listed in the international drug control treaties. The new measures also apply to pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled substances. Preventing the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is one of the principal objectives of the national plan for the comprehensive prevention and control of drugs for the period 2009-2012 adopted by the Government of Ecuador in 2009. The Board also notes that in April 2009, following the findings of the national Institute of Public Health, the Government of Chile adopted a decree placing six synthetic cannabinoid analogues on the national list of controlled substances.

474. In 2009, the Government of Peru adopted decree No. 045-2009, which bans the sale, use and distribution of kerosene in the country by 2010. Kerosene is not controlled at the international level but is widely used for the maceration of coca leaves in laboratories illicitly manufacturing cocaine.

475. In Suriname, programmes to prevent drug abuse are incorporated into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. In 2008, a nationwide crisis helpline was established in the country to provide drug-related information and assistance to the general public. In 2008, the Ministry of Justice and Police of Suriname drafted legislation for the control of chemical substances. The Board urges the Government of Suriname to adopt that legislation without further delay.

476. In June 2009, the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela approved the national drug control plan for the period 2008-2013. Under the plan, the Venezuelan authorities implemented a number of activities to combat illicit drugs, including the monitoring by satellite of areas susceptible to illicit crop cultivation. Installation of a radar system for air traffic control in the country enhanced the protection of the national airspace, as well as maritime areas, from drug traffickers. Within the framework of a national plan to combat the use of clandestine smuggling routes, in 2008 the Venezuelan law enforcement authorities destroyed more than 220 clandestine airstrips used by drug traffickers in the country. In April 2008, the Venezuelan Observatory on Drugs initiated a national study on the extent of drug abuse among the general population.

477. In Brazil, legislation in place since 2006 distinguishes between drug traffickers and drug users and established alternative sanctions for drug abuse without decriminalizing it. In 2009, the Supreme Court of Argentina, in a case involving personal use of cannabis by adult consumers, ruled that the punishment of personal use of cannabis was unconstitutional. The Board, concerned that such legal acts may impart a wrong message, would like to remind Governments that article 3, paragraph 2, of the 1988 Convention requires each party to that Convention to establish as a criminal offence under its domestic law, when committed intentionally, the possession, purchase or cultivation of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances for personal consumption contrary to the provisions of the 1961 Convention, the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, or the 1971 Convention.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

478. According to UNODC, it is difficult to estimate with greater accuracy the magnitude of the illicit cultivation of drug crops that takes place in a number of countries. In Paraguay, one of the major producers of illicit cannabis in South America, the main methods used for detecting drug crop cultivation include aerial remote sensing and ground surveys. In January 2009, the Paraguayan authorities, in cooperation with the Government of Brazil, carried out a monitoring mission to further identify areas of cannabis cultivation in the country.

479. According to the National Anti-Drug Secretariat (SENAD) of Paraguay, illicitly cultivated cannabis plants cover an estimated area of 6,000 ha, yielding about 16,500 tons of cannabis herb. In 2008, the Paraguayan authorities eradicated more than 1,800 ha of illicitly cultivated cannabis plants.

480. Cannabis plants are also illicitly cultivated in Colombia. The cannabis plants cultivated in the department of Cauca are several times more potent than traditional varieties of cannabis plant cultivated in the country. According to the National Narcotics Directorate (DNE) of Colombia, the highly potent variety of cannabis, which contain 17-18 per cent of the active ingredient, is cultivated from seeds originating in Europe. In Chile, although authorities do not consider illicit drug production to be significant in the country, the Government is concerned about cannabis cultivated for domestic consumption in rural mountainous and coastal areas in the central part of the country.

481. In 2008, seizures of cannabis herb increased in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru and decreased in Brazil and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Bolivian authorities seized the largest total amount of cannabis herb in South America in 2008: 1,113 tons in Bolivia, a quantity about two-and-a-half times that reported for 2007. In 2008, seizures of cannabis herb larger than 100 tons were also reported in Paraguay (208 tons), Brazil (187 tons) and Argentina (108 tons). In recent years, Paraguay has been named as the source of cannabis herb seized in South America more often than other countries in the region.

482. The total area under coca bush cultivation in South America decreased in 2008 to 167,600 ha, 8 per cent less than the total area in 2007. Colombia accounted for 48.3 per cent of that total; it was followed by Peru and the Plurinational State of Bolivia, which accounted for 33.5 per cent and 18.2 per cent, respectively. Cocaine manufacture in Colombia declined by 28 per cent in 2008, a reduction that was not fully offset by the increased manufacture of cocaine in Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Peru. As a result, the potential global cocaine manufacture decreased from 994 tons in 2007 to 845 tons in 2008.

483. Although sizeable coca bush cultivation is not found outside the three main countries of cultivation, eradication reports indicate that small-scale coca bush cultivation of an exploratory nature takes place in other countries in South America. For example, in 2008, illicit coca bush was cultivated on small plots of land in Ecuador near that country's border with Colombia.

484. In 2008, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in the Plurinational State of Bolivia increased to 30,500 ha, 6 per cent more than in 2007. The Board notes with concern that as a result of repeated small increases, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in the country doubled between 2000 and 2008. In 2008, potential manufacture of cocaine in the country increased by 9 per cent to 113 tons, accounting for 13 per cent of potential global manufacture of cocaine. In 2008, a total of 5,483 ha of coca bush were manually eradicated in the country. That total area of annual eradication is the second smallest reported since 1995.

485. The eradication of illicitly cultivated coca bush and prevention of coca bush cultivation in new areas were among the main objectives of the Peruvian national strategy to combat drugs for the period 2007-2011. In 2008, the total area under coca bush cultivation increased in Peru for the third consecutive year, amounting to 56,100 ha. The Board notes with concern that from 1999 to 2008, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in the country gradually increased by 17,400 ha, or 45 per cent. The Board calls on the Governments of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Peru to enhance their programmes to reduce illicit drug supply in order to address the increasing illicit cultivation of coca bush in their countries, which is apparently a result of drug traffickers' attempts to

offset the decline in the total area under coca bush cultivation in Colombia.

486. Potential illicit manufacture of cocaine in Peru increased to 302 tons in 2008, accounting for 36 per cent of potential global cocaine manufacture. In 2008, 10,143 ha of illicitly cultivated coca bush were eradicated in Peru, slightly exceeding the goal of 10,000 ha. The forced eradication efforts were hampered by incidents of violence, including armed attacks. The Government's eradication goal for 2009 is 8,000 ha.

487. The Board urges the Governments of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Peru, in spite of perceived difficulties in combating illicit manufacture of and trafficking in cocaine, not to reduce their efforts in those areas and to address in a decisive manner the increasing illicit cultivation of coca bush on their territory. At the same time, the Board believes that measures to provide legitimate and sustainable alternative livelihoods, accompanied by continued law enforcement efforts to prevent the re-emergence of illicit crop cultivation, are essential to achieving a lasting reduction in the production of coca and other narcotic drugs in South America.

488. In Colombia, illicit coca bush cultivation, as well as cocaine manufacture, saw a major decline in 2008. The total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in 2008 decreased by 18 per cent to 81,000 ha, and potential manufacture of cocaine decreased by 28 per cent, or 170 tons, to 430 tons. Colombia's share of global cocaine manufacture fell to 51 per cent, the lowest in a decade. Much of the decline in the illicit manufacture of cocaine in Colombia can be attributed to the manual eradication efforts targeting areas with high-yields. In 2008, a total of 96,115 ha of illicitly cultivated coca bush were eradicated manually (an increase of 44 per cent), and an additional 133,496 ha were subject to aerial spraying.

489. According to UNODC, in 2007, for the third year in a row, the global cocaine interception rate was above the 40-per-cent benchmark. South American countries accounted for almost half of the total amount of cocaine seized worldwide in 2007.

490. In 2008, all three of the main countries producing coca leaf, as well as Argentina, Brazil and Ecuador, reported a significant increase in the quantity of cocaine seized compared with the figures for 2007. In

2008, Bolivian authorities seized 21.6 tons of cocaine paste (an increase of 45 per cent) and 7.2 tons of cocaine hydrochloride (an increase of 148 per cent). In Peru, seizures of cocaine hydrochloride doubled from 2007 to 2008, reaching 16.8 tons, the largest annual total since 2000. In Colombia, seizures of cocaine hydrochloride increased by 57 per cent to 198.4 tons. In Ecuador, seizures of cocaine hydrochloride totalled 27.2 tons, an increase of 55 per cent over 2007. Stable or declining seizures of cocaine were reported, for example, in Chile, Paraguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Despite the large quantity of cocaine seized in South America, drug control agencies in the region emphasized the continued need for the exchange, among law enforcement and judicial authorities in South America, of real-time information in investigative and operational activities in order to further enhance the interdiction capacity of those authorities.

491. The permeable borders and long coastlines of countries in South America pose challenges to drug law enforcement authorities in the region, especially considering their limited resources. Drug trafficking by sea remains a major problem. For example, in Colombia, of a total of 198 tons of cocaine hydrochloride seized in 2008, 74.6 tons were seized on the high seas and at seaports. In particular, drug traffickers have continued using non-commercial maritime vessels (fishing vessels, fast boats and semi-submersibles). Drug traffickers have demonstrated their ingenuity by modifying the structure of fishing vessels to hide illicit drugs and the building of semi-submersibles capable of transporting 10 tons of cargo with a range of 2,500 km. Throughout South America, there has been an increase in the use of light aircraft with forged or stolen registration numbers, operating out of small, privately owned airstrips in remote areas, to transport cocaine. There has also been an increase in the use of human couriers (“mules”) and the dissolving of cocaine in liquids.

492. The drug seizures reported by the Governments of countries in South America attest to the fact that almost all countries in the region are affected by drug trafficking. Cocaine smuggled into North America typically originates in Colombia and enters the United States from Mexico after having passed through countries in South America and in Central America and the Caribbean. In 2007 and 2008, there was a decline in the amount of cocaine smuggled into countries in

North America, in particular the United States. Colombia, Peru and the Plurinational State of Bolivia (in that order) were the most frequently named as the countries of origin of cocaine consignments destined for Europe in 2007. The involvement of Mexican cartels in cocaine trafficking has been reported in several South American countries, including Ecuador and Peru. Large illicit consignments of cocaine are transported from countries in Latin America through Brazil. About half of the cocaine seized in Brazil in 2008 had been smuggled using air routes. In Paraguay, almost all the cocaine seized in the country originated in the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

493. According to UNODC, in the past few years at least 50 tons of cocaine from the Andean countries have passed through West Africa each year, destined for illicit markets in Europe. In 2008 and 2009, UNODC noted an apparent decline in the use of West Africa as a transit area for cocaine. The Board wishes to encourage the Governments of the countries of South America and West Africa to cooperate and remain vigilant in their efforts to combat the smuggling of drugs through their territory.

494. In many countries in South America, criminal organizations engaged in drug trafficking continued to exploit vulnerable population groups. In Ecuador and Paraguay, unemployed persons accounted for 34 per cent and 90 per cent, respectively, of all persons arrested in connection with drug trafficking in 2008. Incidents of drug trafficking involving youth under 15 years of age were reported in several countries in the region, including Chile and Ecuador. Drug trafficking is accompanied by an increased level of other forms of serious crime.

495. In 2007, over 99 per cent of coca-processing laboratories were located in the three main countries cultivating coca bush: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia and Peru. By 2007, a small number of clandestine cocaine laboratories were dismantled in other South American countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The spreading of coca-processing laboratories beyond the main cocaine-producing countries resulted in increased abuse of coca paste, in particular among adolescents and young people, in the countries concerned, in particular Argentina and Brazil.

496. Since 2001, the number of clandestine coca paste and cocaine laboratories identified in the Plurinational

State of Bolivia reflected the increasing trend in illicit coca bush cultivation in the country, although the increase in the number of identified laboratories was even more pronounced. Between 2000 and 2008 the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation doubled in the country, while the number of destroyed coca paste and cocaine laboratories increased eightfold over the same period. In 2008, Bolivian authorities destroyed nearly 5,000 coca paste laboratories, including a number of cocaine hydrochloride laboratories and 7,500 maceration pits. In March 2009, the Bolivian police specialized in drug control operations (FELCN) dismantled in Ñuflo de Chávez province a clandestine laboratory with a capacity to manufacture 3 tons of cocaine hydrochloride per month. The size of the laboratory raises concerns about the growing capacity of traffickers to manufacture cocaine in the country.

497. In Colombia, traditional use of coca leaf is marginal and illegal. Virtually all of the coca leaves produced in the country are destined for cocaine manufacture. According to UNODC, about 40 per cent of coca bush growers in Colombia sell the coca leaves without any further processing at the farm, while the remaining 60 per cent of growers process the coca leaves into coca paste or cocaine base to increase their profits. The last step, the processing of the cocaine base into cocaine hydrochloride, is carried out by traffickers in clandestine laboratories. According to the Colombian DNE, the national drug control agency of Colombia, of the 3,200 clandestine laboratories destroyed in the country in 2008, more than 2,900 laboratories had been manufacturing coca paste or cocaine base, and the remaining laboratories, less than 300 had been manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride. The number of clandestine laboratories dismantled in Colombia in 2008 was 36 per cent greater than in 2007.

498. In 2008, authorities in Peru dismantled over 1,200 coca paste laboratories (the highest number of coca paste laboratories dismantled in that country since 2000) and 19 laboratories manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride. In 2008, clandestine laboratories processing cocaine base or cocaine also were dismantled in Chile (4 laboratories), Ecuador (1 laboratory) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (13 laboratories). The laboratory dismantled in Ecuador was estimated to have manufactured 2 tons of cocaine hydrochloride per month.

499. As a result of continued eradication efforts, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in Colombia gradually declined to 400 ha in 2008, one twentieth the area under such cultivation in 1998. Opium poppy is mainly cultivated in small fields on mountainsides, where it is interspersed with licit crops, in the departments of Cauca, Nariño, Huila and Tolima. In most areas of Colombia in which opium poppy is cultivated, the illicit crop is harvested twice a year. Potential manufacture of heroin in Colombia in 2008 was calculated to be 1.3 tons, 43 per cent less than in 2007.

500. In 2008, 381 ha of illicitly cultivated opium poppy were eradicated in Colombia, and 23 ha were eradicated in Peru. In the past, the eradication of illicitly cultivated opium poppy has also been reported by Venezuelan authorities. In 2007, the total amount of opium seized in South American countries, was 259 kg, or only 0.1 per cent of the amount seized worldwide. In 2008, heroin seizures in Colombia increased to almost 650 kg (an increase of 20 per cent) and heroin seizures in Ecuador decreased to 144 kg (a decrease of 20 per cent). Seizures of heroin by Venezuelan authorities did not change significantly, totalling approximately 130 kg. In 2008, Peruvian authorities destroyed a laboratory processing opium and seized 8 kg of heroin.

Psychotropic substances

501. In the past few years, South American countries reported that Europe was one of the main sources of MDMA (“ecstasy”) seized in their region. In 2008, Brazilian authorities dismantled the first clandestine laboratory manufacturing “ecstasy” and seized a total of 132,000 units of the substance. A second “ecstasy” laboratory was dismantled in Brazil in August 2009. An “ecstasy” laboratory was dismantled in Argentina in 2008. Seizures of “ecstasy” also took place in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). It cannot be excluded that South America, in addition to having a tradition of being a destination of “ecstasy” consignments from other regions, is now becoming a source of the substance, as indicated by the World Customs Organization. According to the latest report of that organization, in 2008, seizures of “ecstasy” from Brazil, Chile and Suriname were reported, for example, in the Netherlands and Sweden.

502. In addition to MDMA (“ecstasy”), drug-testing laboratories in South American countries reported seizures of less common psychotropic substances such as brolamfetamine, mazindol and zolpidem, as well as synthetic drugs not controlled internationally such as 2,5-dimethoxy-4-iodoamphetamine, dihydro-lysergic acid diethylamide, meta-chlorophenylpiperazine and modafinil (a stimulant used for the treatment of narcolepsy).

Precursors

503. According to a Peruvian national study on the diagnosis of the situation concerning the diversion of chemical substances to drug trafficking, published in 2009, the manufacture of 1 kg of cocaine hydrochloride requires the use of approximately 100 kg of various chemical substances. In 2007 and 2008, seizures of potassium permanganate, the key precursor used in the illicit manufacture of cocaine hydrochloride, were reported in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Since 2000, the largest seizures of potassium permanganate have been reported by Colombia. Between 2000 and 2008 a total of 837 tons of potassium permanganate were seized in Colombia. Despite the dismantling of a large number of cocaine laboratories in the Plurinational State of Bolivia in recent years, the seizures of potassium permanganate reported in the country remained low, totalling less than 500 kg in the period 2000-2008. The Board notes with concern that, with the exception of the clandestine potassium permanganate laboratories seized in Colombia, the origin of the potassium permanganate seized in South American countries remains unknown. The Board calls on the Governments of countries in the Americas and the regional members of the Project Cohesion Task Force to devise strategies to address the smuggling of potassium permanganate into the cocaine-manufacturing areas of South America.

504. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of attempts by traffickers to secure precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants, including ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in the form of pharmaceutical preparations in both Central America and South America. From 2007 to 2009, seizures of sizeable amounts of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine were made in Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The diverted substances were destined primarily for clandestine methamphetamine

laboratories in countries in North America, in particular Mexico. However, in 2008, the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine was detected in Argentina. Investigations into seizures of ephedrine indicate Mexican traffickers have increased their presence and activities in South America.

Substances not under international control

505. In 2008, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela placed under national control four substances currently not under international control: butorphanol, nalbuphine, ketamine and tramadol. The control measures include the issuance of import permits and the registration of medicines containing the substances. Paraguay also made subject to national control four substances not currently controlled under the international drug control treaties: ketamine, modafinil, oxymethadone and thalidomide.

5. Abuse and treatment

506. According to the *World Drug Report 2009*,⁴⁸ the primary drugs of abuse among persons treated for drug problems in South America are cocaine-type drugs (accounting for 52 per cent of all cases involving persons seeking treatment for drug abuse), followed by cannabis (accounting for 33 per cent of such cases). The demand for treatment for the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants is significantly lower. Only 4.8 per cent of those seeking treatment do so for the abuse of amphetamines and 5.1 per cent for the abuse of MDMA (“ecstasy”). Only 1.7 per cent of drug abusers in the region are treated primarily for the abuse of opiates.

507. According to the *2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic*,⁴⁹ published by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), although HIV transmission as a result of drug use by injection is still high in South America, the number of new infections transmitted by injecting drugs appears to be decreasing. While the level of HIV infection among persons who use drugs by injection has declined in some cities of Brazil, HIV transmission among such persons remains significant in Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay. Brazilian authorities estimate that about

⁴⁸ *World Drug Report 2009* ..., pp. 14 and 261.

⁴⁹ Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, *2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic* (Geneva, 2008).

0.2 per cent of drug abusers in Brazil inject drugs. Uruguayan authorities estimate that 0.3 per cent of drug abusers in their country inject drugs.

508. The UNODC estimate of the past-year prevalence of cannabis abuse among the general population in South America is 3.4 per cent. The prevalence of cannabis abuse was the highest in Argentina and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), exceeding 7 per cent of the adult population. According to the eighth national survey of drug abuse in Chile, conducted in 2008, cannabis continues to be the most abused illicit drug in the country. About 6.4 per cent of Chileans aged 12-64 years reported having abused cannabis at least once in the previous year. The national study on the use of psychoactive substances in households conducted in 2008 showed that cannabis is also the most abused drug in Colombia. The past-year prevalence of cannabis abuse among persons aged 12-64 years in Colombia increased slightly from 1.9 per cent in 2003 to 2.3 per cent in 2008. Almost half of the individuals surveyed responded that cannabis was easily available in the country.

509. The estimated annual prevalence of cocaine abuse in South America among persons aged 15-64 was 0.9 per cent, approximately double the world prevalence rate of cocaine abuse (0.4-0.5 per cent). Although Colombia is one of the world's main producers of cocaine, according to the 2008 national study of drug abuse, past-year prevalence of cocaine abuse in Colombia was 0.7 per cent, which is slightly less than the prevalence rate for the region as a whole. Cocaine abuse has continued to increase in some countries in the region. In 2008, the abuse of cocaine was reported to have increased in Ecuador, Paraguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). In Uruguay, the annual prevalence of cocaine abuse among persons aged 12-65 rose from 0.2 per cent in 2001 to 1.4 per cent in 2007. In Chile, the lifetime prevalence of the abuse of cocaine, including cocaine base, increased from to 3.5 per cent in 1994 to 7.7 per cent in 2008. In Peru, the annual prevalence of cocaine abuse was stable. The lifetime prevalence of cocaine abuse among persons aged 12-64 in Peru was 1.4 per cent.

510. The past-year prevalence of the abuse of opiates in South America was 0.3 per cent. According to UNODC, levels of opioid abuse are stable in a number of countries in the Americas, including Brazil, Chile and Paraguay. Nevertheless, rising levels of opioid

abuse in 2008 were reported in Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The largest population of opioid abusers in South America, in particular those abusing synthetic opioids, was found in Brazil.

511. According to the latest data, the annual prevalence of the abuse of MDMA ("ecstasy") among the general population in South America is estimated at 0.2 per cent, which is one of the lowest rates of all regions. In the past few years, increased abuse of "ecstasy" among secondary school students was reported in several countries in the region, including Argentina, Chile and Colombia. According to the 2008 study on drug abuse, an estimated 55,000 Colombians, or 0.3 per cent of the population aged 12-64 years, had used "ecstasy" in the previous year. Most of those persons were men aged 18-24 years. About 1.7 per cent of the persons surveyed in Colombia had received an offer to try or buy "ecstasy" in the previous year.

C. Asia

East and South-East Asia

1. Major developments

512. States in East and South-East Asia have made progress in reducing illicit opium poppy cultivation over the years. However, it appears that they have recently been experiencing some setbacks. In 2008, the area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in the region increased by 3.3 per cent compared with 2007.

513. In addition, there was a significant increase in the trafficking in methamphetamine and the illicit manufacture of MDMA ("ecstasy"). Moreover, for the first time in recent years, the illicit manufacture of GHB was reported.

514. Seizures of new types of products containing mixtures of synthetic drugs were reported in China. In December 2008, tablets consisting of a mixture of methaqualone and ephedrine were seized in northern China (in the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia). In January 2009, mixtures of GHB, MDMA and ketamine concealed in bottles labelled "traditional cough medicine" were seized in the autonomous region of Guangxi, China.

515. Drug traffickers are increasingly using social networking sites to recruit South-East Asian women to

work as “mules” in countries in East and South-East Asia, including Singapore. The traffickers are believed to be targeting single women between the ages of 20 and 30 who do not have a criminal record and who are unemployed or work in clerical, sales or service jobs.

516. The Board notes with satisfaction the progress made by Viet Nam in the strengthening control measures since the mission of the Board visited that country in 2007.

517. Although ketamine is not under international control, its illicit manufacture, trafficking and abuse are becoming major problems in many countries in East and South-East Asia. An increase in the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in ketamine was reported in the region. In China, 44 laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of ketamine were dismantled in 2007.

518. The link between HIV transmission and drug abuse by injection remains a concern in many countries in East and South-East Asia.

2. Regional cooperation

519. The thirtieth meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Senior Officials on Drug Matters was held from 29 September to 20 October 2009 in Phnom Penh. During the meeting, participants endorsed the action-oriented ASEAN Work Plan on Combating Illicit Drug Production, Trafficking and Use (2009-2015), as well as a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the workplan. Aimed at making ASEAN member States free of illicit drugs by 2015, the workplan will guide ASEAN member States in reducing, in a sustainable manner, illicit crop cultivation, illicit drug production, drug trafficking, the prevalence of illicit drug use and drug-related crime. The eighth meetings of the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD) Task Force on Civic Awareness and of the ACCORD Task Force on Demand Reduction were held in Jakarta on 5 and 6 August 2009. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the progress made by ACCORD member States in meeting the goals set out under the thematic “Pillars” of civic awareness and demand reduction, as contained in the ACCORD Plan of Action. Participants reiterated the need to shift the focus of policy interventions from public security to public health. The twenty-ninth ASEAN Chiefs of Police Conference was held in Hanoi from 13 to

15 May 2009. Participants resolved to formulate best practices with regard to precursor chemicals in order to stem the illicit diversion of those substances for use in the manufacture of illicit drugs and to share experiences in rehabilitating drug abusers.

520. The Sixth Asian Youth Congress was held in Bali, Indonesia, from 4 to 7 August 2008. During the meeting, participants shared their experiences in peer-led activities to reduce drug abuse in schools and worked together to identify community-based strategies to address drug abuse issues among youth. The eighteenth Anti-Drug Liaison Officials’ Meeting for International Cooperation was held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 24 to 26 September 2008. One of the key proposals of the meeting was that the participating countries establish a common Internet server to exchange information on drug-related crimes. The Response Beyond Borders South-East Asia Regional Workshop was held in Phnom Penh on 8 and 9 October 2008. The objective of the workshop was to foster greater cooperation in improving the quality of life of drug abusers in Asia, by sharing country experiences and best practices. The Thirty-third Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, was held in Denpasar, Indonesia, from 6 to 9 October 2009. Issues such as emerging trends in drug trafficking and measures to counter the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants were discussed at the meeting. Governments were encouraged to ensure that their legal framework was in compliance with the international drug control conventions. In addition, Governments were urged to support increased cooperation among their law enforcement, forensic and chemical control authorities, to ensure a safe and environmentally friendly approach to the disposal of seized chemicals and products of clandestine laboratories.

521. In 2008, China continued to provide training at its police academies in Yunnan Province and the autonomous region of Xinjiang to drug control officers from Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam. The officers studied national drug control efforts in China and were trained in drug detection skills. In Thailand, the Office of the Narcotics Control Board of the Thai Ministry of Justice, with technical assistance provided by Japan, implemented a regional cooperation project on capacity-building in the area of drug analysis with the aim of improving drug law enforcement in Cambodia,

the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. In 2009, training courses on the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers were conducted by Thai law enforcement authorities for the relevant authorities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

522. In October 2008, the National Narcotics Board of Indonesia and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency signed a memorandum of understanding on the strengthening of cooperation against the illicit production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals, including in the area of joint law enforcement operations. In April 2009, the national food and drug administrations of China and the Republic of Korea signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in ensuring the safety of drugs and medical devices: the two administrations will share information on licensing and regulatory systems in their respective countries. The Board continues to encourage international cooperation in drug control and looks forward to the signing of similar memorandums of understanding in the future.

523. Countries in East and South-East Asia continued to cooperate through joint drug control investigations. In February 2008, the cooperation of law enforcement authorities from China and Myanmar resulted in the arrest of drug traffickers and the seizure of 50 kg of methamphetamine. In July 2008, Chinese and Philippine law enforcement authorities cooperated in an operation that resulted in the dismantling of a clandestine methamphetamine laboratory in Quezon, Philippines. Methamphetamine, precursor chemicals and laboratory equipment were seized at the laboratory in Quezon and at a warehouse in Laguna. In early 2009, Vietnamese border forces, in cooperation with law enforcement authorities of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, seized 25,800 tablets of amphetamine-type stimulants in Thanh Hoa, Viet Nam.

524. At the end of June 2008, the Drug Seizure Immediate Notification System for Asia and Oceania, which had been launched in January 2008 in Hong Kong, China, completed its pilot phase, during which 257 kg of drugs were seized and the participating countries issued 78 notifications. On the basis of the success of the pilot phase, the participants agreed to continue to utilize the system and extend it to other regions.

525. The Board encourages countries in East and South-East Asia to continue to cooperate in the areas of drug control and drug abuse prevention.

3. National legislation, policy and action

526. China has established a drug control intelligence and forensic centre under its Ministry of Public Security to implement its Narcotics Control Law, which entered into force in June 2008. The main objective of the centre is to enhance the drug control intelligence and investigation capacities of law enforcement agencies, particularly at the central level. The centre is responsible for the collection, research and application of drug control intelligence and information, the international exchange of drug-related intelligence, research on drugs, the study of advanced forensic technologies and the provision of drug control training. In addition, a circular was issued in July 2008 to instruct the relevant agencies to strengthen drug abuse prevention and education, enhance treatment and rehabilitation for addicts, strengthen law enforcement and drug control to prevent diversion and reinforce international cooperation in the area of drug control. In November 2008, the National Narcotics Control Commission of China organized a joint meeting to provide an overview of national drug control efforts and the current drug control situation and to delegate tasks in combating drug-related crime. Representatives of the police forces, postal services and border control, customs and other agencies attended the meeting.

527. In August 2008, China placed hydroxylamine, a precursor for ketamine, under national control. In November 2008, China introduced a new requirement for drug regulatory agencies to impose further controls on compound pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine (with the exception of traditional medicines containing ephedra). In December 2008, China further strengthened control measures for compound oral solutions containing codeine. In order to prevent the diversion of such preparations, measures to control their production, wholesale and retail have been strengthened.

528. In May 2008, a seminar on precursor chemical control for shipping agents, air freight forwarders and cargo operators dealing with precursor chemicals was conducted in Hong Kong, China. The seminar was aimed at strengthening cooperation between law enforcement authorities and industry in preventing the

diversion of precursor chemicals, covering such topics as legal requirements for the import, export and trans-shipment of precursor chemicals and the liability of operators in handling shipments of such substances.

529. In 2008, *N*-methyl-*N*-[1-(3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl)propan-2-yl]hydroxylamine (*N*-OH MDMA) was designated as a narcotic drug under the Narcotics and Psychotropics Control Law of Japan.

530. In November 2008, the Lao People's Democratic Republic announced that the recent increase in drug trafficking would be addressed through its comprehensive drug control master plan covering the five-year period 2009-2013. The master plan provides, inter alia, for the recent increase in and proliferation of drug abuse, drug trafficking and other drug-related criminal activities. Under the drug law of the Lao People's Democratic Republic adopted by presidential decree in 2008, opium is subject to strict control and may be used for scientific, medical and industrial purposes only. According to the law, the commercial cultivation of opium poppy is prohibited, and offenders may be punished under civil and criminal law.

531. In August 2008, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency joined forces with a telecommunications provider to launch a pilot project to combat illegal drug-related activities. The project was initially implemented for a two-month period in the Metropolitan Manila area. Under the project, subscribers to the telecommunications provider were able to provide information on suspected illegal drug-related activities through a secure Web-based text messaging system. In October 2008, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency signed a memorandum of understanding with chemical and pharmaceutical companies to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals. Forty chemical and pharmaceutical companies and three associations signed the agreement to become proactive counterparts in cutting off the supply of precursor chemicals to clandestine laboratories. The Board welcomes this initiative in the Philippines and encourages the Governments of other countries to follow suit. In that regard, Governments may wish to consult the Guidelines for a Voluntary Code of Practice for the Chemical Industry, developed by the Board in 2009. In December 2008, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency reiterated its appeal to judges and prosecutors to expedite trial proceedings in connection with drug-related cases. The

Director-General of the Agency stated that only 21 per cent of the 99,434 drug-related cases initiated had been resolved, while the remainder were pending.

532. In March 2008, the Republic of Korea revised its Act on the Control of Narcotic Drugs. Under the revised Act, the disposal of expired narcotic drugs for medical use must be conducted in the presence of a competent national authority. In addition, the treatment and rehabilitation of persons addicted to narcotic drugs was transferred from the Korea Food and Drug Administration to the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs.

533. In the Republic of Korea, the Decree enforcing the Act on the Control of Narcotic Drugs added two substances to the list of substances under national control: benzylpiperazine was added to the list of psychotropic substances under control and GBL was added to the list of precursor chemicals under control.

534. According to the Central Narcotics Bureau of Singapore, opiate abusers, who account for the overwhelming majority of arrested drug abusers, have been undergoing a rehabilitation regime in centres for the treatment of drug abuse in Singapore. In August 2007, the rehabilitation regime was expanded to apply to persons arrested for the first, or second time for abusing cannabis or cocaine. Drug abusers who are arrested three or more times for the abuse of those drugs face imprisonment. Eventually, the system of rehabilitating persons arrested for the first or second time for the abuse of certain types of drugs and imprisoning persons arrested for three or more times for that offence will be expanded to cover all drugs of abuse.

535. In April 2008, Singapore strengthened its efforts to prevent the abuse of inhalants, particularly among youth. The Central Narcotics Bureau of Singapore regularly conducts operations to counter the abuse of inhalants and has also intensified law enforcement efforts by working with the police, teachers and counsellors to gather information on meeting points used by abusers of inhalants. Preventive education campaigns, aimed at raising awareness about the harm caused by abusing inhalants, is conducted at schools. A referral procedure for cases involving the abuse of inhalants or drugs has been developed to guide schools in reporting such cases to the Bureau. Parents are educated on the dangers of abusing drugs or inhalants

through talks organized for parent support groups in schools, workplace talks and publications.

536. In June 2009, the National Assembly of Viet Nam passed a law to amend and supplement the Penal Code. According to the new law, illicit use of narcotic drugs is no longer a criminal offence; moreover, the death penalty is no longer imposed for the offence of organizing the illicit use of narcotic drugs but remains in force for offences related to illegally stockpiling, transporting and trading in or appropriating narcotic drugs.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

537. The illicit cultivation of cannabis continued to be reported throughout East and South-East Asia. In 2008, 290 ha of illicitly cultivated cannabis plants were eradicated in Indonesia and 3,385 cannabis plants were eradicated in the Republic of Korea. In the Philippines, there continued to be reports of the illicit cultivation of cannabis for the domestic market. In Mongolia, while most of the cannabis seized in 2008 had been illicitly cultivated in that country, some of it originated in the Russian Federation. Cannabis continues to be cultivated illicitly in the south-west provinces of Viet Nam; nearly 1 ha of illicit cannabis cultivation was reported in 2008. In Japan in 2008, cannabis with a high THC content was illicitly cultivated from seeds smuggled from overseas and sold over the Internet.

538. The Philippines continued to seize significant amounts of cannabis. In 2008, it seized about 4 million cannabis plants (compared with 2.5 million in 2007) and 3.7 tons of cannabis (compared with 1.2 tons in 2007). In 2008, Japan, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea reported having seized the largest quantity of cannabis in recent years. In November 2008, police in the Lao People's Democratic Republic seized 600 kg of cannabis concealed in a truck transporting furniture to Thailand. In April 2009, China seized 87 kg of cannabis at Beijing International Airport from the baggage of a passenger travelling from Qatar to China. Vietnamese police reported that a new, more potent strain of cannabis was emerging on the illicit market, particularly in northern and southern Viet Nam.

539. Illicit opium poppy cultivation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar has

recently begun to increase. In Myanmar, despite the eradication of 4,820 ha of illicit opium poppy crops (an increase of 34 per cent compared with 2007 in terms of the total area eradicated), the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation increased by 3 per cent (to 28,500 ha) in 2008. The area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in 2008 also increased to 1,600 ha in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, to 288 ha in Thailand and to 99 ha in Viet Nam. Data on the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in South-East Asia in 2009 are not yet available. Both the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar have significantly reduced the area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in their respective territories in recent years, achieving record lows of 1,500 ha in 2007 and 21,500 ha in 2006, respectively. In order not to lose ground on the successes achieved thus far, the Board urges the Governments of countries in East and South-East Asia to strengthen their efforts to eradicate the illicit cultivation of opium poppy.

540. China reported the seizure of 1.4 tons of opium in 2008. The opium seized in Mongolia during 2008 originated in China and had been intended for domestic use rather than for re-export. In 2008, 31 kg of opium were seized in Viet Nam. Myanmar and Thailand also reported seizures of opium in 2008. Seizure data indicate that the United Wa State Army in Myanmar is attempting to smuggle drugs into other countries, mainly into Thailand, in order to procure arms and ammunition and is also selling drugs in exchange for money in preparation for the possibility of again going to war with the Government of Myanmar. The Board notes with concern that development and encourages the Government of Myanmar to strengthen its control over the movement of illicit drugs, particularly along its borders.

541. In 2008, Hong Kong, China, and Thailand were identified as trans-shipment areas for heroin trafficking. Traffickers attempted to transport the drug from countries in South Asia, South-East Asia, West Asia and (East, Southern and West) Africa through Hong Kong, China, to destinations elsewhere in East Asia and Oceania. The route through Thailand favoured by heroin traffickers was from South Asia and South-East Asia to East Asia, Europe and Oceania. Heroin consignments smuggled through Hong Kong, China, mainly arrived by air and departed by air or train. Heroin consignments were smuggled through Thailand mainly along air routes. In 2008, heroin

continued to be smuggled mainly from the Lao People's Democratic Republic into Viet Nam and from Viet Nam into China. In early 2009, Thai police seized 16 kg of heroin and arrested a number of persons suspected of using a popular Internet chat service to trade in illicit drugs.

542. The decreasing trend in heroin seizures continued in China, which reported the seizure of 4.3 tons of heroin in 2008 (compared with 4.6 tons in 2007). Between November 2008 and April 2009, law enforcement authorities in Thailand seized 12 kg of heroin in nine separate incidents at Bangkok International Suvarnabhumi Airport. In March 2008, 49 kg of heroin concealed in carpets arriving from Karachi, Pakistan, were seized by Chinese authorities at Ürümqi Airport.

543. In 2008, customs authorities in Hong Kong, China, seized 21.7 kg of cocaine. In 2008, the Republic of Korea seized 8.8 kg of cocaine in two separate incidents. In August and September 2008, law enforcement authorities at Incheon International Airport seized cocaine bound for Japan en route from Brazil.

Psychotropic substances

544. The illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants remained a problem in countries in East and South-East Asia. In February 2009, 200 kg of amphetamine were seized at a clandestine laboratory in Taiwan Province of China. In 2007, two clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were dismantled in Cambodia and one laboratory was dismantled in the Republic of Korea. In 2008, 10 clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were dismantled in the Philippines. During 2008 and the first half of 2009, laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine continued to be dismantled in China, particularly in central and southern China, where seven such laboratories were dismantled in 2008.

545. Traffickers continued to attempt to smuggle methamphetamine from Cambodia and China into the Republic of Korea and from the Lao People's Democratic Republic into Thailand. While some of the methamphetamine seized in the Philippines in 2008 originated in China (including Taiwan Province of China), some had been illicitly manufactured domestically. Traffickers had intended to transport the

methamphetamine through Thailand to countries in North America and Europe and to other countries in South-East Asia. In early 2009, Thai police seized 60,000 amphetamine tablets and arrested a number of persons suspected of using a popular Internet chat service to trade in illicit drugs.

546. In 2008, most of the countries in East and South-East Asia, including China, Indonesia, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, reported seizures of methamphetamine. In 2008, 6.2 tons of methamphetamine were seized in China. In 2008, the Philippines seized 855 kg of methamphetamine (compared with 369 kg in 2007), while the Republic of Korea seized 26 kg of the drug. Thailand reported the seizure of 22 million tablets of methamphetamine in 2008, a significant increase over 2007, when 14 million tablets were seized. In July 2009, law enforcement authorities in Quang Binh province, Viet Nam, seized 806,000 methamphetamine tablets from four persons purportedly attempting to cross the border between Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In August 2008, about 1.7 tons of methamphetamine were seized at a clandestine laboratory in Guangdong Province, China. In November 2008, customs officers in Japan seized approximately 300 kg of methamphetamine on a vessel in the seaport of Moji (Fukuoka, Japan). In March 2009, 90 kg of methamphetamine were seized at a laboratory involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in Guangzhou, China.

547. In 2007, Indonesia dismantled 16 laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of MDMA ("ecstasy"). In Mongolia, all the "ecstasy" seized in 2008 originated in China and had been intended for domestic use rather than re-export. "Ecstasy" seized in the Philippines in 2008 reportedly originated in Thailand.

548. In 2008, many countries in East and South-East Asia, including China, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Thailand, continued to report seizures of MDMA ("ecstasy"). Indonesia reported the seizure of 1,071,266 "ecstasy" tablets, while customs authorities in Japan seized 27 kg of the drug from passengers arriving from the Netherlands at Narita International Airport. In October 2008, 10,000 "ecstasy" tablets

were seized in Hong Kong, China. In May 2009, 7.1 kg of “ecstasy” were seized in Zhejiang Province, China.

549. In 2007, the Republic of Korea dismantled a laboratory involved in the illicit manufacture of GHB. In December 2008, Vietnamese customs officers at the international airport at Ho Chi Minh City seized 796,500 tablets of a pharmaceutical preparation containing nimetazepam; the tablets had been manufactured in Japan and concealed in a shipment of loudspeakers from Taiwan Province of China. Several seizures of nimetazepam had also been reported in China earlier in 2008. Customs authorities in Thailand seized 75 kg of diazepam trafficked by mail in 2008; the United Kingdom had been the intended destination of the majority of the mailed items.

Precursors

550. Significant quantities of precursor chemicals continued to be seized in countries in East and South-East Asia. The Philippines reported the seizure of numerous precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. For example, more than 200 kg of ephedrine were seized at warehouses and clandestine laboratories during 2008. In 2008, the Philippines also reported having seized a significant quantity of acetone (902 litres) and hydrochloric acid (385 litres). In 2008, China again reported having seized a large quantity of precursor chemicals, including acetic anhydride (5.6 tons), ephedrine (6.7 tons), P-2-P (2.9 tons) and pseudoephedrine (1.1 tons). The Republic of Korea seized acetic anhydride (14.8 tons) and pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine (2.2 kg) in 2008. In 2008, 192 kg of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine were seized in Thailand, purportedly bound for Australia.

551. In March 2008, law enforcement authorities in the Republic of Korea seized 2.8 tons of acetic anhydride concealed in used car parts at the port of Busan. The consignment was bound for Afghanistan via the Islamic Republic of Iran. In April 2008, China dismantled two clandestine laboratories and seized 37.5 kg of pseudoephedrine in Hunan Province. In June 2008, three suspects were arrested in the Philippines for selling 67 litres of acetone to an undercover agent in Quezon. Under Philippine drug control legislation, the sale of more than 1 litre of acetone to the same individual within a one-month

period is prohibited. Traffickers have obtained precursor chemicals in Viet Nam and smuggled them into other countries, where the chemicals are used for illicit drug manufacture. In August 2008, Vietnamese police dismantled a criminal group involved in smuggling a pharmaceutical product containing pseudoephedrine into Australia. In October 2008, 20 tons of sulphuric acid were seized in Yunnan Province, China. In February 2009, 119 kg of ephedrine were seized at a clandestine methamphetamine laboratory in Taiwan Province of China. In February 2009, rangers from the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia, in cooperation with law enforcement authorities, dismantled two clandestine sassafras oil laboratories in the western part of the Cardamom mountain range. In June 2009, Ministry of Environment rangers seized 5.7 tons of sassafras oil in Veal Vêng District (Pursat Province).

Substances not under international control

552. Countries in East and South-East Asia continued to report seizures of ketamine. In January 2008, 300 kg of ketamine were seized in Chengdu, China. In November 2008, 307 kg of ketamine were seized in Hong Kong, China. The ketamine was concealed in an air freight consignment of loudspeakers arriving from Singapore. In April 2009, 246 kg of ketamine were seized in Taiwan Province of China. In 2008, the Philippines reported a seizure of 10 kg of ketamine. Myanmar continued to report seizures of ketamine in 2009. Singapore also reported the seizure of a small amount of ketamine in 2009. The Philippines continued to report seizures of precursor chemicals not under international control but used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine; the chemicals seized included iodine (4.7 tons), palladium chloride (2 kg), red phosphorus (1.5 tons), sodium hydroxide (2.5 tons) and thionyl chloride (41 litres).

5. Abuse and treatment

553. Methamphetamine is the most widely abused drug in Japan, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea. In Thailand, 69,145 people were treated for methamphetamine abuse in 2008. Japan reported a significant increase in methamphetamine abuse in 2008 and, in recent years, an increase in the practice among methamphetamine abusers of sharing injection equipment. A recent increase in the abuse of MDMA

(“ecstasy”), especially among youth, was also reported in Japan.

554. Heroin remained the most commonly abused drug in China, Malaysia and Viet Nam. By the end of 2008, data on more than 1 million drug abusers had been collected and entered in the system for monitoring drug abusers in China. Some 877,700 of those drug abusers abuse heroin, and 60 per cent are under the age of 35. In 2008, 264,000 drug abusers underwent compulsory treatment and rehabilitation in China. Between June and December 2008, 16,300 drug abusers participated in community-based rehabilitation. The HIV epidemic in China began among heroin abusers in Yunnan Province in the late 1980s. By 2002, HIV had spread along drug trafficking routes to all 31 provinces in China. By 2007, infected drug abusers accounted for more than 38 per cent of the estimated 700,000 persons infected with HIV.

555. In Malaysia, 61 per cent of drug abusers abuse heroin and an estimated 120,000 persons abuse drugs by injection. The number of new cases of HIV infection among persons who abuse drugs by injection has been falling since 2002, when it reached a peak of more than 5,000. In 2008, under the Malaysian national programme to prevent the spread of HIV among persons who abuse drugs by injection, 3,495 persons were provided with a variety of services at “drop-in” centres. The services included the provision of information relating to the dangers of drug abuse, basic counselling and referrals, basic health care and assistance in establishing support groups.

556. In November 2008, 173,603 drug abusers were registered with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Viet Nam, representing a decrease of 2.6 per cent compared with 2007. Of that total, 82 per cent were heroin abusers. Fifty-five per cent of drug abusers in Viet Nam have become infected with HIV as a result of sharing needles. Since May 2008, when a pilot project for methadone maintenance therapy was launched in Hai Phong and Ho Chi Minh City, 455 drug abusers have been treated in six clinics in the two cities. There are proposals for replicating the pilot project in 10 provinces, including Hanoi.

557. The Lao People’s Democratic Republic reported a decrease in the prevalence rate of opium abuse (expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 and above) in the northern provinces from 0.3 per cent in 2007 to 0.2 per cent in 2008. However, the

relapse of opium addicts continues to be a problem: 4,906 opium addicts were identified as having relapsed in 2008. The total number of opium addicts in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic is estimated at 12,680.

558. Cannabis is the most widely abused drug in Mongolia and Thailand and remains the second most abused drug in the Philippines and the Republic of Korea. In Macao, China, an increase in the abuse of ketamine among young persons aged 14-25 has been noted in the past two years.

559. In Singapore, the treatment regime for cocaine and cannabis abusers is similar to the current regime for opiate abusers, which takes into account the individual abuser’s needs and readiness for change and treatment and the severity of the addiction. All drug abusers undergo a thorough classification and assessment process. The treatment programmes focus on teaching abusers how to overcome behavioural problems resulting from addiction. Key components of the regime include motivation to change, skills training, family-based programmes and religious counselling.

560. The findings of a survey of students 12-14 years old conducted in 2008 in Japan supported the hypothesis that there is a close link between abuse of organic solvents and abuse of cannabis and methamphetamine. In a number of countries in East and South-East Asia, an increase in the abuse of inhalants was reported. Following the enactment of the Intoxicating Substances Act in 1987 in Singapore, the number of arrested inhalant abusers decreased from a high of 1,112 in 1987 to a low of 120 in 2005. However, inhalant abuse has recently been increasing. The majority of the inhalant abusers are reported to be under the age of 20.

561. In late 2008 and early 2009, within the framework of the HIV/AIDS Asia Regional Program (HAARP), country programmes were launched in Cambodia and China with the aim of reducing, over a five-year period, HIV transmission associated with drug abuse by injection. Similar programmes have been designed for the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam. The United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) programme supports HIV prevention, treatment and care programming for persons who abuse drugs by injection in Viet Nam. Several countries in East and South-East Asia also benefit from the Global

Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria grants, which support national programming to reduce HIV transmission among persons who abuse drugs by injection.

562. As problems of drug abuse may not always be confined to high-risk groups, the Board encourages the Governments of countries in East and South-East Asia to remain vigilant with regard to increases in drug abuse among the general population.

South Asia

1. Major developments

563. Trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants has increased in South Asia, as evidenced by the fact that States in the region continue to report seizures of those substances. Neighbouring South-East Asian countries have typically been a major source of amphetamine-type stimulants; however, the discovery of several clandestine methamphetamine laboratories in South Asia in the past two years indicates that countries in that region are increasingly being used as locations for the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

564. Courier and postal services have become a common means of smuggling drugs out of India. A broad range of substances under international control have been detected by law enforcement authorities in parcels transported by courier or post. In recent years, heroin and diazepam have been the drugs most frequently found in seized parcels, while morphine, cannabis herb, cannabis resin, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine have been seized occasionally. The majority of clandestine shipments of controlled substances detected in India were destined for Australia and countries in North America and Europe. The Board encourages the Government of India to increase its vigilance in detecting the misuse of courier and postal services to smuggle controlled substances out of that country.

2. Regional cooperation

565. In June 2008, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of India organized a workshop in New Delhi on modalities for the establishment of a permanent regional forum of non-governmental organizations of States members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on

drug abuse prevention. Recommendations arising from the workshop stressed the importance of strengthening networking among non-governmental organizations, information-sharing and advocacy for drug abuse prevention.

566. The ninth talks at the level of Home Secretary between Bangladesh and India were held in Dhaka in August 2008. The home secretaries of the two countries agreed that cooperation between their national drug control agencies needed to be strengthened. As follow-up to the talks, the heads of the national drug control agencies of Bangladesh and India met in New Delhi in March 2009 to discuss ways of enhancing cooperation in combating drug trafficking.

567. Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka were among the 16 countries represented at an Asian Symposium on recovering from drug abuse, the third in a series of such symposiums, held in Tagaytay, Philippines, in November 2008. The Symposium provided an opportunity for participants to present the progress achieved in treating drug addiction in South and South-East Asia and for drug abusers who had recovered from drug dependence to share their experiences.

568. Heads of State and Government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka participated in the second summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), held in New Delhi in November 2008. During the meeting, participants agreed on the final text of the BIMSTEC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking, one of the main objectives of which is to enhance cooperation among the law enforcement agencies of the BIMSTEC member States in combating trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors.

569. Representatives of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka attended the Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok in February 2009. Participants in the Meeting recommended that Governments should develop coordinated strategies to address the increase in heroin trafficking by West African criminal groups, to implement legislation to counter money-laundering and to assess national demand for and sources of amphetamine-type

stimulants in order to prevent the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in those substances more effectively.

570. During the thirty-first session of the SAARC Council of Ministers, held in Colombo in February 2009, ministers for foreign affairs of the SAARC member States discussed implementation of the declaration adopted at the fifteenth summit of SAARC in August 2008, entitled "Partnership for Growth for Our People", and adopted the SAARC Ministerial Declaration on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, in which the ministers agreed to consider the development of an integrated border management mechanism in order to improve customs control measures and prevent trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and other materials intended to support terrorism.

571. Participants from Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka were present at the Commonwealth Asia Regional Workshop on Drug and Substance Abuse held in Brunei Darussalam in March 2009. The workshop was organized by the Asia Centre of the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Brunei Darussalam, with the support of UNODC. During the workshop, youth leaders were involved in interactive lecture sessions, group work, role playing and field visits that helped them to develop a viable action plan for drug abuse prevention and treatment and care for drug abusers. The workshop also provided participants with a platform for sharing best practices in dealing with problems related to drug abuse.

572. In March 2009, a South Asia regional workshop on HIV related to drug use was held in Kathmandu. The workshop was a follow-up to the First Asian Consultation on the Prevention of HIV Related to Drug Use, which was held in January 2008, and was intended as a forum that would address the challenges identified during the Consultation in greater depth. The workshop focused on country-specific activities and regional cooperation in five main areas: the availability of community, civil society and government services to HIV patients; changes to law enforcement policies and practices regarding drug users; responses to the hepatitis C epidemic among drug users and to challenges in providing services to vulnerable populations affected by drug use, HIV and poverty; and support for parliamentarians in bringing about change in the areas discussed during the workshop.

3. National legislation, policy and action

573. In September 2008, the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency, in partnership with UNODC, conducted nationwide training on HIV and drug abuse prevention in prisons. The aim of the training was to raise awareness regarding drug abuse and HIV transmission among prison inmates in Bhutan. It was recognized that while the prevalence rate of drug abuse and that of HIV infection in prisons in Bhutan was still relatively low, measures should be taken to prevent their occurrence. Participants in the training included officials of the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency, prisons, the police and health departments and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

574. A week-long campaign to collect signatures against drug abuse, spearheaded by the Citizen's Initiative for Coronation and Centenary Celebrations, was conducted in Bhutan in November 2008. During the campaign, entitled "We, the children of Bhutan, pledge ...", more than 23,000 signatures were collected from children and their parents who pledged to live a life free of drugs. The collection of signatures was presented to the Prime Minister of Bhutan by secondary school students on behalf of the youth participating in the campaign.

575. In January 2009, the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency released three advocacy tools to prevent and reduce drug abuse in that country: a version of the Implementation Framework for the Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Substance Abuse Act of 2005 in Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan; a flip chart containing 10 key prevention messages on drug abuse and HIV; and a report on the drug abuse situation in Bhutan. The purpose of the tools is to raise public awareness of the risks associated with drug abuse, the role of drug abuse in the spread of HIV and avenues for seeking help in overcoming drug dependence. The flip chart will be distributed to all schools in Bhutan in order to promote drug abuse prevention among young people.

576. A revised version of the Scheme of Assistance for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse and for Social Defence Services of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of India became effective in October 2008. The Scheme is an ongoing programme that was last revised in 1999. It allows non-governmental organizations to obtain financial assistance from the Government for the

implementation of initiatives to reduce drug demand. Activities supported by the Scheme include drug abuse awareness and prevention programmes and treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. The revised Scheme provides, inter alia, for arrangements for meeting the increase in the cost of related services since 1999 and for the fostering of more comprehensive approaches to the rehabilitation of drug addicts so as to facilitate their reintegration into the community.

577. In November 2008, a programme to provide incarcerated drug abusers who abuse drugs by injection with substitution drugs that can be taken orally was initiated at the Tihar prison complex near New Delhi. Many incarcerated drug abusers start injecting drugs soon after entering prison, thus becoming exposed to a higher risk of contracting and transmitting HIV through unsafe practices such as sharing needles. The programme, implemented in collaboration with UNODC, is the first of its kind to be established in prisons in South Asia and may be used by UNODC as a model for the development of similar programmes elsewhere in the region.

578. In December 2008, India passed a law amending its Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1940. The revised act increases penalties for the manufacture of counterfeit drugs and is aimed at combating the growing problem of counterfeit and adulterated drugs in that country.

579. During 2008, the National AIDS Control Organisation of India carried out a technical review of all institutions providing drug abusers in India with drug substitution treatment, with a view to their possible accreditation. In order to assist institutions in participating in the accreditation exercise, the organization released a document entitled "Standard operating procedure for substitution treatment using buprenorphine", which outlines the standards to be followed by providers of substitution treatment and against which institutions providing such therapy would be evaluated in order to determine their eligibility for accreditation.

580. An international documentary film festival entitled "Drugs: exploring myths, discovering facts, reducing harm" was held in New Delhi on 21 and 22 February 2009. The festival, organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in partnership with the National AIDS Control Organisation and UNODC, was aimed at

increasing public understanding of the issues surrounding drug abuse.

581. In India, a series of educational modules designed to assist schoolteachers in raising awareness about drug abuse was officially released in June 2009. The modules were prepared by the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, in collaboration with UNODC, and are part of a programme to prevent drug abuse in Indian schools. The Board encourages the Government of India to continue to support drug abuse prevention activities targeting young people.

582. In India, the fortieth meeting of the Drugs Consultative Committee was held in New Delhi on 29 June 2009. The meeting was attended by high-level officials of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Narcotics Control Bureau and the Department of Revenue (of the Ministry of Finance) and by the State drug controllers of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization of India. During the meeting, attention was drawn to the importance of the country's furnishing to the Board accurate statistics on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Participants deliberated on mechanisms that could facilitate the collection of the requisite information at the State level and subsequent reporting to the Drugs Controller General of India. The Narcotics Control Bureau agreed to organize training workshops for the State drug controllers and to work towards developing a system for efficient data collection. The Board notes with satisfaction the efforts of the Government of India to meet its reporting obligations under the international drug control conventions.

583. In March 2009, the Government of Maldives announced two new initiatives as part of its ongoing efforts to combat the growing problem of drug abuse in that country. A comprehensive project to support the drug abuse prevention and treatment components of the Maldives Drug Control Master Plan was announced. In addition, a narcotics control council headed by the Vice-President of Maldives and comprising the Commissioner of Police and representatives of several ministries, was established to facilitate coordinated action in the area of drug control.

584. On 15 July 2009, a parliamentary bill was passed in Sri Lanka to establish a coast guard department. The new agency is tasked with strengthening security in the territorial waters of Sri Lanka and helping to combat the smuggling of drugs into that country.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

585. Trafficking in cannabis herb and cannabis resin remains widespread throughout South Asia, where climate conditions are highly suitable for cannabis plant cultivation. In 2008, special drug law enforcement units of Bangladesh seized 2.3 tons of cannabis herb in that country. In India in the same year, law enforcement authorities seized about 103 tons of cannabis herb and 4.1 tons of cannabis resin, and routine operations to eradicate illicitly cultivated cannabis plants resulted in the eradication of some 164 ha of those plants. Large areas under illicit cannabis plant cultivation were also eradicated in Nepal, where more than 7 tons of cannabis herb were reported to have been seized in 2008. In Sri Lanka, more than 37 tons of cannabis herb were seized in 2008.

586. The widespread abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing narcotic drugs such as codeine is an ongoing problem in Bangladesh. Such preparations are smuggled into that country from India. In 2008, drug law enforcement authorities in Bangladesh seized 53,239 bottles containing codeine-based syrup and 226 ampoules containing pethidine and morphine. A total of 554 tablets containing codeine were also seized in Bangladesh in 2008, a significant decrease compared with 2007, when 70,000 tablets were seized.

587. The drug law enforcement authorities of India regularly eradicate opium poppy illicitly cultivated in remote areas of the country's eastern provinces. Drug law enforcement authorities at both the federal and state levels have stepped up their efforts to gather intelligence on illicit opium poppy cultivation and improve vigilance with regard to areas under such cultivation. The authorities have also conducted regular campaigns among villagers in areas where opium poppy is illicitly cultivated to raise their awareness about the implications of such cultivation. Indian law enforcement agencies reported that the total eradicated area of land under illicit cultivation had decreased from 8,000 ha in 2007 to 631 ha in 2008.

588. In the past, the low-grade heroin base known as "brown sugar" that was found on the illicit market in India was suspected of having been derived from

opium poppy diverted from licit cultivation. However, Indian law enforcement authorities estimate that in recent years, an increasing proportion of the heroin seized in India has originated in Afghanistan. The heroin that enters India is abused locally or is smuggled out of the country by couriers. That is an indication that India is being used as a transit area for heroin consignments. Some 4,950 seizures of heroin were reported in India in 2008. In most cases, only a small amount of heroin was seized. A total of 1,063 kg of heroin was seized in 2008. A total of 73 kg of morphine, which is also commonly abused in India, and 2,033 kg of opium were reported to have been seized in 2008.

589. In India, pharmaceutical preparations containing dextropropoxyphene are commonly used by persons who abuse drugs by injection. Such preparations are often used as an alternative to heroin since they are cheaper and more easily available. In 2008, Indian law enforcement authorities seized a total of more than 80,000 tablets containing dextropropoxyphene.

590. Although India produces and exports large quantities of opium derived from licit cultivation, access to morphine for the treatment of pain remains limited in that country. There have been frequent reports of acute shortages of morphine in palliative care centres and hospitals. The Board notes that efforts have been made at the national and state levels to identify the regulatory and legislative measures that bar access to morphine and encourages the Government of India to take the steps necessary to remove those barriers while continuing to prevent the diversion of morphine.

591. The smuggling of heroin into Maldives is an ongoing problem that is contributing to an increase in drug abuse in that country. In 2008, Maldivian law enforcement authorities reported numerous seizures of heroin, totalling more than 8 kg. In the majority of those cases, the traffickers were arrested at Malé International Airport and had travelled to Maldives from either India or Sri Lanka.

592. Sri Lanka continued to report seizures of heroin in 2008; in the course of the year, drug law enforcement units in that country seized about 17 kg of heroin. India and Pakistan were most often identified as the source of the seized heroin. The bulk of the heroin had been smuggled into Sri Lanka by sea; about

20 per cent of it was seized from passengers arriving by air.

Psychotropic substances

593. Bangladesh continues to report large seizures of pharmaceutical preparations containing buprenorphine, which is widely abused by injection. In 2008, law enforcement authorities in that country seized a record 14,782 ampoules containing buprenorphine, that had originated in India and 5,763 methamphetamine tablets, known as “yaba”, that had originated in Myanmar. “Yaba” is reported to be popular among young people in high-income families. In the majority of those cases, the preparations were smuggled by persons entering Bangladesh by crossing the country’s porous land borders.

594. Pharmaceutical preparations containing benzodiazepines are among the drugs most widely abused in Bhutan. More than 1,060 tablets containing chlordiazepoxide and 240 strips of tablets containing nitrazepam were seized in 2007. Bhutan continued to report frequent seizures of those drugs in 2008. The suspected origin of the seized drugs was India.

595. Consistent with reports of the increasing availability of amphetamine-type stimulants in South Asia, several seizures of methamphetamine were made in India in 2008. Indian law enforcement agencies seized about 7,500 tablets of methamphetamine in March 2008 and 3,000 tablets in September of the same year. In addition, 11 kg of methamphetamine was seized in the course of the year.

596. Methaqualone continues to be manufactured illicitly in India, before being smuggled into countries such as South Africa. A total of 2,382 kg of methaqualone was seized in 2008, compared with 1 kg in 2007, 4,521 kg in 2006 and 472 kg in 2005.

597. India has become one of the main sources of drugs sold through illegally operating Internet pharmacies. Orders placed with such pharmacies are often dispatched to buyers in other countries using courier or postal services. Since 2002, Indian law enforcement agencies have detected and disbanded several groups that were operating illegal Internet pharmacies. In February 2007, Indian authorities identified a company that offered software solutions allowing illegal transactions involving pharmaceutical preparations to be made over the Internet. In 2008,

three Internet pharmacies that had been operating in India and illegally selling psychotropic substances to buyers in the United States were shut down. The Board urges the Government of India to adopt measures to prevent the use of the Internet to divert controlled substances.

598. The abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing psychotropic substances in Nepal is facilitated by the open border that that country shares with India. In a survey on drug abuse conducted in 2006, 13 per cent of respondents reported having obtained drugs from the border area between the two countries. Pharmaceutical preparations commonly smuggled out of India and into Nepal contain buprenorphine and nitrazepam. In 2007, about 11,500 vials containing buprenorphine and 92,500 vials containing benzodiazepines were seized in Nepal.

Precursor chemicals

599. Law enforcement agencies in India continue to report seizures of acetic anhydride. While an average total of 300 litres of that precursor was seized annually from 2005 to 2007, a total of about 2,800 litres was seized in 2008. The Board encourages the Government of India to remain vigilant with regard to the diversion of acetic anhydride.

600. As one of the world’s largest manufacturers of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, India represents one of the main sources of those precursor chemicals, which are used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants. In recent years, Indian law enforcement agencies have seized several large consignments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine intended for use in illicit drug manufacture in other countries. In February 2008, intelligence provided by Indian law enforcement agencies led to the seizure in New York of 100 kg of ephedrine originating in India. In September 2008, drug control agencies in India seized 37 tons of pseudoephedrine and 872 kg of ephedrine. Attempts to smuggle ephedrine and pseudoephedrine out of India using courier and postal services have also been reported: a package containing 100 kg of ephedrine was seized in December 2007, while a consignment of 95 kg of pseudoephedrine was seized in January 2009.

601. Several attempts to smuggle pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine out of India were also detected in

2008. In February of that year, a total of 280,000 tablets containing pseudoephedrine were seized in India. Also in 2008, in two separate incidents at Le Havre, France, authorities intercepted 11 million tablets containing pseudoephedrine in transit from India to Honduras and a further 90 kg of such tablets in transit from India to Guatemala. Authorities of the United Kingdom seized 1,650,000 tablets containing pseudoephedrine in a consignment originating in India.

602. Bangladesh, like India, constitutes a significant source in South Asia of preparations containing pseudoephedrine. In 2008, 7,132 tablets originating in Bangladesh and destined for Guatemala were seized while being transported through France.

603. A number of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories have been discovered in South Asia in recent years. In May 2008, a clandestine laboratory importing substances used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine was discovered in Kosgama, Sri Lanka. In India, a methamphetamine laboratory was dismantled by law enforcement agencies in the province of Gujarat in November 2008 and another was dismantled in the province of Punjab in June 2009.

Substances not under international control

604. India has reported an increasing number of seizures of ketamine. Few seizures of ketamine were reported until 2008, when law enforcement authorities seized a total of about 575 kg of that drug. Most of the consignments seized in India were about to be smuggled into countries in South-East Asia.

5. Abuse and treatment

605. Most countries in South Asia lack recent and comprehensive data on the prevalence of drug abuse. Information on patterns of drug abuse in the region is often based on rapid situation assessments, the habits of the patient population in centres for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers and the habits of persons arrested on drug-related charges. The Board reminds the Governments of countries in the region that regular and comprehensive surveys of drug abuse patterns are essential in developing effective drug control policies and strategies to prevent drug abuse.

606. A rapid situation and response assessment conducted by UNODC in Bangladesh in 2005 among 1,073 drug abusers indicated lifetime prevalence rates

of 96 per cent for cannabis abuse, 13 per cent for opium abuse, 92 per cent for abuse of heroin by smoking, 4 per cent for abuse of heroin by injection, 28 per cent for buprenorphine abuse and less than 1 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse. In 2008, of 2,350 patients receiving treatment for drug addiction, 13 per cent were treated for cannabis abuse, 62 per cent for heroin abuse and 10 per cent for the abuse of buprenorphine. The use of mixtures of pharmaceutical preparations containing buprenorphine, diazepam and antihistamines is common among persons who abuse drugs by injection. The Government of Bangladesh operates several centres for the treatment of drug addiction in that country; those centres provided services to 3,869 patients in 2008.

607. In Bhutan, a rapid situation and response assessment conducted by UNODC in Thimphu in 2006 among 200 drug abusers revealed lifetime prevalence rates of drug abuse of 86 per cent for cannabis abuse, 19 per cent for heroin abuse by smoking, 2 per cent for heroin abuse by injection, 14 per cent for buprenorphine abuse and 16 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse. Of the total number of persons arrested by the police for drug abuse in 2006, almost 90 per cent were under 26 years of age, which underscores the prevalence of the problem among youth. In a survey of drug abuse among secondary school students in Phuentsholing, a town near the border between Bhutan and India, conducted in 2008 by the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency in collaboration with UNODC, 9 per cent of respondents reported having abused cannabis occasionally, while 8 per cent reported occasional abuse of pharmaceuticals. The Board notes with satisfaction that the first national baseline survey of drug abuse in Bhutan was conducted in 2009 and looks forward to the findings of that survey.

608. In Bhutan, there are currently no facilities specifically for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers. Patients seeking treatment for drug abuse receive care in the psychiatric wards of major hospitals. The Government of Bhutan is planning to open a treatment facility dedicated to providing care for the growing number of drug abusers in that country.

609. The most recent national household survey in India was conducted during 2000 and 2001. The survey indicated lifetime prevalence rates of 0.5 per cent for opium abuse, 0.2 per cent for heroin abuse, 0.1 per cent

for abuse of cough syrups containing narcotic drugs, 4.1 per cent for cannabis abuse and 0.1 per cent for abuse of sedatives and hypnotics. A rapid situation and response assessment conducted by UNODC in India in 2005 among 5,732 drug abusers indicated lifetime prevalence rates of 73 per cent for cannabis abuse, 27 per cent for opium abuse, 52 per cent for abuse of heroin by smoking, 28 per cent for abuse of heroin by injection, 30 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse and 26 per cent for buprenorphine abuse. In India, treatment and rehabilitation services for drug abusers are provided by centres operated by the Government and by non-governmental organizations. The Government of India currently operates 100 treatment centres and provides financial support to 361 voluntary organizations that operate 376 treatment rehabilitation centres and 68 counselling and awareness centres nationwide.

610. According to an estimate by the National Narcotics Control Bureau of Maldives, there were between 2,000 and 3,000 drug addicts in that country in 2006. A rapid situation assessment conducted in 2003 indicated that opioids were abused by 76 per cent of respondents and cannabinoids by 12 per cent. The increase in drug abuse in recent years has prompted the Government of Maldives to develop a comprehensive drug control master plan, which was launched in 2008. A centre for the rehabilitation of drug abusers on the island of Himmafushi, established by the Government of Maldives in 1997, can accommodate about 125 patients. There are reports of insufficient access to treatment and rehabilitation services in Maldives, notably for repeat offenders arrested on drug-related charges and drug abusers in prisons. The Board notes with satisfaction that in 2009 the Government of Maldives established a new detoxification centre to treat drug addicts.

611. According to a survey conducted by the Government of Nepal in 2006, there were some 46,000 drug abusers in that country. The survey revealed lifetime prevalence rates of 87 per cent for cannabis abuse, 86 per cent for abuse of pharmaceutical preparations, 61 per cent for abuse of low-grade heroin base ("brown sugar"), 14 per cent for heroin abuse and 7 per cent for opium abuse. Similarly, a rapid situation and response assessment carried out by UNODC among 1,322 drug abusers in 2005 revealed a lifetime prevalence rate of 92 per cent for cannabis abuse, 14 per cent for opium abuse, 88 per

cent for abuse of heroin by smoking, 46 per cent for abuse of heroin by injection, 11 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse and 77 per cent for buprenorphine abuse. In 2007, 617 people were reported to have been arrested on drug-related charges. In Nepal, treatment services are provided to drug addicts by non-governmental organizations rather than by the Government. The Board encourages the Government of Nepal to ensure that adequate resources are allocated for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

612. A rapid situation and response assessment conducted by UNODC among 1,016 drug abusers in Sri Lanka in 2005 revealed lifetime prevalence rates of 72 per cent for cannabis abuse, 11 per cent for opium abuse, 55 per cent for abuse of heroin by injection, 2 per cent for abuse of heroin by smoking, 4 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse and less than 1 per cent for buprenorphine abuse. The Government of Sri Lanka operates four treatment centres for drug addicts and special programmes in prisons to treat incarcerated drug abusers. Additional rehabilitation programmes are run by a number of non-governmental organizations nationwide. In 2007, 3,413 drug abusers were admitted for treatment at facilities operated by the Government.

613. The high prevalence of drug abuse by injection in several countries in South Asia and the common practice among persons who abuse drugs by injection of sharing needles are important factors contributing to the spread of HIV. In response to this problem, the Governments of several countries in the region have established opioid substitution programmes. In August 2008, the Government of Bangladesh approved a pilot study on the use of methadone in substitution treatment for drug abuse, to be conducted in Dhaka in collaboration with UNODC. In India, about 4,500 drug abusers receive substitution treatment using buprenorphine at 47 centres run by non-governmental organizations and accredited by the Government. In Nepal, methadone substitution treatment is provided to some 250 drug abusers in a programme implemented by the Government. In October 2008, the Government of Maldives, in collaboration with UNODC, initiated a pilot programme of opioid substitution treatment using methadone for 45 drug addicts.

West Asia

1. Major developments

614. After peaking in 2007, the illicit cultivation of opium poppy and the illicit production of opium in Afghanistan decreased in 2008 and 2009. UNODC reports also indicate that in Afghanistan prices of opiates continued to fall in 2009, fewer people were involved in opium poppy cultivation and opium production and the proceeds of the illicit drug industry decreased. At the same time, the number of Afghan provinces free of opium poppy in Afghanistan and the total quantity of drugs seized continued to rise. In addition, farm-gate prices of opium poppy have fallen due to oversupply, and food prices have risen due to undersupply. Given those circumstances, now is an opportune moment for the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to give higher priority to improving governance and economic development and to provide sustainable support for legitimate alternative livelihoods for farming communities.

615. Many countries in West Asia reported positive developments in drug control in 2009 as a result of national and multilateral efforts by Governments and the allocation of increased resources to fight the scourge of Afghan opiates. In particular, the Board commends the Government of Afghanistan on its recent decision not to authorize any import of acetic anhydride into the country. At the same time, the Board stresses that Afghanistan remains by far the largest illicit producer of heroin and other opiates in the world and is becoming a major producer of illicitly cultivated cannabis. The magnitude of the drug problem is such that it poses a serious threat to the political, economic and social stability of not only Afghanistan but also other countries, both in West Asia and in other regions. Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan, the Russian Federation and countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus and on the Arabian Peninsula remain particularly vulnerable to drug trafficking and abuse.

616. The Middle East has become a market for illicit drugs such as cocaine that had not previously been known to be abused to any significant extent in the subregion and some countries in the region are confronted with new drug smuggling trends.

617. Trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants continue to increase in the countries of West

Asia, particularly in the eastern Mediterranean and on the Arabian Peninsula. In 2007, almost 30 per cent of global seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants were effected in West Asia. The most significant seizures were reported in Saudi Arabia (27 per cent of all amphetamine-type stimulants seized). In recent years, West Asia's share of global seizures of synthetic drugs, including Captagon, amphetamines and MDMA ("ecstasy"), has risen from 1 to 25 per cent.

618. Counterfeit Captagon tablets, often containing amphetamine, continue to be abused and seized in West Asia. In 2008, most of the seizures of such tablets were reported in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic. Many of the seized consignments had been sent from the Syrian Arab Republic. Several other countries in the region have reported dramatic increases in seizures of Captagon tablets. Bulgaria and, to a lesser degree, Turkey are believed to be the sources of the counterfeit Captagon, although there are several indications that undetected amphetamine manufacture may also be occurring elsewhere in the region, in particular in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, countries in which it is suspected that clandestine laboratories are manufacturing counterfeit Captagon tablets.

2. Regional cooperation

619. Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan are increasingly cooperating through the Triangular Initiative, an initiative brokered by UNODC to improve the sharing of intelligence with a view to combating the smuggling of opiates out of Afghanistan and to enhancing joint interdiction operations. Several high-level meetings on combating trafficking in drugs were held, including the third ministerial meeting, held in Vienna in October 2009, and related meetings held in Vienna in March 2009, Kabul in May 2009 and Tehran in July 2009. The three countries continued the deployment at their borders of border liaison officers to plan joint operations targeting the smuggling of opiates out of Afghanistan. The members of the Triangular Initiative also announced that they would strengthen efforts to counter the illicit trade in precursor chemicals used in processing opium in Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries.

620. A joint planning cell was established in Tehran in March 2009 to enhance cooperation among the three countries of the Triangular Initiative and launch joint

field operations against international drug trafficking networks in West Asia. In order to plan for full deployment of border liaison officers in common border areas, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted the International Conference of Drug Liaison Officers on 28 and 29 April 2009. The main purpose of the Conference was to reach agreement on a comprehensive cross-border communication plan and cooperation to stop precursor chemicals from entering Afghanistan. Some success has already been achieved by means of joint operations at Afghanistan's borders with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Central Asian States. The Board notes, however, that although one fourth of all narcotic drugs of Afghan origin is smuggled through Pakistan, no seizures of drugs of Afghan origin were reported in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan.

621. At key international summits, emphasis was placed on adopting a truly regional approach to combating Afghanistan's illicit drug industry. On 27 March 2009, the Special Conference on Afghanistan was convened in Moscow under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, with the participation of, among others, the United Nations (represented by the Secretary-General, the Board and UNODC), the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). The declaration adopted at the Special Conference, *inter alia*, stressed the importance of strengthening efforts to combat illicit drug production and promote the development of the licit economy of Afghanistan and underlined the importance of close regional cooperation, more active collaboration among neighbouring States to combat drug trafficking and efforts to prevent precursors from entering the country.

622. Representatives of 73 countries and 20 international organizations attended an international conference on Afghanistan that was held in The Hague on 31 March 2009. The conference presented a strategy for leveraging, in a regional context, international will and resources to address the remaining challenges in Afghanistan, including the illicit production of, trafficking in and abuse of narcotic drugs. The conference stressed the need for a well-coordinated and strategically integrated approach for Afghanistan, focusing on the priority goals of promoting good

governance and stronger institutions, generating economic growth, strengthening security and enhancing regional cooperation.

623. Governments of countries in Central Asia are increasing their bilateral and multilateral cooperation in areas such as reduction of illicit drug supply and demand, precursor control, border management, countering the spread of HIV/AIDS and combating organized crime and money-laundering. Those countries have also carried out various regional projects and international operations under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), CSTO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding on Subregional Drug Control Cooperation signed in Tashkent in 1996 as well as joint programmes supported by the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union, OSCE, the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL, the Paris Pact Policy Consultative Group, NATO–Russia Council, mini-Dublin groups and individual Governments.

624. The Board urges the Governments participating in the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) to actively include Afghanistan, as well as its neighbouring countries, in that initiative, in order to ensure greater cooperation in collecting, exchanging and analysing drug-related intelligence, organizing and coordinating joint international operations and carrying out other supply and demand reduction efforts and training in West Asia.

625. Joint measures taken by Governments of countries in the Middle East to combat drug trafficking have continued to yield good results. For example, Jordanian authorities reported that in 2007 and 2008, they conducted 22 operations in which they coordinated efforts with Saudi Arabian and Syrian authorities. Jordan remains committed to existing bilateral agreements providing for drug control cooperation, with Egypt, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey. Jordan also cooperates with UNODC and the European Commission in a number of projects funded by the European Union.

626. Close cooperation in particular in controlled deliveries and the sharing of information on drug trafficking, especially between Turkey and other

countries in West Asia, has proved effective, resulting in significant drug seizures in 2007 and 2008. The Board encourages the Governments of countries in West Asia to intensify their cooperation in order to achieve good results in joint efforts to combat drug trafficking in the region.

627. In January 2009, with technical assistance from UNODC, a number of drug law enforcement officers of the Dubai Police participated in a workshop held in Beirut on the design, drafting and marketing of projects related to drug control. Training covered the topics of surveillance and awareness of suspicious behaviour by individuals.

628. At a workshop on border control held in Košice, Slovakia, in April 2009, law enforcement officers from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Palestine, as well as from countries of South-Eastern Europe, discussed new methodologies and equipment used to control borders and combat drug smuggling.

629. At the eighth annual regional coordination meeting on HIV and AIDS in the Middle East, convened by UNAIDS in Beirut in March 2009, participants discussed, among other topics, the harmonization of regional approaches, universal access to HIV prevention, treatment and care services and resource mobilization. The Government of Lebanon is developing a national five-year strategy to begin in 2010. With the technical assistance of UNODC and in partnership with UNAIDS, authorities will develop an action plan on drug abuse and HIV; substitution therapy will also be included in the plan.

630. At its 29th session, held in Muscat in late December 2008, the Supreme Council of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf approved the establishment in Qatar of the Gulf Cooperation Council criminal information centre for combating drugs.

631. The Israeli Anti-Drug Authority participated in regional law enforcement workshops organized by the United Nations, participated in the joint meetings of Israeli and Palestinian law enforcement officers and began building channels of communication with Jordan by conducting research trips.

3. National legislation, policy and action

632. The Government of Afghanistan ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption⁵⁰ and established the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption in August 2008. However, the enactment of revised drug control legislation, the law on extradition and mutual legal assistance, the Criminal Procedure Code, and amendments to the Penal Code reflecting penal sanctions for corruption are still awaiting approval of the National Assembly and/or the President. Corruption continues to be a serious problem in Afghanistan, hampering efforts to eradicate illicit opium poppy cultivation and combat illicit drug trade in general. The Board urges the Government of Afghanistan to expedite adoption of the necessary legislative base that will enhance its ability to take strong measures to fight corruption, report the main drug traffickers to the Security Council and prosecute those, including government officials, involved in Afghanistan's illicit drug industry.

633. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, one of the countries most affected by the illicit trade in Afghan opiates, significantly increased its resources allocated for drug control in the year starting 20 March 2008 and, in particular, strengthened its capacity for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse. The Government has also continued to strengthen border control through the deployment of additional personnel and the construction of barriers and other border structures.

634. In May 2009, the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan ratified the framework agreement on the establishment of CARICC; and the parliament of the Russian Federation ratified the framework agreement in September 2009. With those ratifications, CARICC begins the transition from its pilot phase to full-fledged functionality as a regional focal point for communication, analysis and the real-time exchange of operational information in order to prevent and combat transborder drug trafficking and international organized criminal groups involved in drug trafficking. Among achievements to date, CARICC served as the regional focal point for the Targeted Anti-trafficking Regional Communication, Expertise and Training (TARCET) in the areas of precursors and controlled

⁵⁰ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2349, No. 42146.

delivery operations. Efforts within the framework of CARICC to foster cooperation and share information among the participating countries resulted in the seizure of 200 kg of heroin and the dismantling of more than 10 drug trafficking groups. The Board notes that the CARICC strategic plan for the period 2010-2011, which was approved at the first meeting of the CARICC Council, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in February 2009, recognizes the openness of CARICC to developing partnerships with non-member States and organizations.

635. Over 20 partner countries and international and regional organizations participate in Operation TARCET, which is aimed at facilitating cross-border cooperation in interceptions and seizures of consignments of precursor chemicals smuggled into Afghanistan for use in the illicit manufacture of heroin. During 2008, in the framework of TARCET I, such joint activities resulted in the seizure of over 19 tons of acetic anhydride (14 tons in Pakistan, 5 tons in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 500 kg in Afghanistan), over 27 tons of other chemicals (6.8 tons of sulphuric acid in Kyrgyzstan, 1.6 tons of acetic acid in Uzbekistan, 16 tons of acetyl chloride in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 3 tons of diverse chemicals in Afghanistan). During the first month of the second phase of the operation (TARCET II), which started in July 2009 and is expected to last until early 2010, 5 tons of acetic anhydride were reported to have been seized in Quetta, Pakistan.

636. In May 2009, the Government of Kazakhstan adopted a new programme for combating drug abuse and drug trafficking for the period 2009-2011, focusing on implementation of the second stage of the national drug control strategy for the period 2006-2014. The main purpose of the programme is to dismantle illicit drug distribution networks in the country and reverse the increasing trends in the abuse of psychoactive substances and in drug dependence by enhancing coordination and regional drug control measures and promoting primary prevention activities and healthy lifestyles among the public. The programme entails a 15-fold increase in the financing of the national drug control authorities with the aim of increasing by 30-50 per cent the amount of opiates seized each year.

637. The Government of Armenia issued several decrees in January 2008, strengthening its national drug control mechanisms by approving licence formats

and licensing procedures for all processing activities related to the manufacture, distribution and medical and scientific use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and their precursors. In April and September 2008, the country's drug control legislation was amended with a view to strengthening controls over licit movement and stocks of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors.

638. The Board takes note of the achievements obtained through enhanced drug law enforcement and interdiction efforts in Israel. In 2008, the Israeli police established a new drug interdiction unit named "Magen" to patrol the Israeli-Jordanian border in the Dead Sea area, resulting in increased drug seizures. Israeli police reported that the number of drug trafficking and smuggling cases increased by 40 per cent from 2007 to 2008.

639. The Government of Jordan carries out initiatives, including seminars and lectures at schools and universities, to raise public awareness of the dangers of drug abuse. Governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, correction and rehabilitation centres, youth clubs and the media will all be involved in those initiatives which are aimed at making drug demand reduction efforts more successful.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

640. According to "Afghanistan Opium Survey 2009: Summary Findings", issued by UNODC in September 2009, opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan decreased from a peak of 193,000 ha in 2007 to 157,000 ha in 2008 (a decrease of 19 per cent) to 123,000 ha in 2009 (a decrease of 22 per cent). The most significant decrease was recorded in Helmand province, where such cultivation declined by a third, from 103,590 ha in 2008 to 69,833 ha in 2009. The number of provinces free from opium poppy cultivation has increased from 18 to 20. Kapisa, Baghlan and Faryab provinces became poppy-free, while Nangarhar province could not retain the poppy-free status that it had achieved in 2008. The Board urges the Government of Afghanistan, as well as the international community, to continue to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of measures to curb opium poppy cultivation and to ensure that farming

communities involved in illicit crop cultivation are provided with sustainable, legitimate livelihoods.

641. Despite the decrease of 22 per cent in the total cultivation area, because of the record opium poppy yield of 56 kg per hectare in 2009 — an increase of 15 per cent over 2008 — opium production fell by only 10 per cent, from 7,700 tons in 2008 to 6,900 tons in 2009. The prices of fresh and dry opium poppies have fallen by a third in the past year, causing the total farm-gate value of opium production in Afghanistan to fall by 40 per cent, from \$730 million in 2008 to \$438 million in 2009. The number of people involved in opium production also dropped significantly: from 2.4 million to 1.6 million.

642. Afghan opiates are smuggled predominantly through Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and countries of Central Asia. Those countries are faced with a wide range of problems related to large-scale drug trafficking such as organized crime, corruption and relatively high illicit demand for opiates. As a result, the Islamic Republic of Iran has the highest rate of abuse of opiates in the world. In the countries of Central Asia, the rate of abuse of opiates continues to increase, and HIV/AIDS transmission through the sharing of needles among persons who abuse drugs by injection continues to be a problem.

643. Significant drug seizures were made in Afghanistan, though those seizures were small in comparison with the scale of illicit drug production in the country. Of the estimated 7,700 tons of opium produced in 2008, 42.8 tons were seized, for a seizure ratio of 0.56 per cent, while the ratio of heroin seized to heroin produced is 0.43 per cent (2.8 tons of heroin seized of an estimated 658 tons of heroin produced). It has been reported that in the first half of 2009, drug law enforcement operations involving military units of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) of Afghanistan and NATO resulted in the seizure of 459 tons of poppy seeds, 50 tons of opium, 7 tons of morphine, 2 tons of heroin and 19 tons of cannabis resin. In addition, the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan reported the seizure of 36 tons of opium, 5 tons of heroin, 2 tons of morphine and 338 tons of cannabis resin.

644. The Islamic Republic of Iran, through whose territory more than half of illicit Afghan opiates is reported to be smuggled, continues to seize more opiates than any other country in the world. In the first

half of 2008, 180 tons of opiates were seized in the Islamic Republic of Iran (an increase of 37 per cent over the first half of 2007), mainly on the country's eastern border with Afghanistan. In the first three months of 2009, 146 tons of opium, 6.5 tons of heroin, over 3 tons of morphine and 21 tons of cannabis resin were seized by Iranian law enforcement authorities.

645. Pakistan continues to be used as a major transit area for Afghan opiates, but to a lesser extent than is the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to Pakistan officials, one third of illicit opiates of Afghan origin are smuggled through Pakistan. According to Government data, until 2006, increasing quantities of Afghan opiates were seized in Pakistan. The total amount of seized opiates increased from 25 tons of heroin equivalent in 2005 to 36.4 tons of heroin equivalent in 2006, an increase of 46 per cent. The latest officially reported data suggest that, while seizures of opium increased by 77 per cent (from 15.4 tons in 2007 to 27 tons in 2008), seizures of heroin and morphine during that period each fell by one third (seizures of heroin fell from 2.8 tons to 1.9 tons and seizures of morphine fell from 10.9 tons to 7.3 tons).

646. Turkey reported an increase in the amount of heroin seized: in 2008, the amount of heroin seized in Turkey exceeded 15 tons, an increase of 14 per cent over the 13.2 tons seized in 2007. However, the amount of opium seized, after peaking at 519 kg in 2007, fell to 202 kg in 2008, a decrease of 61 per cent. Cocaine seizures in Turkey followed an upward trend until 2008. The amount of cocaine seized totalled only 3 kg in 2003 but increased to 40 kg in 2005, 77 kg in 2006 and 114 kg in 2007. In 2008, cocaine seizures dropped to 105 kg.

647. According to UNODC estimates, approximately 121 tons of heroin and 293 tons of opium transited through Central Asian countries in 2008, as most opiates produced and trafficked in north-eastern Afghanistan are smuggled across the border into the countries of Central Asia, due to their proximity and strong ethnic links. Official data on opiates seizures in 2008 indicate that Central Asian countries seized 5.3 tons of heroin (almost 2 tons more than in 2007) and 4.5 tons of opium (1.7 tons less than in 2007). Some of those seizures were carried out through joint operations, such as Operation Channel 2008 of CSTO, which resulted in the detection of 12,782 cases of drug

trafficking and the seizure of over 25 tons of precursors and 30 tons of illicit drugs, including 3.4 tons of heroin, 983 kg of opium, 1.9 tons of cannabis, 11.7 tons of cannabis resin and 1.6 tons of cocaine.

648. Several large seizures of opiates (up to 500 kg each) have been reported by the law enforcement agencies of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Tajikistan continues to seize the largest quantities of opiates in Central Asia (53 per cent of seizures in the subregion in 2008) and remains the gateway for most opiate smuggling through the subregion. Heroin seizures effected in Central Asian States increased by 60 per cent, primarily due to the dramatic increase in seizures in Kazakhstan (1.6 tons of heroin seized, an increase of 214 per cent over 2007) and Uzbekistan (1.5 tons of heroin seized, a 207 per cent increase from 2007). Heroin seizures in Tajikistan increased by 6 per cent from 2007, reaching 1.6 tons in 2008. In contrast, opium seizures in Central Asia decreased by 28 per cent (4.5 tons seized). The largest portion of the opium seized in this subregion continued to be accounted for by Tajikistan (1.7 tons), followed by Turkmenistan (1.5 tons) and Uzbekistan (1 ton). Statistics released by the Government of Turkmenistan indicate that the total amount of drugs seized in 2008 exceeded 2 tons, including 245 kg of heroin, 261 kg of cocaine, 1.5 tons of opium and 135 kg of cannabis and cannabis resin.

649. Official data suggest that the quantities of heroin, opium and cocaine smuggled through the Southern Caucasus are increasing. In 2008, 650 kg of drugs were seized in Azerbaijan, including 55 kg of opium and 49 kg of heroin. The number of offences recorded for drug possession, abuse and trafficking exceeded 1,670. The opiates originating in Afghanistan are entering Azerbaijan mostly by land and rail from the Islamic Republic of Iran and countries in Central Asia en route to Georgia, the Russian Federation and countries in Western Europe.

650. The Middle East has become a market for illicit drugs such as cocaine that had not previously been known to be abused to any significant extent in the subregion. For example, Jordan is confronted with new drug smuggling trends. In the first four months of 2009, 25.4 kg of cocaine from South America were seized in the country, compared with a total of 6.3 kg in 2008. While in recent years only small quantities of cocaine and heroin reached Lebanon, mainly to meet

local demand, in 2008 Lebanese authorities intercepted 61 kg of cocaine and 14.5 kg of heroin, a significant increase over the corresponding figures for 2007.

651. The largest increase in cocaine seizures in 2007 was reported in the countries of the Arabian Peninsula (seizures of 141 kg in 2007 compared with 72 kg in 2006). The Syrian Arab Republic reported total seizures of 77 kg in 2007 compared with 2 kg in 2006.

652. Because it is situated between drug-producing countries to the north and east and drug-consuming countries to the south and west, Jordan continues to be primarily a transit area for illicit drugs. The Public Security Directorate of Jordan has noted that the amount of drugs smuggled through Jordan continues to grow. The drugs of choice among individuals arrested for drug possession in Jordan are cannabis and heroin, and the majority of individuals arrested for drug-related crimes are between the ages of 18 and 35 years.

653. According to UNODC estimates, the production of cannabis resin in Afghanistan has been increasing since 2003. In 2007, the total area under cannabis plant cultivation in Afghanistan (70,000 ha) equalled more than one third of the total area under opium poppy cultivation. The Board continues to be concerned that the vast oversupply of opiates and the widely reported decrease in opiate prices could prompt a shift to cannabis cultivation and smuggling. As an indication of that shift, it was reported that the total amount of cannabis resin seized in Pakistan increased by 23 per cent in the period 2005-2006 (from 93.5 to 115.4 tons) and by 33 per cent in the period 2007-2008 (from 101 to 135 tons).

654. Cannabis continues to be the drug most commonly seized in Central Asia. In addition to the fact that cannabis plants grow wild in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, more and more shipments of Afghan cannabis and cannabis resin are being discovered in Central Asia. The law enforcement agencies of Central Asian countries seized over 33 tons of cannabis and more than 1 ton of cannabis resin in 2008. Similarly, in Turkey, the amount of cannabis resin seized increased by 23 per cent, to 39.1 tons, in 2008. Authorities in Azerbaijan seized 555 kg of cannabis and cannabis resin.

655. Lebanon is not a major producer of illicit drugs. However, Lebanese authorities reported a small increase in cannabis cultivation in 2008 and growing

drug abuse particularly among young persons, due to the greater availability and reduced price of most illicit drugs. Israeli police have occasionally reported the arrest of farmers for clandestinely growing cannabis plants using hydroponic techniques.

Psychotropic substances

656. In Turkey, the amount of seized synthetic drugs, predominantly MDMA (“ecstasy”) and Captagon (containing mainly amphetamine), increased until 2005, when 1.7 million tablets were seized. After 2005, the amount of “ecstasy” seized in Turkey decreased by about 35 per cent, averaging 1 million tablets each year in the period 2005-2008. Half of the seized tablets were subsequently identified as fake “ecstasy”, containing meta-chlorophenylpiperazine instead of MDMA. The amount of Captagon tablets seized in Turkey also decreased by approximately 63 per cent in 2008, from 7.5 million tablets in 2007 to 2.7 million in 2008. The Government of Turkey has indicated that the decrease may be partly attributable to inadequate cooperation with law enforcement agencies in neighbouring countries.

657. Counterfeit Captagon tablets containing amphetamine continue to be seized mainly in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates. Trafficking in and abuse of counterfeit Captagon remain serious problems in the countries on the Arabian Peninsula, where Captagon appears to have become the drug of choice. In 2008, most of the amphetamine seized worldwide was seized in the Middle East (accounting for 73 per cent of the world total), followed by Western Europe (19 per cent of the world total). According to UNODC, in Saudi Arabia, the amount of seized amphetamine-type stimulants, mostly in the form of Captagon, increased from 0.3 tons in 2002 to 14 tons in 2007.⁵¹ The Board is concerned about the marked increase in Captagon seizures effected in that country. The Board urges the authorities of Saudi Arabia to investigate the reasons behind that development and to take the appropriate monitoring and control measures.

658. Captagon tablets illicitly manufactured in laboratories in Eastern Europe are transported through Turkey from the Bulgarian border en route to West

Asia through the Syrian Arab Republic by land and sea. Drug law enforcement operations involving the close cooperation of Bulgaria, Saudi Arabia and Turkey resulted in the seizure of nearly 3 million Captagon tablets in 2008. In the same year, Saudi Arabia seized 52 million counterfeit Captagon tablets. Several other countries of the subregion have reported dramatic increases in seizures of counterfeit Captagon since 2004.

659. According to Iraqi health authorities, pharmaceutical preparations containing the controlled substance diazepam (Valium) is the drug most commonly abused among the Iraqi population. Diazepam is available in correctional and health institutions throughout Iraq. The Board calls upon the Iraqi authorities to take appropriate regulatory measures to ensure that the distribution of controlled substances, in particular diazepam, is always carried out under medical supervision and dispensed in accordance with legitimate medical prescriptions. In Jordan, benzodiazepines are reported to be abused. The Pharmaceutical Crime Unit of the Ministry of Health of Israel, which monitors the diversion of prescription drugs, is investigating the illicit trade in buprenorphine (Subutex) and the use of forged prescriptions to obtain methylphenidate.

Precursors

660. The destruction of clandestine drug laboratories in Afghanistan has continued: 69 facilities illicitly manufacturing heroin were destroyed in 2008. The seizure of 14,233 litres of acetic anhydride in 2008, although an increase over the quantity seized in 2007, constitutes less than 1 per cent of the quantity of that chemical estimated to be used for heroin manufacture in Afghanistan. As a result of the new emphasis on addressing the link between drugs and the insurgency, operations in the first half of 2009 involving military units of ISAF and NATO resulted in the destruction of 98 tons of precursor chemicals and 27 illicit drug laboratories in Afghanistan. In addition, the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan reported the seizure of 61 tons of precursor chemicals and destruction of 74 clandestine opium processing laboratories.

661. The amount of acetic anhydride reported to have been seized in Turkey increased by 250 per cent from 2006 to 2007, reaching 13.3 tons. That trend was

⁵¹ *Amphetamine and Ecstasy: 2008 Global ATS Assessment* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XI.12).

reversed in 2008, when seizures of that precursor totalled less than 5 tons.

5. Abuse and treatment

662. The abuse of opiates continues to pose a major problem in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries. Nearly all those countries have high rates of drug abuse. For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran has the world's highest rate of abuse of opiates: more than 2 million people are reported to abuse opiates, resulting in an estimated prevalence rate of 2.8 per cent. Pakistan also has a high abuse rate for opiates: the estimated rate of drug abuse among the population aged 15-64 years in 2006 was 0.7 per cent. In 2008, the Government of Pakistan reported that there were an estimated 628,000 "severe/problem" opioid abusers in the country, 77 per cent of whom were heroin abusers. Many countries in Central Asia have similar levels of drug abuse, heroin having replaced cannabis and opium as the most commonly abused illicit drug. In Central Asia, the incidence of heroin dependence among registered drug abusers ranges from 50 to 80 per cent, with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan reporting the highest rates.

663. Drug abuse in the countries of Central Asia is reaching alarming proportions, due especially to the sharp increase in the use of opiates in recent years. In 2008, more than 94,000 drug abusers were registered in clinics of the countries in the subregion. As a result of the wide availability of cheap heroin, patterns of drug abuse have shifted from smoking opium and cannabis to abuse of heroin by injection and, to a lesser extent, the abuse of some opium concoctions. Heroin is the most commonly abused drug (70 per cent of registered drug users), followed by cannabis (15 per cent) and opium (11 per cent).

664. Drug abuse remains a serious concern in the Southern Caucasus. In Azerbaijan, the drugs of choice are opioids and cannabis, followed by non-prescribed sedatives and tranquillizers. In 2008, among drug users aged 15-64 years, 70 per cent abused opioids, 20 per cent abused cannabis and 10 per cent abused benzodiazepines; among adolescents, 10 per cent abused opioids, 30 per cent abused cannabis and 60 per cent abused benzodiazepines. At the end of 2008, 514 persons who abused drugs by injection were infected with hepatitis or HIV, while 26 of the 48 drug-related deaths in the country were caused by the abuse

of benzodiazepines. The Board urges the Government of Azerbaijan to closely monitor that worrying situation and increase the resources allocated for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, especially among youth.

665. While there are very little data on drug abuse in the Middle East, heroin abuse is reported to have increased in the subregion, and the age of initial abuse is decreasing and the demand for treatment is increasing. However, many countries in the Middle East lack the capacity to collect and analyse data on drug abuse. The Board encourages the Governments of those countries to conduct comprehensive surveys and rapid assessments of the drug abuse situation and to take effective measures in the area of demand reduction.

666. According to Lebanese authorities, the number of male drug abusers increased from 488 in 2001 to 1,381 in 2008, and the most prevalent drugs of abuse remained cannabis and cannabis resin ("hashish"), followed by heroin and, to a lesser extent, cocaine.

667. In Israel, an epidemiological survey on the prevalence of drug abuse among the general population is carried out every four years. The data for 2008 show that 60 per cent of the 20,000 problematic drug abusers in Israel abuse opioids by injection. The reported prevalence of HIV among persons who abuse drugs by injection is 2 per cent. The Israel Anti-Drug Authority administers treatment programmes targeting specific segments of the population, such as women, youth, new immigrants and the homeless, providing counselling, sanitary services and food.

668. According to official reports, 120 new HIV cases were reported in Afghanistan in 2008, bringing the national total to 556. The main cause of HIV transmission in the country is exposure to contaminated drug injecting equipment. The Board notes that the Afghanistan National Development Strategy aims to keep the country's HIV prevalence rate below 0.5 per cent of the population and reduce the rates of mortality and morbidity associated with HIV/AIDS by the end of 2010. To achieve that goal, the Government is taking guidance from the National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS for the period 2006-2010.

669. According to the Ministry of Health of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a total of 19,435 cases of

HIV/AIDS infection were identified from January 1986 to March 2009, up to 7 per cent of those individuals being female. Drug abuse by injection remains the most prevalent factor in HIV transmission in the Islamic Republic of Iran (78 per cent), although the role of sexual transmission is now increasing. Given that 60 per cent of the country's population of 71 million is under the age of 30, the Board is concerned of the danger of HIV infection spreading in the country.

670. In the Central Asian countries, HIV and other blood-borne infections are strongly associated with drug abuse by injection. According to UNODC estimates (for 2008), in Kazakhstan approximately 100,000 individuals aged 15-64 years abuse drugs by injection, compared with 80,000 in Uzbekistan, 25,000 in Kyrgyzstan and 15,000 in Tajikistan. In Central Asian countries, the lifetime prevalence of injecting drug abuse among problematic opiate users ranges from 68 per cent (in Uzbekistan) to 95 per cent (in Kyrgyzstan). Of that group, 90-99 per cent have injected opiates at least once in the past 12 months.

671. Official statistics provided by Governments of Central Asian countries showed 6,664 new HIV cases in 2008, for a cumulative total of 31,000 HIV cases. That represents an increase of 24 per cent in the total number of registered HIV cases in one year and a 19-fold increase since 2000. According to the most recent UNAIDS estimate, in 2005 approximately 52,000 people were living with HIV/AIDS in Central Asia, while UNODC estimates that more than 2,700 people died of HIV/AIDS during the period 2006-2008. The Board urges the Governments of Central Asian countries and the international community to take prompt action to stop this concentrated HIV/AIDS epidemic, focusing on persons who abuse drugs by injection.

D. Europe

1. Major developments

672. The Board notes that the Government of the United Kingdom reclassified cannabis in January 2009, which means that cases involving cannabis are subject to stricter law enforcement. The decision reflects the fact that highly potent forms of cannabis (such as "skunk") have become dominant on the illicit drug

market of the United Kingdom. In February 2009, the Government of the United Kingdom rejected the recommendation by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs that MDMA ("ecstasy") should be downgraded (see paragraph 695 below).

673. The abuse of certain drugs appears to be stable or declining in some countries in Europe. Information from recent national surveys suggests that cannabis use is stabilizing in many countries in the region. Similarly, the most recent data available support reports that the abuse of amphetamines and MDMA ("ecstasy") in Europe is stabilizing or even decreasing, after having increased in the 1990s. Data from some countries suggest that some drug abusers may be replacing amphetamines and "ecstasy" with cocaine. That may be the case in Denmark, Spain (to a limited extent) and the United Kingdom.

674. Europe has a large market for cannabis and is reportedly the only region into which cannabis herb from other regions is smuggled. Western Europe remains the largest market in the world for cannabis resin. The Western European country in which the largest amount of cannabis resin is seized is Spain, followed by Portugal and France. The main sources of the cannabis resin found in Western Europe are Morocco and countries in South-West Asia, notably Afghanistan.

675. In Western Europe, the number of cocaine seizures has decreased substantially, particularly in the main ports of entry. According to the World Customs Organization, most of the cocaine entering Western Europe has been smuggled out of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Central Africa and West Africa continue to be used by traffickers as storage and transit areas for cocaine, although a decline has been noted in both the total amount of cocaine seized and the number of cocaine seizures.

676. In 2008, cocaine arrived in Europe mainly by ship. Consignments of cocaine from Colombia and Ecuador were hidden in sea freight and sent to countries in Europe, mainly Croatia, followed by the Netherlands and Montenegro. The increasing number of shipments of cocaine from South America to countries in Eastern Europe reflects a fairly new development in cocaine trafficking: cocaine is frequently smuggled into Western Europe via the Balkan route, the route traditionally used for smuggling opiates.

677. The illicit market for opiates in Eastern European countries has continued to expand. In 2008, the abuse of opiates was reported to be increasing in most Eastern European countries, particularly Albania, Belarus, Croatia, the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation, as well as in countries along the Balkan route.

678. The United Kingdom, Italy, France and Germany (listed in decreasing order) account for most of the heroin seized in Europe. Heroin shipments bound for Western Europe leave mainly from the Netherlands, followed by Turkey, Belgium and Pakistan. Heroin from Central and Eastern Europe is increasingly being transported by air to Western Europe. Despite recent increases in the quantity of opium seized, seizures of that drug continue to be less significant than heroin seizures.

2. Regional cooperation

679. The second phase of the operation Channel 2008 was conducted by CSTO and the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation in November 2008, with the participation of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The goal of the operation was to build a system of enhanced collective security to prevent trafficking in drugs from Afghanistan and the entry of precursor chemicals into Central Asian countries and Afghanistan. Representatives of the law enforcement agencies of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Colombia, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Spain and the United States took part in the operation. The joint operation resulted in the seizure of over 18.7 tons of drugs, including more than 2.4 tons of heroin, 1.6 tons of cocaine, 7.3 tons of cannabis resin, 6.8 tons of cannabis herb and 20.8 tons of precursor chemicals.

680. In December 2008, senior international drug control officials attended a meeting in Vienna to coordinate efforts to stem the supply of illicit drugs from Afghanistan. The meeting was organized by UNODC within the framework of the Paris Pact Initiative, aimed at countering trafficking in and abuse of opiates from Afghanistan. Specific topics discussed at the meeting included drug law enforcement; financial flows linked to the production of and trafficking in Afghan opiates; preventing and treating drug abuse and HIV epidemics in Afghanistan and

neighbouring countries; and trafficking in precursors used to manufacture heroin.

681. The Council of the European Union endorsed the European Union Drugs Action Plan for 2009-2012 in December 2008. The Action Plan for 2009-2012 is the second of two consecutive action plans to implement the European Union Drugs Strategy for the period 2005-2012 endorsed in 2004. The Strategy is centred on two key dimensions of drug policy — drug demand reduction and drug supply reduction — complemented by three cross-cutting themes: coordination; international cooperation; and information, research and education. The Action Plan is focused on five priorities: reducing the demand for drugs; reducing the supply of drugs; improving international cooperation; improving understanding of the problem; and improving coordination and cooperation and raising public awareness.

682. The sixteenth European Cities against Drugs (ECAD) Mayors' Conference and the Second World Mayors' Conference were held in Göteborg, Sweden, in February 2009. The main theme of the joint conference was to offer stronger support of the international drug control treaties in preparation of the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in March 2009.

683. On 27 March 2009, a special conference on Afghanistan, organized within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, was held in Moscow. The conference participants discussed the impact of the situation in Afghanistan on neighbouring countries and identified ways to combine efforts to fight drug trafficking and organized crime emanating from that country. The conference was dedicated to combating drugs and finding ways to resolve the serious drug control situation in Afghanistan. One important item on the agenda was the proposal by the Russian Federation to call on the international community to increase interaction for strengthening the security belts around Afghanistan. Twenty countries and eight international organizations were represented at the conference.

684. EMCDDA held a conference on the theme "Identifying Europe's information needs for effective drug policy" in Lisbon in May 2009. The conference brought together some 300 policymakers, researchers and practitioners from Europe, North America and Oceania. The conference participants took stock of

progress in European drug control policy, considered future key issues in drug control in Europe and discussed the possible impact of those issues on the need for information.

685. Representatives of 33 countries participated in the Eighth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe, held in Vienna in June 2009. The participants reviewed trends, strategies and effective responses to drug trafficking, the importance of information in dismantling drug trafficking organizations and the influence of the Internet and other electronic media on drug trafficking.

686. The Board welcomes the Livestrong Global Cancer Summit, held in Dublin in August 2009. The Summit was a landmark event, bringing together world leaders, industry, non-governmental organizations and individuals to spotlight their collective commitment to the global fight against cancer. Several specialized agencies and other organizations in the United Nations system, such as WHO and the International Atomic Energy Agency, were also represented by high-ranking officials.

687. The Board takes note of the work of the Council of Europe's Ad Hoc Committee on Counterfeiting of Medical Products and Similar Crimes Involving Threats to Public Health, which met in the course of 2009 to prepare a draft convention on the subject.

688. Several joint law enforcement operations in Western Europe have resulted in the interception of large quantities of illicit drugs. The operations required close cooperation with European agencies such as the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre – Narcotics (MAOC-N), an intergovernmental task force set up to prevent drug trafficking by sea.

3. National legislation, policy and action

689. In Finland, Narcotics Act No. 373/2008 entered into force in September 2008. The Act aligns Finnish drug control legislation with the corresponding European regulations and is aimed at enhancing drug control by increasing cooperation among national authorities. The Act outlines the main principles of drug control and covers all substances controlled under the 1961 Convention, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention. The Act prohibits the cultivation of coca bush, khat plants and psilocybin mushrooms, as well as the cultivation of opium poppy, hemp and

cactus plants containing mescaline for use as drugs or raw material for drugs.

690. In November 2008, a series of referendums were held in Switzerland to decide on the national drug control policy. Voters decided in favour of offering prescribed heroin to drug abusers on a permanent basis but rejected the decriminalization of cannabis.

691. In Montenegro, the National Strategic Response to Drugs (2008-2012) and Action Plan 2008/2009 was adopted. The document includes comprehensive measures to reduce illicit drug supply and demand in the country. The national office on drugs is the coordinating agency for activities aimed at reducing the spread of drug abuse, especially among young people, and increasing the possibilities for the rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts.

692. In January 2009, the Government of the Netherlands established an advisory committee on drug control policy to review the national drug control policy. In its conclusions, presented in June 2009, the committee stated that the national drug control policy was achieving its objective of limiting damage to the health of drug users. In addition, the committee identified areas where the policy was in urgent need of change, such as the use of drugs by minors. A memorandum on drug control policy, based partly on the recommendations of the committee, is expected to be issued.

693. In February 2009, the Government of Romania reorganized the Pharmaceutical Department of the Ministry of Health, creating a general directorate for strategies and medicine policy. The responsibilities of the general directorate include monitoring the national system for the distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and overseeing activities to control the manufacture and export and import of controlled substances. The Board encourages the Government to continue improving the mechanism for controlling the manufacture and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances used for medical and scientific purposes.

694. In Spain, the national drug control strategy for the period 2009-2016, which had been adopted by the Council of Ministers in January 2009, was published in the *Official State Gazette* in February 2009. The objectives of the strategy include delaying the age of initial drug abuse; reducing the use of licit and illicit

drugs; guaranteeing the provision of quality assistance to all people directly or indirectly affected by drug abuse; reducing or limiting the consequences, in particular the health consequences, of drug abuse; facilitating the integration of people into the rehabilitation process, through training, for example; and increasing the effectiveness of measures aimed at regulating the licit supply of and controlling the illicit demand for psychotropic substances. The strategy is also intended to optimize coordination and cooperation at the national, regional and international levels. The main elements of the strategy are prevention, supply reduction and training. The strategy has an evaluation component, for assessing the value of the strategy, determining whether the aims have been achieved and proposing corrective measures.

695. In February 2009, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs in the United Kingdom issued a report on MDMA (“ecstasy”), reviewing its harmfulness and classification under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The report contained 13 recommendations to the Government, 11 of which were accepted. The Government rejected the recommendation that “ecstasy” should be downgraded, citing concerns that the downgrading of the substance could lead to an adverse impact on patterns of use and attitudes and that a change in classification might encourage the development of international trafficking in “ecstasy” by organized criminal groups. The Government also rejected the recommendation to explore a national scheme to enable “ecstasy” to be tested for individual use, stating that that might obscure the messages that “ecstasy” was harmful and should not be used. The Board welcomes those decisions by the Government of the United Kingdom.

696. In March 2009, the Government of Serbia adopted the National Palliative Care Strategy, which focuses on the use of opioids for pain relief. One important objective of the strategy is the revision of national laws regulating palliative care in Serbia.

697. In April 2009, the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina established an agency for medicines and medical products in accordance with the law on medicines and medical products that had entered into force in July 2008. The law applies to medicinal products containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as the precursor chemicals used in their manufacture. In addition, the law covers areas

such as licensing requirements, the maximum allowed substance content in doses of medication, the quality of drugs crossing borders, manufacturing methods, the use of equipment, transport and the required documentation for transportation. The new law is expected to strengthen control of the movement of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors within the country.

698. In May 2009, Germany’s lower house of parliament voted in favour of a law allowing the provision of diamorphine (pharmaceutically manufactured heroin) to severe drug abusers who failed to respond to other forms of treatment. The law is based on the results of a study by the Ministry of Health involving persons severely addicted to opiates, comparing their response to treatment with heroin with their response to treatment with methadone. The results showed that diamorphine-supported treatment was successful with respect to the person’s overall health condition, abstinence, drug abuse reduction and social reintegration. Diamorphine-supported treatment will be offered to about 1,500-3,000 drug abusers. Heroin-supported treatment is also offered in a few other countries in Western Europe.

699. In the United Kingdom, a curriculum on substance misuse in undergraduate medical schools has been developed and is now being implemented at all of the medical schools in England. One of the core aims of the curriculum is to enable doctors to assist in the prevention of substance misuse and management of substance dependence. The other core aims include: to enable schools to help future doctors and doctors in training to be aware of the risks posed by substance misuse to their own health and to their professional practice and conduct; and to promote the proper care and protection of the general public.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

700. Cannabis plants are illicitly cultivated in many countries in Europe. Albania, Bulgaria and Serbia have emerged as some of the main countries in Eastern Europe in which cannabis is illicitly cultivated. In 2009, as in 2008, the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) of Germany reported that the illicit cultivation of cannabis, both outdoors and indoors, had intensified. More than 500 illicit cannabis cultivation sites, ranging

from small indoor facilities to large outdoor plantations, were uncovered in Germany in 2008. In Switzerland, where there is significant illicit cannabis cultivation, there was a reduction in the total area under illicit cannabis cultivation and in the number of facilities illicitly producing cannabis on a smaller scale. In the Netherlands, intensified law enforcement efforts targeting the illicit cultivation of cannabis plants is said to have contributed to a decline in the quality and an increase in the prices of cannabis on the domestic market. While European cannabis cultivation sites appear to be the source of a growing proportion of the cannabis herb found in Europe, large quantities of cannabis herb continue to be smuggled into the region. Europe is the only region in the world into which significant quantities of cannabis herb from other regions, such as Africa or Asia, are smuggled.

701. Albanian cannabis is smuggled by land on a route leading through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria to Turkey and on another route leading to Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia and countries in Western Europe. Illicit cannabis cultivation has also been reported in the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine; about half of the cannabis cultivated in those countries is for the domestic market.

702. Western Europe remains the largest market in the world for cannabis resin. Each year, Spain accounts for more than 70 per cent of the cannabis resin seizures reported in Western and Central Europe and accounts for the largest total amount of cannabis resin seized worldwide (628 tons in 2008). In some countries in Europe, there has been an increase in the amount of cannabis resin seized; in Portugal, for example, 61 tons of cannabis resin were seized in 2008. For consignments of cannabis resin, the most frequently cited European destination is France, followed by the Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal and Italy.

703. Trafficking in cannabis resin, though limited in most Eastern European countries, is slightly more widespread in the Russian Federation. In 2008, the total amount of cannabis resin seized in the Russian Federation was 329 kg. Most of the cannabis resin was found in motor vehicles or on-board trains. Most of the cannabis resin smuggled into Europe continues to be from Morocco or countries in Central Asia.

704. There continues to be a significant level of trafficking in cannabis herb in Eastern Europe and

Central Europe. Most of the cannabis herb produced in those subregions originates in Albania, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. In Albania, more than 145,000 cannabis plants were eradicated in about 360 operations and more than 3,941 kg of cannabis herb were seized in 2008. In Croatia, 220 kg of cannabis herb and 4 kg of cannabis resin were seized in 2008. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, more than 57 kg of cannabis herb were seized in 686 seizures in 2008. In Bulgaria, the Government reported that 14,806 kg of cannabis plants were destroyed and 1,026 kg of cannabis herb were seized in 2008. The Board urges the Governments of countries in Eastern and Central Europe to further intensify their efforts to counter cannabis trafficking.

705. European countries continue to account for virtually all cocaine seizures occurring outside the Americas. In 2008, the amount of cocaine seized in Europe declined considerably compared with previous years, which were characterized by record seizures. The considerable decrease in the total amount of cocaine seized in the region is primarily attributable to the fact that fewer seizures of cocaine were made in Portugal and Spain, two of the main entry points for the drug, for two consecutive years. The decrease is believed to also be the result of recent changes in the routes used for smuggling cocaine into those countries.

706. The smuggling of cocaine through Eastern European countries has significantly increased over the past few years. The most significant seizures made in 2008 were 381 kg of cocaine, seized at the port of Koper, in Slovenia, and liquid cocaine with a gross weight of 163 kg, seized by the customs authorities in Slovakia.

707. A new modus operandi for cocaine used by cocaine traffickers was uncovered in February 2008, when law enforcement authorities in Slovakia found 164 kg of cocaine in wine shipped from South America via Germany. The World Customs Organization reported that the cocaine had been dissolved to form a viscous fluid and poured into several bottles that were subsequently declared as "red wine".

708. "Crack" cocaine continues to be of marginal importance in Western Europe. Nevertheless, the amount of "crack" cocaine seized in Germany increased from almost 5 kg in 2007 to about 8 kg in

2008. Most (96 per cent) of those seizures of “crack” cocaine were made in the city of Hamburg.

709. Heroin seizures increased in Western Europe in 2007 and 2008. The increase in heroin seizures in Europe as a whole was attributed to South-Eastern Europe and Eastern Europe, which are believed to be used as transit areas for opiates destined for Western and Central Europe. In Europe, most of the heroin seizures are made in France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. In 2008, the amount of heroin seized in Germany fell by 53 per cent. The United Kingdom, Italy, France, Germany and Norway (listed in descending order) were the main countries of destination of heroin consignments entering Western Europe. The heroin is sent in consignments of 50-1,000 kg.

710. Almost all of the heroin on the illicit markets in Eastern Europe originated in Afghanistan. Turkey continues to be the starting point for the Balkan route, used for smuggling heroin into Europe. In addition, heroin continues to be smuggled along the “silk route”, through Central Asia into the Russian Federation, where it is abused or, to a lesser extent, smuggled further into other CIS member States.

711. Heroin is smuggled mainly by car and by train. According to the World Customs Organization, no heroin seizure was made along air traffic routes in Eastern and Central Europe during 2008. Train connections between the Russian Federation and the countries to the west of it — Belarus, Poland and Ukraine — are increasingly being used for smuggling heroin into Western Europe. Reports suggest that heroin is increasingly being smuggled into Western Europe along air routes from Eastern and Central European countries: more than 90 seizures of heroin, totalling 637 kg, were made in major airports in Western Europe in 2008.

712. In 2008, heroin accounted for 92 per cent of all the seizures of opiates effected in Eastern and Central European countries. In the Russian Federation, heroin accounted for approximately 42 per cent of all the seizures of opiates. In Eastern and Central Europe, major seizures of heroin were reported in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania and Slovenia. Heroin seizures in Poland, Serbia and Ukraine decreased in 2008 compared with the previous year. In 2008, Bulgarian law enforcement authorities intercepted heroin consignments for the

first time: four consignments of heroin, totalling 422 kg, were seized on a route used as an alternative to the classic Balkan route, leading from the Islamic Republic of Iran through Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia and then crossing the Black Sea by ferry boat from Poti, Georgia, to Burgas, Bulgaria.

713. In Western European countries, the total amount of opium seized was significantly lower than the total amount of heroin seized. The largest amount of opium seized was reported in Sweden.

Psychotropic substances

714. According to UNODC, the quantity of amphetamine seized in Eastern Europe increased significantly from 24 kg in 2007 to 129 kg in 2008. Poland accounted for more than 77 per cent of the seizures of amphetamine effected in Eastern Europe in 2008. More than 100 kg of amphetamine were seized by Bulgarian authorities. In Croatia, 15 kg of amphetamine were seized in 2008.

715. In Europe, the amount of amphetamine seized rose by 40 per cent, to 8.2 tons, in 2007. That was the highest total ever registered for Europe, representing more than one third of the world total in 2007. The increase in 2007 was mainly attributable to Western Europe and Central Europe, which together accounted for more than 90 per cent of the European total, for the first time since 2002. The largest increase was registered in the Netherlands, where 2.8 tons of amphetamine were reported to have been seized in 2007, more than four times the highest amount ever reported by a European country. The amount of amphetamine seized also increased in France, Germany and Norway but declined in Sweden.

716. In Germany, seizures of amphetamine and methamphetamine increased, together amounting to 1,283 kg in 2008. German authorities reported that by far the largest share of seized amphetamine of known origin came from the Netherlands. Amphetamine was also smuggled out of Belgium, Poland or, in smaller amounts, the Czech Republic.

717. Until now, illicit methamphetamine manufacture has often involved small groups of persons manufacturing the drug principally to meet their own needs. While that is still the case, EMCDDA has noted an increasing level of professionalization in illicit methamphetamine manufacture (and trafficking),

together with the possible involvement of organized criminal groups. Given the capacity of modern illicit production processes, that development could lead to methamphetamine becoming more widely available on illicit markets in Europe. There is recent evidence of more manufacturing and tableting, which might indicate that the methamphetamine manufacturing sites are increasing in size.

718. Although methamphetamine seizures made in Europe are small in comparison with those made in North America and East and South-East Asia, they increased from 187 kg in 2006 to 390 kg in 2007. The largest increase was registered in Norway, but methamphetamine seizures also rose in Lithuania and Sweden. In Belgium and the Netherlands, seizures of methamphetamine were reported in 2007 for the first time ever. In Germany, methamphetamine seizures are mostly made in areas bordering the Czech Republic.

719. Seizures of MDMA (“ecstasy”) declined in Western Europe in 2008, a development that is partly attributable to the fact that the drug is increasingly being manufactured in the countries in which it is abused — in Europe, as well as in North America and South-East Asia. The largest portion of the seized “ecstasy” with a known origin or transit route is from the Netherlands. The second most common source of “ecstasy” continued to be Belgium. As in the case of amphetamine, the “ecstasy” tablets were often seized while en route to Southern and Eastern Europe.

720. According to Europol, the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine takes place mainly in countries in Central and Eastern Europe, above all in the Czech Republic and the Russian Federation. In 2008, the Czech Republic accounted for 96 per cent (or 457) of the clandestine methamphetamine laboratories dismantled in Europe. The Russian Federation reported the seizure of 137 methamphetamine manufacturing sites. In addition, four such sites were seized in Slovakia and three were seized in Poland.

721. In Europe, seizures of MDMA (“ecstasy”) remained low in 2008, totalling 63 kg. The biggest single seizure of “ecstasy”, amounting to 56 kg, was made by Bulgarian authorities.

Precursors

722. According to UNODC, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Serbia are emerging as

countries used for the illicit manufacture of amphetamine. In Eastern European countries, seizures of precursors of amphetamine have increased in the past few years. According to information submitted to the Board, major seizures of P-2-P in 2007 were reported in Poland (a total of 241 litres), the Russian Federation (194 litres), Estonia (96 litres) and Bulgaria (32 litres).

723. Traffickers’ attempts to use countries in Europe as sources of acetic anhydride have continued. Large amounts of the substance have been seized in States members of the European Union. Investigations have determined that the seized shipments of acetic anhydride had been diverted from legitimate trade within the European Union (for more details, see the 2009 report of the Board on the implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention).⁵²

Substances not under international control

724. Khat, a substance not under international control, is often smuggled into Europe via the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, where it has not been placed under national control, and then shipped to other countries in Europe. Significant amounts of khat (more than 100 kg) have been seized in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. In 2008, Estonian authorities seized khat for the first time.

725. The abuse of khat is often not noticed in countries in Europe. Khat is used almost exclusively in migrant communities in Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and other countries in the region.

726. In May 2009, the Government of the Czech Republic adopted an amendment to the act on dependency-producing substances, placing under national control the substance benzylpiperazine. The amendment to the national drug law is expected to strengthen further the control of the movement of

⁵² *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2009 on the Implementation of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.XI.4).

psychotropic substances and precursors within the country.

5. Abuse and treatment

727. While cannabis resin remains the most commonly abused drug in Europe, the abuse of products containing cannabis herb has increased in the past few years. According to EMCDDA, the average annual prevalence of cannabis abuse among Europeans 15-64 years old is 6.8 per cent (more than 23 million persons). National figures range from 0.8 to 11.2 per cent, the lowest figure being in Malta, followed by Bulgaria, Greece and Sweden, and the highest being in Italy, followed by Spain, the Czech Republic and France. Lifetime prevalence of cannabis abuse is 21.8 per cent (or more than 71 million persons aged 15-64), national estimates range from 1.7 to 36.5 per cent. The lowest lifetime prevalence rate was reported in Romania, followed by Malta, Bulgaria and Cyprus, and the highest was reported in Denmark, followed by France, the United Kingdom and Italy.

728. In Europe, cannabis abuse appears to be stable or declining in a number of countries. Intensified prevention efforts and increased availability of information on the health risks may have contributed to that development. In the United Kingdom, a clear downward trend has been observed over the years; in England and Wales, for example, the prevalence of cannabis abuse among the population aged 16-59 fell from 10.9 per cent in the reporting year 2002/03 to 7.9 per cent in the reporting year 2008/09. In Spain, the prevalence of cannabis abuse among secondary school students aged 14-18 also declined, from a peak of 25.1 per cent in 2004 to 20.1 per cent in 2008. Those and other data suggest that a reversal of the strong upward trend of the period 1993-2003 has begun. That is confirmed by the results of the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD), which show that there was no increase in recent use of cannabis in any European country between 2003 and 2007.

729. The ESPAD results published in March 2009 reveal that, on average, 23 per cent of male students between 15 and 16 years of age and 17 per cent of female students in the same age group have tried illicit drugs at least once during their lifetime. Reported illicit drug use continues to vary considerably in all countries. In the Czech Republic, almost half of the

students (46 per cent) reported illicit drug use, whereas in Cyprus, Finland, Norway, Romania and Sweden 8 per cent or less reported illicit drug use.

730. In Europe, the vast majority of students who tried illicit drugs used cannabis. Lifetime cannabis use was reported by 19 per cent of the students. That was followed by the use of MDMA ("ecstasy"), cocaine or amphetamines (about 3 per cent). LSD, "crack" cocaine and heroin were reported to have been used less frequently. The highest lifetime prevalence of "ecstasy" use was in Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom (Isle of Man): 6-7 per cent.

731. The abuse of cocaine appears to be concentrated in a few countries in Western Europe, while the abuse of the drug is relatively low in most other European countries. A decline in cocaine abuse has been recorded in Spain and the United Kingdom. In Spain, a country with a high rate of cocaine abuse, the levels of lifetime, annual and last-month use of cocaine among secondary school students aged 14-18 years have declined; for example, annual prevalence of cocaine use among secondary school students fell from a peak of 7.2 per cent in 2004 to 3.6 per cent in 2008. In the United Kingdom, data from England and Wales also suggest a slight decline in the annual prevalence of cocaine use. Declining or stable cocaine abuse has also been reported in Austria, Germany and Switzerland, whereas an increase in cocaine abuse has been reported in France and Ireland.

732. Heroin abuse appears to be relatively stable in most countries in Western Europe. However, a substance abuse survey indicated an increase in the lifetime prevalence of heroin use among young people aged 17 years in France, from 0.7 per cent in 2005 to 1.1 per cent in 2008.

733. According to UNODC, the number of opiate users in Eastern Europe is estimated to be between 2 million and 2.5 million. According to the *World Drug Report 2009*, the Russian Federation is the largest market for opiates in the region, with an estimated 1.68 million opiate abusers. The second largest market for opiates in the region is Ukraine, with an estimated 323,000-423,000 opiate abusers. In 2008, the abuse of opiates was reported to be increasing in most Eastern European countries, particularly in Albania, Belarus, Croatia, the Republic of Moldova and the Russian

Federation, as well as in the countries along the Balkan route.

734. According to the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation, there are 2.5 million drug addicts and more than 5.1 million abusers of drugs other than heroin in that country, almost double the figures for 2002. The abuse of heroin and other opiates predominate. The Federal Drug Control Service estimates that 10,000 heroin addicts die from overdose each year. Almost 65 per cent of newly detected HIV cases in the Russian Federation are linked to the abuse of drugs by injection.

735. In the past five years, the reported demand for treatment related to methamphetamine abuse has been increasing in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia. In the Czech Republic, 61 per cent of all persons receiving treatment for drug abuse reported methamphetamine as their primary drug of abuse. Abusers of methamphetamine account for about two thirds of all problematic drug abusers. In 2008, methamphetamine abuse was reported in 26 per cent of all requests for treatment for drug abuse in Slovakia. In the Czech Republic, 82 per cent of patients in treatment for methamphetamine abuse reported having abused drugs by injection; in Slovakia, the figure was 41 per cent.

736. Methamphetamine abuse continues to be limited in Eastern Europe, especially in comparison with the abuse of other stimulants such as cocaine and amphetamine. In European countries, the highest prevalence of the abuse of methamphetamine, known locally as "pervitin", is in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Some data indicate increased availability of the drug in Hungary and Poland, although the overall level of abuse appears to have remained relatively low.

737. The Board notes the results of the survey on the prevalence of use of sedatives or tranquillizers and antidepressants in Ireland and Northern Ireland (in the United Kingdom). The survey revealed that older adults reported higher prevalence of use in their lifetime, in the past year and in the past month than younger adults for the use of sedatives or tranquillizers and antidepressants and that women reported higher prevalence rates than men for antidepressants. Lifetime prevalence rates for the use of sedatives or tranquillizers and antidepressants were higher among respondents who were separated, divorced or widowed. Various indicators of deprivation (lower socio-

economic groups, not being in paid work and lower educational attainment) were associated with higher prevalence rates for sedatives or tranquillizers and antidepressants. The Board encourages the Governments of other countries in Europe to carry out similar surveys, as the excessive use of psychotropic substances is often under-diagnosed.

738. In 2008, according to the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation, of the 389,302 drug abusers registered in treatment centres, 46,976 (12.1 per cent) were HIV-positive. On average, 8,000 people die every year in the Russian Federation as a result of the toxic effects of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; about 1,000 of those people die of an overdose of drugs, mainly opiates.

739. The HIV epidemic in Eastern Europe is largely concentrated among persons who abuse drugs by injection. It is estimated that in Eastern Europe, 110,000 people became infected with HIV in 2007, while some 58,000 died of AIDS. A high level of HIV infection has been reported among persons who abuse drugs by injection in Belarus (52 per cent). The number of newly reported HIV cases is rising in Georgia and the Republic of Moldova.

740. In 2008, 1,449 drug-related deaths were registered in Germany, an increase of 3.9 per cent compared with the previous year; the reasons for the increase have not been established. In the United Kingdom, the National Programme on Substance Abuse Deaths reported that it had received from coroners in England and Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man notifications of 1,490 drug-related deaths occurring in 2008, a decrease of 3.2 per cent compared with the number reported in the previous year (1,539).

741. In December 2008, an analysis of drug-related deaths between 1998 and 2005 was published in Ireland. Of the 2,442 drug-related deaths recorded in that period, 1,553 were directly drug-related deaths (poisonings) and 889 were indirectly drug-related deaths (non-poisonings). The annual number of deaths by poisoning increased from 178 in 1998 to 232 in 2005. The majority of deaths by poisoning were males. Moreover, the majority of the cases of death by poisoning involved people aged 20-40 years. Of the 1,553 cases of death by poisoning, 714 (46.0 per cent) were attributable to a single drug or substance. Heroin and unspecified opiates accounted for 159 (22.3 per

cent) of the single-drug poisonings, analgesics containing an opiate compound accounted for 85 (11.9 per cent) deaths and methadone accounted for a further 61 (8.5 per cent) deaths. The number of deaths by poisoning in which cocaine was implicated rose from 5 in 1998 to 34 in 2005. Cocaine was implicated in 100 cases (6.4 per cent of all deaths by poisoning). Of the deaths where cocaine was involved, 29 per cent were attributable to cocaine alone. Prescription medication and over-the-counter medication were implicated in many of the deaths by poisoning. Benzodiazepines played a major role in poly-substance poisonings. Benzodiazepines were involved in 30 per cent of deaths by poisoning.

742. The Board takes note of the EMCDDA publication on Internet-based drug treatment interventions, a new and complementary approach to drug abuse treatment in some European Union member States. An Internet-based drug treatment intervention is defined as “an Internet-based programme that comprises a specially developed/adapted, structured and scheduled drug treatment intervention”. The report identifies several Internet-based drug treatment interventions designed for abusers of cannabis, cocaine and “club drugs” (such as MDMA (“ecstasy”)). Despite the need for further investigation and the evaluation of existing Internet-based drug treatment interventions, the available data show promising results for further research and development in the European Union. Internet-based drug treatment interventions may prove to be a useful option for reaching a population of drug users in need of support who are often not reached through more traditional approaches.

743. Access to opioid substitution treatment has expanded considerably over the past few years. According to EMCDDA, the total number of drug abusers receiving substitution treatment in member States of the European Union and in Norway in 2007 is estimated at 600,000, up from 570,000 in 2005 and 500,000 in 2003. The available data on the number of drug abusers in substitution treatment suggest an increase in all European countries except France, Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands (countries in which the situation remained nearly stable) and Spain (where a decline that started already in 2002 has continued). The most rapid scaling up of such treatment was seen in Bulgaria (where in 2007 nearly 3,000 treatment places were available, compared with only 380 in 2003) and in Estonia (where the number of

drug abusers in substitution treatment increased from 60 to more than 1,000 within five years). The number of drug abusers in substitution treatment more than doubled in the period 2003-2007 in the Czech Republic, Finland, Latvia and Norway. An increase in excess of 40 per cent was reported in Greece, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Sweden.

E. Oceania

1. Major developments

744. Demand for MDMA (“ecstasy”) in Australia has increased in recent years. According to the World Customs Organization, approximately 36 per cent of the total amount of “ecstasy” seized globally in 2008 was destined for that country, where widespread use and stable prices underpin demand for that drug. While Canada has remained a significant source of “ecstasy” destined for Australia, Mauritius was also identified as the country from which a shipment of “ecstasy” departed for Australia, an indication that traffickers are devising new routes for smuggling that substance into Australia.

745. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the smuggling of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine into New Zealand, indicating continued illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants in that country. The number of pseudoephedrine tablets seized in 2008 was almost 13 times that seized in 2002. Most shipments of preparations containing pseudoephedrine appear to be organized by Asian organized criminal groups based in New Zealand that use Asian students studying in that country and other temporary visitors as “receivers” for those shipments. China has emerged as a major source of pseudoephedrine tablets seized at the New Zealand border. There have also been reports that pseudoephedrine tablets are smuggled into New Zealand from several countries in Oceania, including Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Tonga.

746. The annual prevalence rate of amphetamine and methamphetamine abuse in New Zealand is among the highest in the world; nevertheless, that rate declined gradually from its peaked level at 5 per cent in 2001 to 3.4 per cent in 2006. A recent survey suggested that among persons aged 15-45, the annual prevalence rate further decreased to 1.4 per cent in 2009.

747. In Oceania, a number of regional initiatives, including meetings and training courses, to address drug control issues have been successful, and countries in the region continue to participate actively in those initiatives. In spite of that, the Board noted that with the exception of Australia and New Zealand, all countries in the region have reported limited drug-related data to the Board. In view of the information available, the Board is concerned that countries in the region other than Australia and New Zealand are being targeted for trafficking in and illicit manufacture of drugs. The Board has also noted the involvement of organized crime syndicates in drug trafficking in those countries. The low rate of accession by States in Oceania to the international drug control treaties and the geographical proximity of the region to illicit drug manufacturing countries in South-East Asia make Oceania more vulnerable to drug trafficking. The Board urges the States in the region that are not yet parties to the international drug control treaties to ratify those instruments and encourages them to provide comprehensive drug-related data.

2. Regional cooperation

748. A number of regional conferences continued to bring countries in Oceania together to address drug control issues. The annual meeting of the Regional Security Committee of the Pacific Islands Forum, held in Fiji in June 2009, addressed the need for closer regional cooperation in combating transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, in Oceania. Participants also highlighted the importance of training programmes offered by Australia and New Zealand relating to detection skills, intelligence-gathering and other core skills such as document examination. In July 2009, the fourth meeting of the Pacific Drug and Alcohol Research Network was held in Vanuatu. Representatives of 11 countries in Oceania, WHO, UNODC and research institutions shared information on the latest trends in drug and alcohol abuse at both the regional and national levels. Participants agreed that more comprehensive data should be developed throughout the region and that more funding should be provided for drug abuse research and treatment.

749. Trafficking in precursor chemicals in Oceania has become an issue of particular concern. In September 2008, the South Pacific Precursor Control Forum convened a workshop in Samoa to consider the

implementation in the region of further legislative and regulatory measures to prevent the diversion of precursors for use in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants, in particular the development of model laws on drugs. Participants also discussed the importance of regional compliance with the international drug control treaties. The twelfth National Chemical Diversion Congress of Australia was hosted by New Zealand in November 2008. The Congress, which was attended by representatives of Governments of States in Asia and the Pacific, addressed the situation regarding the diversion of substances in New Zealand and made recommendations regarding ways to reduce the diversion of precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants from domestic distribution channels.

750. Australian and New Zealand law enforcement agencies continued to provide support for capacity-building initiatives in Oceania. The customs authorities of both countries organized training programmes for law enforcement agencies in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. The New Zealand Police continued to expand its Overseas Police Liaison Network, through which New Zealand police officers are posted to what are believed to be major transit areas for illicit drugs and precursor chemicals destined for New Zealand, including the South and West Pacific. The network has helped to reduce the smuggling of drugs into New Zealand and improve intelligence-sharing among law enforcement authorities in Oceania. The Board encourages the Governments of Australia and New Zealand to continue to strengthen regional cooperation by sharing expertise and providing assistance in drug control in the region.

3. National legislation, policy and action

751. The Board appreciates the efforts of the Government of Australia to control precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants. In 2008, the Australian Crime Commission established the National Clandestine Laboratory Database as a repository for information provided by law enforcement and forensic agencies in Australia with regard to clandestine laboratories. The database is expected to strengthen the intelligence-gathering capacity of the Australian law enforcement agencies. As one of the priorities under its National Amphetamine-Type Stimulant Strategy 2008-2011, Australia has developed a precursor chemical

information resource which will be made available to law enforcement, forensic and health officers to enable them to identify precursor chemicals more easily. In August 2007, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia introduced “Project Stop”, an online tool which has been playing an important role in preventing the diversion of pseudoephedrine for use in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine by enabling pharmacies to monitor sales of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine in real time. To date, approximately 63 per cent of pharmacies in Australia have registered to use the tool.

752. In April 2009, the Government of Australia launched a national campaign against illicit drugs, entitled “Illicit Drug Use — Targeting Young Methamphetamine Users”, the overall aim of which is to help to reduce the abuse of methamphetamines, “ecstasy” and cannabis among young Australians aged 15-25 by raising awareness of the harms associated with illicit drug use and directing young drug abusers to relevant support, counselling and treatment services. The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service has developed a drug and precursor strategy for the period 2008-2010 to strengthen its capacity to detect, investigate and prosecute the smuggling of drugs and the illegal importation of precursor chemicals into Australia.

753. In view of the high prevalence rate of abuse of *N*-benzylpiperazine (BZP) abuse in New Zealand, in 2008, the Government of that country strengthened the control of BZP and related substances that are active ingredients in most “party pills”, drugs which have a similar effect to that of MDMA (“ecstasy”). The new control measures prohibit the possession, use, sale, supply, import, export and manufacture of BZP.

754. In February 2009, the New Zealand Police launched its “Illicit Drug Strategy to 2010”, the aim of which is to reduce the supply of and demand for illicit drugs, particularly cannabis and methamphetamine, which are the drugs most widely abused in New Zealand. The Strategy also provides for tightened precursor control, the strengthening of the National Intelligence Centre to provide more effective assistance in drug-related investigations and the implementation, by 2010, of the Government’s Organized Crime Strategy, which targets the relationship between illicit drug manufacture and organized crime. In order to reduce cannabis supply,

the New Zealand Police has been conducting a nationwide operation to counter the illicit cultivation, distribution and abuse of cannabis and related crime. During the period 2008-2009, the operation resulted in the eradication of a total of 141,000 cannabis plants — the highest number in 10 years — and the arrest of 1,100 offenders. The New Zealand Police has also established special response teams to detect and dismantle methamphetamine laboratories with the aim of reducing supply of that drug. In addition, the entry into force of the Criminal Proceeds (Recovery) Act 2009 is expected to strengthen the capacity of the Police to recover the proceeds of illicit drug crop cultivation and illicit drug manufacture and trafficking.

755. In October 2009, the Government of New Zealand announced a new national action plan to tackle the problems of methamphetamine in the country. The action plan is aimed at reducing the use of methamphetamine by restricting public access to pseudoephedrine (the precursor used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine), strengthening the capacity of law enforcement authorities and improving treatment service for methamphetamine abusers.

756. The Board welcomes the initiatives undertaken by the Governments of Fiji and Samoa to tackle the growing problems of illicit drug manufacture and trafficking. Samoa is considering amendments to its Narcotics Act in order to strengthen precursor control and increase penalties for drug-related offences. In view of the growing problem of the illicit cultivation of cannabis plants in Fiji, the Police of Fiji have developed a community policing model whereby the community joins forces with the police in eradicating cannabis plants. The initiative has gained significant momentum and will eventually be adopted nationwide. In 2009, the Drug Unit of the Fiji Police Force developed a programme to raise awareness of the risks associated with drug abuse through presentations in prisons, schools and villages throughout Fiji.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotics

757. Illicit cannabis cultivation continues to be reported in Oceania. Cannabis plants are illicitly cultivated not only in Australia and New Zealand but also in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga. It appears that in recent years, organized criminal groups

have been involved in the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in cannabis in those countries. There is concern that the development of the “cannabis industry” will facilitate the investment of profits from that industry in the illicit manufacture of other drugs, in particular methamphetamine. In view of the lack of systematic surveillance systems in those countries, the Board urges the Governments in question to take measures to prevent the illicit production of and trafficking in cannabis.

758. Cannabis continues to be the drug most commonly seized in Oceania. Most of the cannabis seized in the region had been produced domestically, while a very small proportion has been smuggled from other regions. During the reporting period 2007/08, Australia seized a total of 5,400 kg of cannabis nationwide, including 54 kg seized at the customs border. Major sources of the cannabis seized at the border include the Netherlands, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and the United States of America. In New Zealand, 98 per cent of cannabis abusers surveyed in 2008 as part of an annual study described the availability of cannabis as “very easy” or “easy”. In 2008, New Zealand reported the seizure of 700 kg of cannabis herb and 156,000 cannabis plants. In 2009, Fiji also reported large seizures of cannabis plants, including 15,000 cannabis plants eradicated by the Fiji Police Force during “Operation Yadra Viti Rua”.

759. While cocaine seizures in Oceania account for only a very small proportion of global seizures of that drug (0.1 per cent in 2007, according to UNODC), the quantity of cocaine reported to have been seized in the region has increased in the past few years. Australia accounted for 99 per cent of such seizures effected in the region in 2007 and reported the seizure of 842 kg of cocaine in 2008. Eighty per cent of the cocaine seized at the border had been concealed in sea cargo shipments. The smuggling of cocaine from Canada continues to pose a serious problem in Australia. In addition, cocaine is increasingly being smuggled into Australia through China (including Hong Kong). West African criminal groups are believed to have been involved in a number of cases of cocaine smuggling detected at the Australian border. Mexico has also emerged as the country from which a shipment of cocaine departed for Australia. In early 2009, Australian law enforcement authorities detected an organized criminal group that was attempting to smuggle 144 kg of cocaine from Mexico into Australia.

Cocaine seizures in New Zealand remained at a low level in 2008, while Samoa reported one incident in 2008 in which an attempt had been made to smuggle cocaine into that country by mail. Very limited information on cocaine trafficking and seizures in other countries in the region was reported to the Board.

760. South-West and South-East Asia remain major sources of the heroin smuggled into Australia. Australian criminal groups with long-established links to South-East Asian heroin traffickers continue to be actively involved in smuggling that drug. Heroin smuggled out of Malaysia and Viet Nam has also been detected in Australia. In May 2009, Australia reported the seizure at Sydney Airport of 2 kg of heroin from a passenger arriving from Malaysia and a further 1.4 kg of the drug from a passenger arriving from Viet Nam. Heroin is smuggled into Australia chiefly by mail, air cargo and air passenger. New Zealand reported the seizure of only a very small amount of heroin (34.5 grams) in 2008. Very limited information regarding trafficking in and seizures of heroin in countries in Oceania other than Australia and New Zealand has been reported.

Psychotropic substances

761. Combating the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants remains a priority for law enforcement authorities in Oceania. Domestic clandestine manufacture remains the main source of such substances in Australia, where 271 laboratories engaged in such manufacture (including MDMA (“ecstasy”) laboratories) were seized during the period 2007-2008, a number consistent with the steady trend observed since 2004. While the clandestine laboratories found to be manufacturing amphetamine-type stimulants in Australia tend to be large, so-called “box labs” — small and highly mobile laboratories that can be easily packed away for storage and transportation — have also been detected in that country.

762. Most of the methamphetamine seized in New Zealand had been illicitly manufactured in that country. In 2008, a total of 133 clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were dismantled in that country, a significant decrease from 190 in 2007 and 211 in 2006. While stricter legislative control measures and the introduction of the Organized Crime Strategy may have played a significant role in reducing illicit

methamphetamine manufacture in New Zealand, the decrease in the number of laboratories dismantled and the fact that the amount of precursors seized at the border remains large suggest that illicit drug manufacturers may be devising new methods.

763. Although amphetamine-type stimulants are supplied primarily by domestic clandestine manufacturers, evidence shows that they are increasingly being smuggled into Oceania. In Australia, the quantity of amphetamine-type stimulants seized at the border has increased almost 10-fold from 27 kg during the reporting period 2006/07 of the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service to 263 kg during the reporting period 2007/08 of that body. Major source regions include North America and South-East Asia. In November 2008, Australian law enforcement authorities in Adelaide seized 80 kg of methamphetamine concealed in a shipment from China. The seizure was one of the largest methamphetamine seizures reported in Adelaide to date. New Zealand reported the seizure of 96 kg of methamphetamine in December 2008, one of the largest seizures of methamphetamine in that country to date.

764. There is evidence that other countries in Oceania are also being targeted by traffickers of amphetamine-type stimulants. The Board notes that in French Polynesia in 2008, a methamphetamine trafficking network was detected and 19 persons were sentenced for drug-related offences. The network was believed to have been operating in that territory for at least a few years before it was dismantled.

Precursors

765. The quantity of precursors seized in Oceania is increasing. During the reporting period 2007/08, Australia reported the seizure of a total of 1,169 kg of precursor chemicals at the border, a dramatic increase compared with the 295 kg seized during the reporting period 2006/07. According to the New Zealand Customs Service, the number of seizures of precursors has increased by 12 times in the past six years.

766. Trafficking in ephedrine and pseudoephedrine as raw materials — mainly concealed in cargo transported by air or ship or in international mail items — continued to be reported in Australia and New Zealand. East and South-East Asia remains the major source region for most of the consignments seized. In 2008,

Australian law enforcement agencies seized 1,100 kg of ephedrine, a large proportion of which had originated in China (including Hong Kong), India, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea or Viet Nam. Japan was also identified as the source of a seized shipment of ephedrine destined for Australia. In June 2009, the Australian Customs Service reported a large seizure of 1.8 tons of precursor chemicals, including 200 kg of pseudoephedrine, concealed in a shipment from China. In 2008, New Zealand reported the seizure of 14.5 kg of ephedrine that had originated in India and 154 kg of pseudoephedrine concealed in cement plaster shipped from China. In the latter case, two men were subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment for their involvement.

767. While the illicit manufacture of MDMA (“ecstasy”) continued to be reported in Australia, the quantity of seized precursors of MDMA decreased. In 2008, Australia reported having seized 1 litre of isosafrole compared with a total of 255 litres of isosafrole and 1,900 litres of 3,4-MDP-2-P seized in that country in 2007. No seizures of those substances were reported in other countries in Oceania, including Fiji and New Zealand.

Substances not under international control

768. An increasing quantity of GBL is reported to have been seized in Oceania. In 2008, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service detected 18 shipments of GBL, the combined weight of which was 2,263 kg (equivalent to 2,534 litres). The shipments had originated mainly in China, Germany, Japan, Poland or the United Kingdom. Seizures of GHB continued to be reported in Australia in 2009, while New Zealand reported the seizure of a combined total of 837 litres of GBL and GHB in 2008, a sharp increase from 5 litres in 2007.

769. While the annual prevalence of ketamine abuse has remained low in Australia (0.3 per cent in 2004 and 0.2 per cent in 2007), seizures of that substance have continued to be reported. In 2008, 26 consignments of ketamine totalling 3.8 kg were seized in Australia, having been detected primarily in mail items or smuggled by air passengers. The majority of the consignments had originated in China (including Hong Kong), India, New Zealand, Peru or Thailand.

770. Evidence shows that traffickers are turning to natural plant extracts in an effort to circumvent

tightened controls over ephedrine. In September 2008, Australian law enforcement authorities seized a shipment from India consisting of five drums of powdered extract of the plant *Sida cordifolia*; approximately 6 kg of ephedrine could have been obtained from that shipment.

771. In recent years, New Zealand has reported having seized an increasing quantity of iodine and hypophosphorous acid. It is believed that the seized substances were to have been used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. In 2008, New Zealand reported 63 seizures of solid iodine totalling 52 kg, a significant increase of 58 per cent compared with the 33 kg seized in 2007. Moreover, 45 litres of hypophosphorous acid were seized in that country in 2008, almost three times the amount seized in 2007.

5. Abuse and treatment

772. In Australia, according to the results of the 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey, 38.1 per cent of the population aged 14 or older had used an illicit drug at some time in their lives, while 13.4 per cent had used an illicit drug in the past 12 months, a considerable decrease from 15.3 per cent in 2004. Female teenagers were more likely than male teenagers (both in the age group 14-19) to have ever used an illicit drug (26.5 per cent compared with 21.1 per cent). However, in all other age groups, males were more likely than females to have ever used an illicit drug (41.4 per cent compared with 34.8 per cent). The average age at which respondents had first tried illicit drugs was about 19 years old.

773. The prevalence rate of drug abuse by injection remained low in Australia (an annual prevalence rate of 0.5 per cent in 2007), consistent with the trend of the past several years (0.6 per cent in 2001 and 0.45 per cent in 2004). Methamphetamine and amphetamine are the drugs most commonly injected, followed by heroin. About 30 per cent of persons who abuse drugs by injection do so daily, and approximately 59 per cent obtain needles and syringes from pharmacies; 62.5 per cent had never shared a needle or other injecting equipment with another person.

774. Although cannabis remains the drug most commonly abused in New Zealand, the prevalence rate of cannabis abuse in that country has declined in recent years. The annual prevalence rate of cannabis abuse among persons aged 15-45 decreased from 20.4 per

cent in 2003 to 17.9 per cent in 2006. Despite low demand for cocaine in New Zealand, cocaine abuse in that country has increased in recent years. In 2006, 1.1 per cent of the population aged 15-45 had used cocaine in the past 12 months, a significant increase from 0.5 per cent in 2003. The annual prevalence rate of the abuse of MDMA ("ecstasy") abuse in New Zealand has increased in recent years, from 2.9 per cent in 2003 to 3.9 per cent in 2006.

775. According to a recent survey in New Zealand, 70 per cent of persons who abused drugs frequently were male, 63 per cent of persons who frequently abused MDMA ("ecstasy") were college and secondary-school students and 81 per cent of persons who frequently abused drugs by injection were unemployed or receiving sickness benefits. The drug most commonly injected was heroin. Eighty-nine per cent of frequent drug abusers obtained needles through a needle exchange programme in 2007; 91 per cent had not shared a needle with another person in the past six months.

776. For most of the countries in Oceania other than Australia and New Zealand, published surveys on drug abuse are not available. However, according to information available to the Board, cannabis is the drug most commonly abused in those other countries, mainly on account of its ready availability and low cost. Cannabis is generally consumed in combination with alcohol. The number of male cannabis abusers is significantly higher than that of female cannabis abusers. The majority of cannabis abusers are young persons aged 15-20. The Board urges States in the region to develop surveillance systems to monitor the situation with regard to drug abuse.

777. In 2007 and 2008, a total of 658 agencies were registered as providing treatment for the abuse of alcohol and other drugs in Australia; of these, 50 per cent were non-governmental providers. The drugs for the abuse of which treatment was most commonly sought were cannabis, amphetamine-type stimulants and heroin. Counselling was the most common type of treatment in the period 2007-2008, followed by withdrawal management (detoxification), assessment, education and rehabilitation.

778. In Australia, opioid addicts have been treated using opioid pharmacotherapy for a number of decades. According to a survey by the Government of Australia, as at 30 June 2008, a total of 41,347 persons

were receiving pharmacotherapy treatment, 2,500 more than in 2007. Of that total, about two thirds were male. Persons aged 30-39 accounted for the largest proportion of those receiving treatment (38 per cent); persons in the age group 20-29 accounted for 25 per cent, while those aged 40-49 accounted for a further 25 per cent. Seventy per cent of those receiving treatment were treated with methadone; the remainder were treated with buprenorphine or buprenorphine with naloxone, a combined preparation that is used more commonly in Australia than buprenorphine alone as a treatment for opioid dependence. Approximately 65 per cent of those surveyed received treatment from a private treatment provider. In 2008, there were some 1,400 practitioners authorized to prescribe pharmacotherapy drugs in Australia, a slight increase since 2007.

779. During the period 2007-2008 in New Zealand, an estimated 23,500 drug abusers received treatment from public services. Of that number, 35 per cent were female. The service most commonly sought by persons who frequently abused drugs by injection was the needle exchange programme, whereas persons who frequently abused methamphetamine and MDMA (“ecstasy”) were more likely to seek the help of a social worker or counsellor. The source of assistance most commonly sought by secondary-school students with drug-related problems in New Zealand was consultation with friends, followed by discussions with parents, school counsellors, family doctors and services for the treatment of drug abuse.

780. The Government of New Zealand has established drug treatment units in prisons as part of a programme to reduce drug abuse among prisoners. The units offer an intensive six-month programme that includes behavioural therapy and the provision of information on the dangers of drug addiction. The establishment of the drug treatment units has yielded satisfactory results to date. It is expected that the units will be able to provide treatment for alcohol and drug abuse to 1,000 prisoners by 2011.

781. Countries in Oceania other than Australia and New Zealand have reported limited information on treatment for drug abuse to the Board. However, it is noted that in certain countries, such as Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, treatment for drug abuse is provided mainly by general or psychiatric hospitals. In general, such treatment is received on a voluntary basis and drug abuse issues are usually addressed through counselling. The Board encourages countries in the region other than Australia and New Zealand to develop comprehensive and effective programmes for the treatment of drug abuse and demand reduction strategies.