

concern. Such efforts would help establish a network for sharing relevant information particularly between the competent law enforcement authorities, which the Board has always promoted. The Board stands ready to assist in that endeavour.

Technical visits

493. The Board made a technical visit to Estonia in June 1999 to discuss the implementation of recommendations made to the Government following the 1996 mission of the Board to that country. The Board notes with satisfaction that resources set aside by the Government for activities to reduce illicit drug demand among youth and for the treatment of drug addicts have increased. The capacity of the police to intercept illicit drug consignments has been strengthened. The control system for licit narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors is in place and is functioning effectively. The Board trusts that the Government of Estonia will continue to strengthen its efforts to prevent drug abuse in response to the increasing availability of heroin on the illicit market in that country. The Board invites the Government to enhance the capacity of its customs services to prevent drug smuggling and to ensure the implementation of the new legislation against money-laundering. The Board encourages the Government to accede to the 1988 Convention without further delay. Estonia is the only country among those that are currently candidates for European Union membership that is not yet a party to the 1988 Convention.

E. Oceania

Major developments

494. In Australia, the average age of first-time use of heroin has fallen below 18 years of age, and in some areas the average age of first-time use of heroin by injection is in the mid-teens. The purity level of the heroin available on the street remains high and the heroin death rate is increasing. Domestic cultivation of cannabis is rising and local manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants has increased substantially in the states of New South Wales and Queensland. The Board notes the extensive public debate in Australia regarding the drug problem. The Board trusts that decision makers in Australia will carefully choose policies, programmes and projects that will reverse these trends and that those policies, programmes and projects will be in full compliance with the international drug control treaties to which that State is a party.

495. The Government of New Zealand passed in early 1999 national legislation introducing controls over benzodiazepines, thus bringing that State into full compliance with the provisions of the 1971 Convention.

496. The Board welcomes the completion in July 1999 of the rapid assessment survey of drug abuse in Papua New Guinea. The survey confirmed that, *inter alia*, the level of cannabis abuse in that country is quite high. The Board is confident that the results of the survey will assist in the elaboration of a national master plan for drug control in Papua New Guinea.

Treaty adherence

497. New Zealand became a party to the 1988 Convention at the end of 1998. Of the 14 States in Oceania, 9 are parties to the 1961 Convention, 8 are parties to the 1971 Convention and 4 are parties to the 1988 Convention. The Board notes that the rate of accession to each of those treaties continues to be slow in that region. The Board once again urges all States in the region that are not yet parties to the international drug control treaties to accede to them without delay.

Regional cooperation

498. Increasing attention has been given over the past year to the fact that some Pacific island States are vulnerable to being exploited as offshore financial centres in money-laundering operations. The Board notes the efforts to improve cooperation among the countries in Asia and the Pacific in the fight against money-laundering and trusts that appropriate legislation and systems will soon be in place.

499. The Board also notes the efforts of Pacific island States to deal with common social problems, including drug abuse, through the Pacific Forum.

National legislation, policy and action

500. The Board urges the Government of Australia not to permit the establishment and operation of drug injection rooms, or so-called "shooting galleries". In the view of the Board, such establishments would provide an outlet for illicit drug abuse and facilitate or encourage illicit drug trafficking, which, under the international drug control treaties, Governments are obliged to combat in all its forms (see paragraphs 176-177 above).

501. New Zealand released in March 1999 an updated national action plan on drugs. The Board commends the

Government for banning drug-smoking paraphernalia, targeting doctors who excessively prescribe controlled drugs and calling for more research and information about drug problems among the Maori. The action plan reaffirms that cannabis will not be legalized or decriminalized and reclassifies MDMA (“ecstasy”) as a class A drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act, which, in effect, imposes the strictest level of control on the substance and increases the penalties for the use and supply of “ecstasy”.

502. The Board welcomes the priority given to demand reduction by the National Narcotics Bureau of Papua New Guinea in implementing the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction, adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, held in June 1998, and encourages the Government to enact legislation to update its national drug control laws as a further step to enable it to meet the requirements of and become a party to the 1988 Convention.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

503. Cannabis continues to be the most widely abused narcotic drug in Oceania. The illicit cultivation of cannabis plants in Australia appears to be expanding, and there has been a noticeable shift away from open-area cultivation towards indoor hydroponic cultivation. That country is also a key market for cannabis cultivated in Cambodia and Papua New Guinea. Efforts to eradicate cannabis crops in Papua New Guinea have been hampered by the mountainous and swampy terrain.

504. In New Zealand, there is no significant cultivation of opium poppy for the illicit manufacture of heroin on a commercial scale; however, opium poppy is illicitly cultivated and consumed locally. Seizure data indicate that New Zealand is sometimes used as a transit point for south-east Asian heroin en route to Australia. Heroin abuse does not appear to be a major problem in New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific island States. The abuse of opiate substitutes, such as morphine sulphate tablets and “homebake” derived from codeine-based tablets, is common in New Zealand.

505. Trafficking in and abuse of cocaine appear to be minimal in all countries in Oceania except Australia. Seizure data indicate that New Zealand and the Pacific island States, as well as countries in east Asia, are at times used as transit points for South American cocaine destined for Australia, where both trafficking in and abuse of cocaine are increasing.

Psychotropic substances

506. In 1999 methamphetamine remained the principal drug manufactured in clandestine laboratories in Australia, though one seizure of amphetamine was also made. Sudafed tablets, which contain pseudoephedrine and are widely available without a prescription, are increasingly being sought after for use in the manufacture of methamphetamine in Australia. The Board remains concerned that not all jurisdictions in Australia have enacted legislation specifically covering the illicit use of precursor chemicals. The authorities in New Zealand have also seized a laboratory used for the clandestine manufacture of methamphetamine.

507. LSD is smuggled out of the United States and countries in Europe and into New Zealand, where it is purportedly much more widely abused than in many other developed countries.

(Signed) Antonio Lourenço **Martins**
President

(Signed) Jacques **Franquet**
Rapporteur

(Signed) Herbert **Schaepe**
Secretary

Vienna, 18 November 1999

Notes

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 520, No. 7515.

² *Ibid.*, preamble.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1019, No. 14956, preamble.

⁴ A similar underlying principle governs article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 (*Official Records of the United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Vienna, 25 November-20 December 1988*, vol. 1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XI.5)) in limiting the manufacture of, trade in and use of precursor chemicals to legitimate pharmaceutical or medical and industrial purposes.

- ⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 976, No. 14152.
- ⁶ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XI.4), para. 4.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 20.
- ⁸ The term “opioid”, as used in the present publication, covers all natural, semi-synthetic and synthetic substances with chemical structures and pharmacological effects similar to those of morphine.
- ⁹ Unless otherwise indicated, the data concerning the manufacture and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances discussed in the present publication are those reported to the Board by Governments.
- ¹⁰ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1994 ...*, paras. 1-33.
- ¹¹ *Official Records of the United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Vienna, 25 November-20 December 1988*, vol. I (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XI.5).
- ¹² Extent of competence: article 12.
- ¹³ The term “precursor” is used to indicate any of the substances in Table I or II of the 1988 Convention, except where the context requires a different expression. Such substances are often described as precursors or essential chemicals, depending on their principal chemical properties. The plenipotentiary conference that adopted the 1988 Convention did not use any one term to describe such substances. Instead, the expression “substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances” was introduced in the Convention. It has become common practice, however, to refer to all such substances simply as “precursors”; although that term is not technically correct, the Board has decided to use it in the present report for the sake of convenience.
- ¹⁴ More detailed information on compliance by individual States with the reporting obligations may be found in the technical reports of the Board on narcotic drugs (*Narcotic Drugs: Estimated World Requirements for 2000; Statistics for 1998* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 00.XI.4.4)) and psychotropic substances (*Psychotropic Substances: Statistics for 1998; Assessments of Medical and Scientific Requirements for Substances in Schedules II, III and IV* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E/F/S.00.XI.2)).
- ¹⁵ The findings, conclusions and recommendations were published in 1996 in a special report entitled *Availability of Opiates for Medical Needs* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.XI.6).
- ¹⁶ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1999 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.00.XI.3).
- ¹⁷ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.XI.1).
- ¹⁸ The proposals by the Board regarding the nomenclature of the substance under review are contained in the 1998 report of the Board on the implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention (*Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1998 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.99.XI.4)).
- ¹⁹ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1998* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.XI.1), paras. 99-101.
- ²⁰ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1999 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.00.XI.3); see also *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1998 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. 99.XI.4).
- ²¹ General Assembly resolution S-20/4 B.
- ²² Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/31, entitled “Lucknow Accord on the Adoption of Uniform Measures to Control Trade in Precursors and Other Chemicals Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances”.
- ²³ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control*

Board for 1998 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.99.XI.4), annex V, para. 11.

²⁴ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1999 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.00.XI.3).

²⁵ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1998 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.99.XI.4), annex V, paras. 41-42.

²⁶ Defined as use of an illicit drug at least once during the 30 days prior to the survey interview.

²⁷ Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

²⁸ Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

²⁹ Called Lancang Jiang in China.

³⁰ *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1998* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.XI.1), para. 311.

³¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 976, No. 14151.

³² General Assembly resolution S-20/2, annex, para 17.