

B. Africa

Record seizures among several countries in West Africa indicate that the subregion remains a major transshipment hub for trafficking in cocaine from Central and South America to Europe.

Nigeria published its first-ever national study on drug use, reporting a past-year drug use prevalence rate of 14.4 per cent in the country.

1. Major developments

445. Africa continues to confront numerous challenges posed by both the trafficking of drugs and the abuse of drugs. Record seizures from several countries in West

Africa indicate that the trafficking of cocaine from Central and South America to Europe remains high, although insufficient data are available to determine the rate of growth. Trafficking of heroin is increasing among African countries bordering the Indian Ocean, while the illicit cultivation of cannabis remains a problem for countries throughout the region. Although the data are limited, it can be seen that trafficking in illicitly manufactured tramadol remains high and that tramadol is becoming a major substance of abuse, mostly in North, West and Central Africa. In addition, despite the newly available prevalence data from some countries, major gaps in the data remain and continue to impede efforts to determine the full extent of drug abuse in Africa.

446. According to a special report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/1086), the drug trafficking situation in Guinea-Bissau has begun to show modest improvement, although significant challenges remain. In that regard, Security Council resolution 2458 (2019), aimed at strengthening the international response to the political situation in Guinea-Bissau, contains provisions on combating drug trafficking in the country.

447. In January 2019, the Government of Nigeria, with the support of the European Union and UNODC, released its first-ever *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, for 2018. This first comprehensive survey on drug use conducted in the country collects data from 38,850 households and 9,344 high-risk drug users across Nigeria.

2. Regional cooperation

448. At the thirty-second Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in February 2019, Heads of State and Government of States members of the African Union formally adopted the Treaty for the Establishment of the African Medicines Agency. Once it has been ratified by 15 member States, the Agency will serve as the continental regulatory body for standardizing and strengthening regulatory systems across Africa, in order to ensure access to safe, effective, high-quality and affordable medicines and medical products.

449. The African Union and the Indian Council of Medical Research signed a memorandum of understanding in March 2019 establishing a framework to formalize cooperation between India and Africa in the health sector, including the facilitation of trade in pharmaceuticals, as well as support for the manufacture of drugs and medicines in Africa, including those under international control.

450. In July 2019, heads of navies, coast guards and gendarmeries from Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone signed a memorandum of understanding for joint maritime operations in the maritime zone of the Economic Community of West African States. The memorandum of understanding is aimed at improving the response of the subregion to piracy and criminal activity in the Gulf of Guinea and ensuring security within the exclusive economic zones of these countries.

451. Seychelles received a mission from the European Union Action against Drugs and Organised Crime project in March 2019 to assess the drug situation in the country. The aim of the mission, the first of its kind in Seychelles, was to determine how the country could strengthen its efforts against drug trafficking, in particular trafficking in heroin, and improve drug demand reduction efforts in Seychelles.

452. The third Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control was held by the African Union Commission from 29 July to 2 August 2019. During the ministerial segment of the session, ministers from African Union member States reviewed and adopted the Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2019–2023) of the African Union.

3. National legislation, policy and action

453. Egypt has amended its national drug control law, stiffening penalties for drug trafficking in the country and placing additional substances under national control. The amendment includes penalization for trafficking in synthetic cannabinoids that is equal to that for other narcotic drugs and extends the existing application of capital punishment for drug trafficking to trafficking in synthetic drugs.

454. **Although the determination of sanctions applicable to drug-related crime remains the prerogative of States parties to the conventions, INCB reiterates its position on the issue of capital punishment for drug-related offences and encourages States that retain capital punishment for drug-related offences to consider the abolition of the death penalty for that category of offence.**

455. A special report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/1086), published in December 2018, containing an assessment of UNIOGBIS, highlighted that modest progress had been made in Guinea-Bissau to counter drug

trafficking and transnational organized crime. However, it noted that officials in the Government of Guinea-Bissau acknowledged that the scope of drug trafficking remained a problem and that some military and security officials were involved in drug trafficking. The report also indicated that powerful implicated parties in the country that did not want effective State institutions would hinder UNIOGBIS and other United Nations entities in their efforts to counter drug trafficking in the country.

456. Pursuant to the above-mentioned report, the Security Council, in its resolution 2458 (2019), reiterated its concern at the threat to peace and stability posed by drug trafficking and related transnational organized crime in Guinea-Bissau. The Council stressed that long-term political and economic stability in the country was not possible without combating drug trafficking, called upon the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to continue to improve efforts to deal with trafficking in drugs and called upon the international community, regional organizations and the United Nations system to increase support to the country to address the problem.

457. In connection with the report of the Secretary-General and Security Council resolution on Guinea-Bissau, in early November 2019, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union issued a communiqué regarding the deteriorating political and situation in Guinea-Bissau. The Peace and Security Council noted with concern the increase in drug-related crimes in the country and their major impact on the general political and security situation, including hindering efforts to conduct new elections.

458. The Gambia has developed and launched its first-ever National Drug Control Strategy, for the period 2019–2023. The Strategy will guide the policy and operational approaches taken by the country to counter drug trafficking.

459. In December 2018, Nigeria established the Presidential Advisory Committee for the Elimination of Drug Abuse to address all aspects of drug control in the country. The Committee comprises high-level officials from several departments of the Government and representatives of civil society organizations and is charged with providing the President of Nigeria with sustainable recommendations for addressing the country's drug problems.

460. The Parliament of Kenya approved an amendment to the country's drug control law whereby it significantly increased the penalties and fines for trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The amendment sets out additional penalties for any law enforcement

officer who aids or abets any offence under the drug control law.

461. Health authorities in Morocco launched the national multisectoral strategy for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases for the period 2019–2029. The strategy, which covers many non-communicable health conditions, contains several measures to monitor and address health consequences related to drug use in the country and advocates for health-centred approaches to assist persons who abuse drugs.

462. On 23 May 2019, South Africa issued a notice updating the schedules of its Medicines and Related Substances Act of 1965, moving CBD from schedule 7 of the Act, the highest level of control, to schedule 4, which will allow for preparations containing CBD to be made available on prescription. In addition to the rescheduling, the Government indicated that CBD-based products that contain a maximum daily dose of 20 mg of CBD and that are produced from raw cannabis material containing no more than 0.001 per cent of THC and no more than 0.0075 per cent of CBD would not be controlled after 12 months following the issuing of the notice. That allows the purchase of CBD products below those established thresholds without any prescription.

463. Following amendments to its Dangerous Drugs Act in 2018, Zimbabwe now permits the cultivation of cannabis for medical purposes. The amendment establishes the regulatory framework for the cultivation of cannabis, including provisions to ensure the security of cultivation areas and the quality of cannabis products.

464. In September 2019, Mauritius launched the new National Drug Control Master Plan for the period 2019–2023. The Master Plan establishes four strategic pillars to address drug control issues in Mauritius: drug supply reduction; drug demand reduction; harm reduction; and coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

465. Africa remains a major transit region for drug trafficking, as well as a growing illicit market for drugs. Trafficking in cocaine remains a major problem, as several countries in West Africa reported record seizures of the drug, taken from vessels that had departed from Central and South America and were bound for North Africa and Europe. Trafficking in heroin is also a growing problem in countries on the coast of the Indian Ocean. Trafficking of tramadol, an opioid analgesic not

under international control, remains a major problem for parts of Africa, and tramadol is becoming one of the most trafficked and abused drugs, in particular in North, West and Central Africa. Cannabis continues to be one of the most trafficked drugs in the region. Although most of the trafficking appears to take place within the region, some North African countries reported the trafficking of cannabis herb and resins into Europe.

466. The largest-ever seizure of cocaine in Cabo Verde occurred in January 2019, when the Judicial Police seized over 9.5 tons of cocaine from a vessel that had departed from Panama. The authorities of Cabo Verde also seized over 2.2 tons of cocaine from a ship in August 2019, during a joint interdiction operation led by the national Coast Guard.

467. Another record seizure of cocaine occurred in March 2019 when authorities of Guinea-Bissau seized 789 kg of the drug as part of Operation Carapau, which was led by the Transnational Crime Unit and the Judicial Police of Guinea-Bissau. That seizure was the largest ever made by authorities in the country. Similarly, in July 2019, the authorities of Senegal carried out a record seizure of cocaine during a three-day operation that detected 1 ton of the drug hidden on ships in the port of Dakar.

468. For 2018, data provided by countries in the region indicate that trafficking in cocaine is proliferating. The Kenyan authorities reported seizing 2.2 tons of cocaine that year, more than 90 per cent of which was trafficked by air. Major seizures in 2018 were also reported by Morocco, Algeria and Angola, which seized 1.7 tons, 672 kg and nearly 500 kg, respectively. Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria and South Africa all reported seizing quantities of cocaine ranging from a few kilograms to 155 kg.

469. The trafficking of tramadol continues to pose a challenge in the region, in particular among countries in North, West and Central Africa. Nigeria reported major seizures in late 2018, including more than 581 million high-dosage tramadol tablets seized in a two-day operation. In addition, the country reported seizing a total of some 22.5 tons of tramadol in 2018. Morocco reported the seizure of more than 45 million tablets of tramadol in 2018, while Senegal also reported seizures of the drug. Reported seizures suggest that trafficking of the synthetic opioid in the region remains a major problem among countries in the Sahel and the Maghreb.

470. According to the UNODC *World Drug Report 2019*, trafficking in heroin via Africa appears to have increased, with seizures rising from less than 0.5 tons in

2013 to almost 1.5 tons in 2017. In 2018, overall seizures of heroin in Africa have continued to rise, with Kenya alone reporting 1.5 tons seized that year. Trends derived from available data on heroin seizures suggest that trafficking in heroin via Africa, in particular in countries on the Indian Ocean coast, is continuing to grow.

471. Major seizures of heroin were reported by Egypt, Mauritius and the United Republic of Tanzania for 2018, exceeding the quantities seized in 2017. The 1.5 tons of heroin seized by Kenya in 2018 represents more than a tenfold increase from 2017, when the country reported the seizure of 112 kg. Smaller seizures of heroin in 2018 were also reported by Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Mozambique and Seychelles.

472. While the illicit cultivation of cannabis occurs in many African countries, the trend of past years continued, as Morocco and Nigeria again reported the largest seizures of cannabis and cannabis resin in the region. Morocco reported the seizure in 2018 of nearly 72 tons of cannabis resin, as well as of 252 tons of majoun, a consumable product consisting mostly of cannabis but that can also include other drugs, along with poppy seeds and other foodstuff. In June 2019, Moroccan authorities reported the seizure of 12 tons of cannabis and 800 kg of cannabis resin. Another operation carried out two weeks later led to the seizure of 600 kg of cannabis found in sewage pipes in Taghbalt.

473. During 2018, at least 16 countries from all regions of Africa reported seizures of cannabis herb, resins and plants. Major seizures of at least several tons were reported by Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, the Niger, Senegal and Zambia. Nigeria reported the seizure in 2018 of more than 270 tons of cannabis herb, the largest amount since 2015. Algeria reported the seizure of nearly 32 tons of cannabis resin. An analysis of reports available from countries in the region indicates that most of the illicit cultivation of cannabis herb is destined for country-level or subregional markets, even though significant amounts of cannabis resins and herb destined for European markets are trafficked through North Africa and, most often, thereon through Spain.

474. With regard to the trafficking of other drugs, several countries reported seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants. In 2018, Nigeria and South Africa seized a few hundred kilograms each of methamphetamine, while Morocco reported the seizure of more than a million MDMA tablets. Some seizures of khat were reported by a few countries, while only South Africa reported any seizures of ketamine, a sedative not controlled internationally.

5. Prevention and treatment

475. The lack of information and prevalence data continues to be an impediment to determining the extent of drug use in Africa. It also hinders Governments and the international community as they seek to respond effectively by means of evidence-based drug use prevention and treatment programmes. Nonetheless, it can be seen from the information available that trends in drug use in the region do not appear to be improving, as some countries report drug use rates for some drugs that are higher than the global prevalence rate. Cannabis continues to be the main drug of abuse, and tramadol, an opioid analgesic not under international control, is also a major drug of abuse in some parts of Africa.

476. **The Board calls upon all States to provide regularly to the Board and other relevant international organizations data on drug use prevalence and any official information regarding their efforts to prevent the use of drugs and provide treatment services to drug users.**

477. The 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, produced by the Government of Nigeria with support from the European Union and UNODC and released in January 2019, is the first-ever comprehensive survey of drug use conducted in the country. It analyses data collected from 38,850 households and 9,344 high-risk drug users. The report found that, among persons aged 15–64 years, the past-year prevalence rate for non-medical drug use (not including tobacco and alcohol) was 14.4 per cent. The report also found that cannabis was the most commonly used drug, with an estimated 10.8 per cent of the population (approximately 10.6 million people) having used cannabis in the previous year. Opioids, heroin and pharmaceutical preparations (tramadol, codeine and morphine) are the next most abused substances, with a prevalence rate of 6.0 per cent (approximately 4.6 million people). In addition, polydrug use was very common, as nearly 95 per cent of high-risk users and almost half of other users reported having consumed more than one drug in the previous year.

478. In addition to providing detailed data on the drug use situation in Nigeria, the National Survey also outlines the challenges and the policy approaches needed to address the drug use problem in the country. In particular, the data reported in the National Survey will be used to develop a new national drug master plan for the period 2020–2024. Furthermore, the National Survey underscores the need for affordable and accessible scientific evidence-based treatment in Nigeria, noting the gender disparities in access to treatment and the need to address the problem of stigmatization of people who use drugs.

The National Survey also stresses that there is a need to ensure the availability of pain medications in the country, while also preventing diversions from licit trade and countering trafficking in opioids.

479. In Kenya, the National Authority for the Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis released in June 2019 a survey entitled *Status of Drugs and Substance Abuse among Primary School Pupils in Kenya*. The survey was conducted among 3,307 randomly selected students between 10 and 14 years of age from 177 primary schools across the country. The survey found that among respondents, the average median age of onset of at least one substance of abuse was 11 years, while the lowest reported age of onset was 4 years. The survey also found that 20.2 per cent of primary school pupils had used at least one drug or substance of abuse (including alcohol or tobacco) in their lifetime and 1.2 per cent had used cannabis in their lifetime. It also found that students were more likely to abuse drugs if one or both parents had used drugs or some other substance. The report found that alcohol, tobacco and prescription drugs were the substances that were most available to students to abuse.
