

A. Africa

1. Major developments

271. There have been alarming trends affecting the illicit drug situation in Africa. There has been a sizeable increase in the manufacture and smuggling of methamphetamine and an increase in the abuse of opioids, cannabis, amphetamine-type stimulants and cocaine in the region. In addition, there have also been sizeable increases in the smuggling of opiates through East Africa and the trafficking of cocaine in North and East Africa.

272. The political situation in West and Central Africa in 2012 and early 2013 was marked by several military coups, post-electoral violence and the rise of religious extremism. In its presidential statement of 10 December 2012, the Security Council expressed grave concern about the consequences of instability in the north of Mali on the Sahel region and beyond. Even after the Government of Mali regained control of the national territory in January 2013, there continued to be serious security risks in the country and the subregion, including drug trafficking. There have been reports that insurgents and extremists in the Sahel have been involved in and profiting from drug trafficking in the areas they control.

273. Stability in Guinea-Bissau suffered a major setback with the coup of 12 April 2012. The Security Council, in its resolution 2048 (2012), expressed deep concern about the possible increase in illicit drug trafficking as a result of the military coup and imposed a travel ban on high-ranking military officials for “seeking to prevent the restoration of the constitutional order”, which activities, the Council noted, were supported in part through the proceeds from drug trafficking. There have been reports that cocaine is being trafficked by air, land and sea, without being intercepted by transitional authorities or security forces, and that hundreds of kilograms of cocaine are trafficked in each transaction.

274. The political instability in North Africa, particularly Egypt, creates a breeding ground for criminal activities and drug syndicates operating in the subregion, enabling them to engage in drug trafficking, with the consequent drug abuse and related crime continuing to pose a threat.

275. There has been an overall increase in the trafficking of opiates through Africa. The 10-fold increase in seizures of heroin in East Africa since 2009 makes that subregion possibly the largest hub in Africa for heroin

trafficked onward to the European markets. Heroin, departing from South-West Asia, including Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and Turkey, and destined mainly for the illicit markets of Europe is increasingly transiting West Africa. Increased maritime smuggling of Afghan opiates to Africa continues to be a problem in the region.

276. Cannabis is being cultivated and seized in almost all countries in Africa. Nigeria remains the country with the largest seizures of cannabis in the region, followed by Egypt. There was a 10-fold increase in seizures of cannabis herb in Mozambique from 2010 to 2011, and a two-fold increase in seizures in Burkina Faso from 2009 to 2011. Morocco, along with Afghanistan, remains the biggest source of cannabis resin in the world, although production in Morocco is decreasing. Spain remains the main entry point in Europe for cannabis resin originating in Morocco and the gateway to markets in Western and Central Europe.

277. The smuggling through Africa of cocaine from South America destined for Europe appears to have diminished since 2009, while the use of containerized consignments and maritime shipping of cocaine through West Africa to Europe is on the increase. At the same time, because of Africa’s growing population, there is the potential for the demand-driven expansion of the region’s cocaine market. In 2012, increase in seizures of cocaine in North and East Africa could be observed.

278. There is an emerging market for amphetamine-type stimulants in Africa, and at the same time those substances are being trafficked from the region to the countries of East and South-East Asia and Oceania.

279. Trafficking in precursors, especially ephedrine, has increased in Africa, with seizures being reported by Benin, Botswana, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Namibia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. The increase in trafficking in ephedrine could indicate the establishment in Africa of new laboratories for the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

280. The abuse of opioids, cannabis, amphetamine-type stimulants and cocaine is increasing in Africa. The prevalence of cannabis abuse continues to be high in Africa—nearly double the global average—while the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants, cocaine and opiates remains close to the global average. West and Central Africa continue to have a prevalence of cocaine abuse that is significantly higher than the global average, while the prevalence of abuse of cannabis and opioids in those two subregions remains relatively high.

2. Regional cooperation

281. In the period under review, regional cooperation focused on upgrading current regional drug control strategies, as well as strengthening law enforcement and judicial cooperation in drug trafficking cases and enhancing drug demand reduction efforts.²⁰

282. The African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control for the period 2013-2017 was adopted at the fifth session of the African Union Conference of Ministers for Drug Control, held in Addis Ababa in October 2012. The Plan pays particular attention to capacity-building in research, information collection and the development of monitoring systems with a view to increasing monitoring of changing and emerging trends, the implementation of evidence-based responses and the ability to assess the effectiveness of those responses.

283. The Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Authority at its forty-second ordinary session, held in February 2013, decided to extend the period of the Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa (2008-2011) until 2015, in order to sustain the fight against drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse and to consolidate the base of financial support for its effective implementation.

284. In support of the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, United Nations entities and INTERPOL are implementing the West Africa Coast Initiative, which targets five post-conflict countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The transnational organized crime units established under that Initiative in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone have been active in carrying out coordinated interdiction activities, including in the area of drug trafficking.

285. INCB provided training to representatives of the national competent authorities of 12 West African countries in Addis Ababa from 17 to 21 June 2013. Organized in collaboration with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and hosted by the Economic Commission for Africa, the seminar was aimed at strengthening the capacity of the participating national competent authorities to ensure adequate availability of controlled substances for medical purposes and comply with their reporting obligations under the international

²⁰Lists of selected regional cooperation meetings for all regions are available in English on the INCB website (www.incb.org), published in conjunction with the annual report.

drug control treaties. The Board reiterates the importance of the continuation of such training in other regions, which contributes to improving the availability and monitoring of medicinal products containing controlled substances in furtherance of the implementation of the drug control treaties.

3. National regulation, policy and action

286. In June 2013, South Africa's Cabinet of Ministers approved the National Drug Master Plan (2013-2017), aimed at preventing and reducing alcohol and substance abuse and the associated social and economic consequences for South African society, and which places emphasis on the four pillars of prevention: early intervention, treatment, aftercare and reintegration. The Plan also calls for the creation of a nationwide database to track drug crimes. A new asset forfeiture unit and an independent police anti-corruption agency became operational in 2012.

287. In November 2012, Cabo Verde adopted its National Integrated Programme in the Fight against Drugs and Crime for the period 2012-2016. The Programme, developed together with UNODC, has four areas: (a) prevention and research; (b) improvement of the health, treatment and the social and professional reintegration of drug addicts; (c) combating illicit trafficking, organized crime and terrorism; and (d) justice and integrity. In addition, the Government adopted a new decree-law in 2012 to amend money-laundering legislation, which extended the powers of the financial intelligence unit.

288. The Government of Liberia has finalized draft legislation on controlled substances and on the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency. Once approved, the two legal instruments will provide a comprehensive set of drug-related offences, while empowering the Agency to enforce those laws.

289. The President of the Sudan issued a directive in June 2012 to form a Supreme Council for Drug Control under his chairmanship as a policymaking and coordinating body for drug control.

290. In April 2013, the Government of Egypt adopted a national action plan against drug abuse to address increasing drug abuse in the country. The action plan addresses four aspects of the illicit drug phenomenon: (a) monitoring and analysis of the drug situation in the country,

(b) preliminary prevention and early detection, (c) treatment and rehabilitation, and (d) supply reduction.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

(a) Narcotic drugs

291. Morocco, together with Afghanistan, continues to be the biggest source of cannabis resin in the world, especially for the illicit markets of Western and Central Europe, but production in Morocco is decreasing (compared with the previous national survey, for the period 2003-2005). North Africa is the subregion with the largest amounts of seizures of cannabis resin in Africa. According to the customs seizure data of the World Customs Organization, approximately 116 tons of cannabis resin (65 per cent of the total amount seized globally by customs authorities) come from Morocco.

292. Spain is the main entry point to Europe for cannabis resin originating in Morocco and the gateway to markets in Western and Central Europe, accounting for 34 per cent of global seizures of cannabis resin in 2011, while seizures by Moroccan authorities accounted for 12 per cent. In 2011, 90 per cent of the detections made by Moroccan customs authorities were of shipments contained in lorries on ferries heading for Spain. A significant seizure was made by Spanish customs authorities at Algeciras port on 15 March 2012, when 8,362 kg of cannabis resin were seized in the port's commercial freight sector, in a load consigned in Morocco and destined for France.

293. There are reports of numerous seizures of speed boats, departing from the western shores of Algeria destined for France and Spain, containing cannabis resin believed to be trafficked to Algeria from Morocco. Major seizures of cannabis resin were carried out by Algerian authorities in March 2013 at the Algerian-Moroccan border (of cannabis resin entering Algeria) or close to the Algerian border with Libya (of cannabis being trafficked out of Algeria). According to Algerian authorities, 42 tons of cannabis resin were seized in the country in the first quarter of 2013, of which 18 tons were seized at the border with Morocco.

294. The Government of Mauritania estimates that one third of cannabis resin produced in Morocco transits the States of the Sahel region. Moroccan cannabis resin is trafficked to Mauritania overland via Algeria or Western

Sahara or by ship. It is then either taken along a northern route entering the northernmost area of Mali or is transported along the Nouakchott-Nema road, entering Mali through the country's Timbuktu region. From northern Mali, cannabis resin smuggling routes partly overlap with those serving the cocaine trade, traversing northern Niger or southern Algeria leading to Libya. The drugs are then either trafficked to Europe via the Balkans or transported to Egypt and Israel. Another route runs via Chad and the Sudan to the Arabian peninsula.

295. In 2012, authorities of Egypt, one of the destination countries in the region for Moroccan cannabis resin, seized 12.3 tons of cannabis resin and 77.1 tons of cannabis herb. In early 2013, Egyptian authorities, in collaboration with the Italian navy participating in NATO maritime forces, seized 32 tons of cannabis resin coming from Morocco by sea, destined for the Egyptian illicit market.

296. Cannabis herb continues to be widely cultivated in Africa and to be seized by authorities. Nigeria once again had the largest volume of cannabis herb seizures in the region (139 tons seized between July 2011 and April 2012), followed by Egypt (73 tons seized in 2011). There was a 10-fold increase in seizures of cannabis herb in Mozambique from 2010 (3 tons) to 2011 (32 tons), and the total quantity of cannabis herb seized in Burkina Faso doubled between 2009 (17 tons) and 2011 (33 tons). At the same time, data on seizures made by customs authorities showed that in 2012 North Africa, followed by West Africa, was the African subregion with the largest seizures of cannabis. Total seizures of cannabis by the customs authorities in North Africa in 2012 (24.2 tons) represented a 150 per cent increase over 2011 (9.7 tons), while West Africa saw a 40 per cent decrease in seizures in 2012 (10.9 tons) compared with 2011 (18.1 tons).

297. Cannabis originating in Afghanistan also finds its way to North Africa. Egyptian authorities seized 3 tons of such cannabis on the shores of the Red Sea in a single operation in 2012. That seizure reflects the attempts of traffickers to open new markets for cannabis from Afghanistan in North Africa, especially in Egypt, where demand is high.

298. Cannabis continues to be produced and consumed locally in most countries in Southern Africa, as well as being smuggled to Europe. Southern African criminal groups are increasingly engaged in the online sale of illicit drugs.

299. There was an overall increase in seizures of heroin in Africa in the biennium 2010-2011 compared with the

preceding biennium. That increase was particularly steep in East Africa. Since 2009, there has been a fivefold increase in seizures of heroin in East, West and Central Africa.

300. Maritime smuggling of Afghan opiates to Africa continues to increase, with most seizures being made at the sea borders. Individual seizures made at the sea borders of Africa were of large volumes. For example, 127 kg of heroin were seized off the coast of Benin in January 2013, and 210 kg of heroin were seized in the United Republic of Tanzania in January 2012.

301. Heroin seizures in Egypt, the country of greatest consumption of heroin in North Africa, have continued at the rate of 50-100 kg per year in recent years.

302. Heroin is increasingly transiting West Africa, especially by means of commercial air couriers. In 2012, a total of 220 kg of heroin was seized in the West African subregion. Ghana and Nigeria, in particular, regularly seized medium-sized shipments of heroin. Most of the heroin departs from South-West Asia, including Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan, and is destined mainly for the European illicit market.

303. Shipping containers have also been used recently to transport large volumes of heroin, particularly from Pakistan, to the countries of the Gulf of Guinea. Those shipments are then redistributed to the major cities of West Africa for their eventual transportation by air to European or East Asian markets.

304. Although trafficking of heroin through East Africa has been taking place since the 1980s, seizures of heroin in East Africa since 2009 increased almost 10-fold, making the subregion an active hub for smuggling onward to further destinations. It is estimated that the local market in East Africa consumes at least 2.5 tons of heroin per year, worth some \$160 million in local markets, while the total volume of heroin smuggled into the subregion appears to be much larger: close to 22 tons. Maritime transportation is becoming the preferred method for smuggling heroin, over air transportation and couriers.

305. Seizure data for the period 2010-2012 suggests that heroin originating in Afghanistan is trafficked, using dhows and to a lesser extent container shipments, from Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan towards the sea borders of Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, for further transportation by road to South Africa. Since early 2010, 1,895 kg of heroin, in large consignments, have been seized along the Swahili coast or from dhows

in the Indian Ocean. In 2013, more than 1 ton of heroin was seized in international waters off the coast of East Africa.

306. Kenyan authorities reported that the national territory is also being used as a transit point for heroin smuggled to Europe and the United States, indicating India, in addition to Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan, as the departure point of heroin entering Kenya by sea and air. Nigerian authorities pointed to Ethiopia as one of the main transit countries for heroin arriving on its soil.

307. The rapid increase in seizures in East Africa could be due to the increased enforcement efforts in the subregion that benefit from international assistance, including the Combined Maritime Forces, a 29-nation partnership, and/or to an increase in the actual flows of heroin. The increase in actual flows of heroin might be the more likely cause, given the growth in local demand and the growth in the use of East Africa as a transit area.

308. Although air transportation is not as common as maritime shipments to smuggle heroin into East Africa, flights between Pakistan and East African countries that pass through the international airports of Dubai and Doha, as well as flights of local African airlines, are also being used to smuggle heroin.

309. An increase in heroin seizures had been observed in Southern Africa until 2009, but since then there has been a lack of comprehensive seizure data for the subregion. Most heroin smuggled into Southern Africa enters by means of maritime transport from South-West Asia through East Africa, including Kenya, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania, or is brought in by air passengers on increasingly indirect routes. Heroin is then either consumed in a local market or transported onward to Europe and elsewhere. In November 2012, an exceptionally large seizure of heroin (451 kg) was made by the Netherlands customs authorities from a shipment departed from South Africa, transiting via the Netherlands and bound for Canada. Development of new harbours such as the Port of Ngqura on the east coast (Indian Ocean) of South Africa and expansion of existing harbours such as the Port of Durban in South Africa, continue to be tested by traffickers as possible entry points for smuggling drugs into Southern Africa.

310. Africa's importance as a transit area for cocaine originating in South America destined for Europe appears to have declined between 2009 and 2011, while countries in the Caribbean region, especially the Dominican Republic,

are becoming more important for the trans-shipment of cocaine to Europe. At the same time, in Africa, given its increasing population, there is the potential for the demand-driven expansion of the local illicit cocaine market. In 2012, cocaine seizures increased in most countries of North Africa, indicating the demand-driven growth of the market. The Egyptian Anti-Narcotics General Administration reported total seizures of 41 kg of cocaine in 2012, compared with 1.5 kg in 2011.

311. There is an increase in seizures of cocaine in East Africa, where cocaine consumption has so far been limited. The United Republic of Tanzania reported seizures of 65 kg in 2010, a significant increase from previous years. Partial data show that that country's total seizures in the period January-April 2011 were 85 kg, mostly of cocaine coming from Brazil. Mozambique intercepted 12 shipments of cocaine totalling 65 kg at Maputo international airport in 2011; the shipments were being sent on drug trafficking routes going from India to Ethiopia, then Mozambique. Kenya carried out five interceptions of a total quantity of 21 kg of cocaine in 2011. Although East Africa is not part of a major route from South America, the individual seizures in 2011 suggest that shipping containers being used to smuggle cocaine pass through the subregion on their way to their destination of illicit markets in Europe. There has also been some detection of minor cocaine courier traffic, some destined for the Far East, through the airports of Dubai and Addis Ababa.

312. Containerized consignments and maritime shipping are being used more frequently to transport cocaine from South America to Europe via West Africa, in addition to the traditional means of air courier and postal shipments. Between 2005 and 2011, approximately 5.7 tons of cocaine were seized from shipping containers sent from Latin America to Europe through West Africa, including 2.1 tons seized in 2011. More recently, in February 2013, 282 kg of cocaine were seized in the Port of Tema (Accra), Ghana, from a container originating in the Plurinational State of Bolivia. In a joint operation by the authorities of Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 2 tons of cocaine were seized in the Atlantic ocean, about 700 miles southwest of Cabo Verde, destined for northern Portugal and Spain, at the end of March 2013.

313. The number of couriers travelling from West Africa to Europe has decreased. Fewer than one fifth of the cocaine couriers arriving in Europe are coming from West Africa, since more trafficking is taking place by means of direct air travel from Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, many West African traffickers prefer to sell

the drug locally as they do not have the necessary links and networks and are afraid of the risks associated with smuggling drugs into Europe. Moreover, there is a substantial local market for cocaine, as the number of local abusers of cocaine in West Africa is growing.

(b) Psychotropic substances

314. There is an emerging market for amphetamine-type stimulants in Africa, which is evidenced by the increase in diversions of precursors, seizures and methamphetamine manufacture.

315. Methamphetamine is being increasingly trafficked from West Africa, namely Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo, to East and South-East Asia, as well as Oceania. It is estimated that the volume of methamphetamine trafficked from West Africa to Asia was about 1.5 tons in 2012. Benin and Nigeria have been the most prominent countries of origin for the trafficked methamphetamine, while it is suspected that the substance is being illicitly manufactured on a large scale in Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana and Mali. In 2012, the most significant seizures made by European customs authorities of amphetamine, departing from West Africa and bound for Asian countries were made in Germany (72 seizures totalling 247 kg), France (23 seizures totalling 51 kg) and Sweden (4 seizures totalling 22 kg). From January to June 2013, about 14 kg of methamphetamine were seized at the Lomé international airport and 2 kg at the Cotonou international airport. Eight arrests of transiting drug couriers coming from Banjul, the Gambia, and en route to East Asia were made in London and Paris airports. In June 2013, Belgian authorities reported the seizures of more than 34 kg of methamphetamine smuggled in a cargo shipment, which had been sent from Cotonou to Kuala Lumpur via Brussels and Doha.

316. Nigeria is the only country in West Africa to officially report illicit methamphetamine manufacture, as the country's National Drug Law Enforcement Agency seized two methamphetamine laboratories in the period 2011-2012 and three in the first half of 2013.

317. There have been reports of illicit methamphetamine manufacture and trafficking in East Africa, as well as reports of the arrest in Kenya, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania of suspects believed to be members of organized criminal networks involved in its manufacture. Mozambique reported seizures of methamphetamine on the India/Ethiopia/Mozambique route. Amphetamine-type stimulants and methaqualone (Mandrax) continue to

be illicitly produced in Mozambique for smuggling to South Africa and beyond.

318. While South Africa has been successful in dismantling laboratories manufacturing methcathinone and methamphetamine, amphetamine-type stimulants continue to be illicitly manufactured in the country and exported. Reports from the South African police indicate trafficking of amphetamine-type stimulants by couriers through airports in the Gulf region to Asia and possibly Australia. Southern African criminal groups are increasingly selling illicit drugs online, and the distributors of Mandrax were particularly active in 2012.

319. According to the World Customs Organization, customs services of countries in all African subregions except North Africa reported seizures of psychotropic substances. In Central and West Africa, there was an increase in cases between 2011 and 2012, both in terms of the number of seizures and the quantities intercepted. The number of seizures in East and Southern Africa decreased, but the total amounts seized remained unchanged.

320. The main reason for the lack of data on amphetamine-type stimulants in the African region is the general lack of awareness among authorities in the continent, where law enforcement efforts are geared mainly towards interdicting cannabis and cocaine.

(c) Precursors

321. Trafficking in precursors continued throughout the region. Ephedrine seizures have been reported by several African countries, including Benin, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Namibia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. The substance was seized in bulk quantities and in the form of pharmaceutical preparations. The increase in trafficking in ephedrine could indicate the establishment of new clandestine laboratories in Africa. As noted above, Nigeria dismantled three illicit methamphetamine laboratories in the first half of 2013. In June 2013, Kenyan authorities reported a case of dismantling a clandestine laboratory for illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants. In the first half of 2013, 226 kg of ephedrine were intercepted by the authorities of Benin, a country in which no quantities of that substance had been seized in the previous nine years.

322. The tools available to monitor the international flow of chemical precursors are used by few Governments in Africa. Therefore, the picture of the overall situation of precursor diversion in Africa remains incomplete.

Governments are being requested by the Board to improve their existing control and reporting mechanisms for substances under international control in order to reduce attempts to divert chemical substances for the illicit manufacture of drugs.

(d) Substances not under international control

323. Khat (*Catha edulis*), a plant containing the controlled substances cathinone and cathine, is cultivated and consumed for its stimulant effects mainly in East Africa, in particular in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, as well as in some parts of the Middle East. Khat is legal in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, but controlled in Eritrea, Rwanda, the Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania. The abuse of khat has been increasing in certain parts of Africa. There is no comprehensive study of the extent of khat abuse in the region, but the individual reports from Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya indicate substantial increases in abuse of this plant-based substance over the past few years. For example, in Djibouti, annual prevalence of abuse of khat among women increased from 3 per cent in 1996 to 7 per cent in 2006, and doubled again to almost 14 per cent by 2011.

324. Somalia is the main consumer country of khat in Africa, while exports to overseas markets are often destined for the Ethiopian, Kenyan, Somalian and Yemeni expatriate communities. The substance was being exported to the United Kingdom until July 2013, when the United Kingdom Government decided to control khat as a class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act of 1971. Western European countries and the United States together accounted for 99 per cent of the total khat seizures made by customs authorities in 2012. Khat seized was destined mainly for the illicit markets in Canada, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the United States.

325. Abuse of and trafficking in tramadol, a synthetic opioid not under international control, continues to be a serious concern in a number of countries of North and West Africa.²¹ The Egyptian authorities reported that they seized a total amount of 620 million tablets of tramadol in 2012, most of which were illicit shipments in containers coming from India through the ports of Dubai and Yemen. Benin, Ghana, the Niger, Senegal and Togo continue to serve as transit hubs for the smuggling of tramadol. From November 2012 until September 2013, about 84 tons of tramadol were seized from containers by joint

²¹For a more detailed and global analysis of abuse of tramadol, see chapter II.E.3. (Global developments in the non-medical use of tramadol).

port control units of Benin and Togo under the Container Control Programme of UNODC and the World Customs Organization. Of the 15 seizures made during that period by the joint port control units in Benin and Togo, in 14 cases, the containers from which the tramadol was seized had been sent from India and in one case, from China, and all but one of those containers were destined for the Niger. In most cases, the drug appeared to be a genuine pharmaceutical product, but the amount of tramadol contained in the medicine was greater than the regulated amounts. In certain other cases, seizures were carried out because the importer did not have the appropriate licence.

326. In 2012, most seizures of new psychoactive substances in Africa were of synthetic cannabinoids. Africa was the only world region where there were no reports of the emergence or seizure of synthetic cathinones and phenethylamines.

5. Abuse and treatment

327. Although there is a lack of reliable and comparable information on drug abuse in Africa, it is estimated that there continues to be a high annual prevalence of cannabis abuse (7.5 per cent of the population aged 15-64) in the region, nearly double the global average. The abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants (0.9 per cent), cocaine (0.4 per cent) and opiates (0.3 per cent) remain comparable with global averages.

328. West and Central Africa, in particular, continue to have a relatively high annual prevalence of abuse of cannabis (12.4 per cent of the population aged 15-64) and opioids (0.4 per cent). The same subregions still have a significantly higher prevalence of abuse of cocaine (0.7 per cent, or an estimated 1.6 million people) than the global average (0.4 per cent), with potential to increase due to the expanding cocaine market in the subregions.

329. A survey on the prevalence of psychoactive substance abuse in Cabo Verde conducted in 2012 and published in April 2013 showed that 7.6 per cent of the Cabo Verdean population had used or tried an illicit drug at least once in their lifetime, 2.7 per cent had used an illicit drug in past 12 months, and 1.6 per cent had used an illicit drug in the past 30 days. Cannabis was the drug of abuse of choice (7.2 per cent lifetime prevalence rate; 2.4 per cent reporting use in the past 12 months, and 1.5 per cent reporting use in the past month), followed by cocaine (0.9 per cent, 0.2 per cent and 0.1 per cent, respectively) and “cocktail” (a mixture of “crack” cocaine

and cannabis) (0.3 per cent lifetime prevalence, and 0.1 per cent reporting use in the past 12 months). Amphetamine consumption is also becoming a matter of concern, with a lifetime prevalence rate of 0.1 per cent being reported. To respond to the drug abuse problem, drug abuse prevention initiatives are being implemented by the Government and civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations throughout the country, targeting local communities, families and young people.

330. The abuse of opioids, cannabis and cocaine is increasing in Africa. Cocaine trafficking in West Africa and heroin trafficking in East Africa have caused the supply-driven increase of abuse of those substances in the respective subregions.

331. Recent studies conducted in Kenya and Seychelles have revealed that heroin was the primary drug of abuse of those who inject drugs. Cannabis remains the most commonly abused substance in Nigeria, while the abuse of opioids in the country is also increasing.

332. Polydrug abuse, including use of cannabis combined with either flunitrazepam, methaqualone or methamphetamine, is also becoming a common practice in Africa. Authorities in Kenya and South Africa specifically reported this matter as a public health concern.

333. South Africa reports an increase in the abuse of heroin, methamphetamine and methcathinone.

334. Within North Africa, the situation with drug abuse is varied. The number of drug abusers in Algeria is currently estimated at more than 300,000. According to the Algerian National Federation of the Fight against Drugs and Drug Addiction (FNLDT), the annual prevalence of drug abuse was 1.15 per cent in 2012. Most drug abusers are aged 20-39 years. The country reported an increase in the abuse of cannabis, tranquillizers and sedatives. Morocco also reported an increase in the abuse of cocaine and opiates.

335. The prevalence of HIV among injecting drug abusers remains a cause of concern in Africa. In Ghana, about 4 per cent of new HIV infections are attributed to injecting drug abuse, while HIV prevalence among injecting drug abusers in Senegal is 9.2 per cent. In Nigeria, an analysis in 2010 of the modes of HIV transmission showed that injecting drug abuse accounted for 9 per cent of new infections, while the prevalence of HIV among injecting drug abusers was estimated at 4.2 per cent. In Kenya, injecting drug use is responsible for nearly 4 per cent of new HIV infections, and the prevalence of HIV among injecting drug users is about 6.2 per cent.

336. Availability of evidence-based treatment and rehabilitation facilities in Africa is substantially below the world average. Approximately one in six problem drug users globally receives treatment for drug abuse disorders or dependence each year. However, in Africa only one in 18 problem drug users has access to treatment services, predominantly for treatment related to cannabis abuse. Of particular concern in North Africa is the lack of community-based and gender-sensitive drug treatment programmes with adequate access to treatment facilities for women.

B. Americas

Central America and the Caribbean

1. Major developments

337. The Central America and Caribbean region continues to be exploited by organized criminal groups as a transit and trans-shipment route for illicit drugs heading to North America and Europe. It is estimated that more than 90 per cent of all cocaine trafficked to the United States is of Colombian origin and transits Mexico and the Central American corridor. Conversely, the flow of cocaine through the Caribbean region has declined significantly in recent years as traffickers have looked for alternative routes, particularly along the border between Guatemala and Honduras.

338. As cocaine trafficking remains the most lucrative source of income for organized criminal groups in Central America, the intensified competition in cocaine trafficking has increased the level of violence in the region. The most recent wave of violence is in particular affecting the northern part of Central America: Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. The national murder rate in Honduras continues to be one of the highest on record. The areas of highest concern with regard to violence lie along the Honduran coast, on both sides of the Guatemalan/Honduran border, and in Guatemala along the borders with Belize and Mexico.

339. Drug trafficking through these countries has been a contributory factor to high levels of violence and drug-related corruption, as well as a further burden on already overloaded criminal justice systems. It is estimated that there are more than 900 gangs, called “maras”, with over 70,000 members, currently active in Central America. In El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, 15 per cent of homicides are gang-related.

340. The Board continues to follow closely the drug policy discussion in the region, which includes proposals to establish regulatory regimes for substances under international control that are not fully in line with the international drug control treaties. Proponents assert that such policy changes would contribute to reducing crime, violence and corruption in the region. The Board wishes to draw attention to the fact that some of those proposals, if enacted, would contravene the text, objective and spirit of the treaties (namely, to preserve the health and well-being of mankind), to which all States of the region are parties. Those proposals would have a serious impact on the health of their populations, particularly young people, at a time when there is increasing scientific evidence of the harm caused by drug use and abuse, and could further contribute to illegal markets, crime, trafficking, corruption and violence, as well as transmit ambiguous messages regarding the health dangers of drug use and abuse.

341. Notwithstanding action taken by Governments in the region to tackle the diversion of precursor chemicals, the region continues to be used for the trafficking of these materials, perhaps as an alternative route in the face of strengthened controls in Mexico.

2. Regional cooperation

342. Central America and the Caribbean remains a hub for drug trafficking, thus making it an important area for regional cooperation. UNODC works with Governments of the region. During the past year, regional cooperation focused on law enforcement cooperation, tackling drug trafficking, preventing the diversion of precursors and reducing drug demand.

343. Operation Lionfish, led by INTERPOL and aimed at maritime trafficking of drugs and illicit firearms by organized criminal groups across Central America and the Caribbean, was carried out from 27 May to 10 June 2013. During the operation, nearly 30 tons of cocaine, heroin and cannabis, with an estimated value of \$822 million, were seized. The operation involved 34 countries and territories in the region and also resulted in 142 arrests, as well as the seizure of 15 vessels, eight tons of chemical precursors, 42 guns and approximately \$170,000 in cash.

344. Another operation, under the code name “Icebreaker”, led by INTERPOL and supported by the Board and the World Customs Organization, took place during October 2012. The operation focused on combating methamphetamine manufacture and smuggling across