

cocaine manufactured. Furthermore, the introduction of pre-export notifications as a treaty requirement for both substances will facilitate licit international trade by expediting the clearance of shipments, without adverse effects on the availability of the substances for licit purposes at the national level. The Board therefore recommends that both acetic anhydride and potassium permanganate be transferred from Table II to Table I of the 1988 Convention.

III. Analysis of data on seizures of, and illicit traffic in, precursors and trends in illicit manufacture of drugs

A. Overview

71. The analysis presented below provides an overview of major trends in diversion and trafficking of the substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of drugs. In the analysis of available data, consideration has been given to information provided by the law enforcement and regulatory authorities not only on seizures, but also on known cases of diversion and attempted diversion, on stopped or suspended shipments in international trade, and on the illicit manufacture of drugs. The findings of investigations undertaken are also considered.

72. The present report contains seizure data for the five-year period from 1995 to 1999, furnished by Governments under the provisions of article 12 of the 1988 Convention (see annex I, tables 3a and 3b).

73. Seizures of all the substances in Tables I and II, with the exception of *N-acetylanthranilic acid*, used in the illicit manufacture of methaqualone, have been reported for 1999. In that connection, it should be noted that background information on the circumstances of the seizures is not always supplied. To analyse current trafficking trends accurately and to develop new mechanisms to prevent future diversions, the Board requests that every effort be made to collect and provide such information to it in a timely manner.

74. The Board has also noted that in cases where the seized substance had been diverted in another country, such information is sometimes not shared with the countries concerned, thus hindering the proper conduct

of follow-up investigations. Where Governments have cooperated with each other in that regard, channels of diversion from licit trade have been identified and future diversions from those sources have been stopped.

75. With regard to international trade, more Governments have reported stopping shipments of substances in both Tables I and II. For 1999 and 2000, 11 countries have reported stopping shipments of 15 of the substances in Tables I and II. The Board urges all Governments to carry out investigations into those shipments and to share, with other Governments concerned, information on the reasons for stopping the shipments and on the results of any follow-up investigations.

76. On the basis of available information, the following general observations can be made:

(a) Smuggling is increasingly being reported as the method preferred by traffickers for transporting chemicals across international borders to the areas of illicit manufacture of drugs. Such reports show that diversions from domestic distribution channels continue to occur, and that Governments should thoroughly examine the current controls over domestic distribution in order to prevent such diversions;

(b) Traffickers are introducing more elaborate mechanisms to divert the chemicals that they require. In some instances, for example, traffickers have formed front companies to carry out a degree of licit business in the substances listed in Tables I and II. The amounts of controlled chemicals ordered in excess of the licit requirements of the company are subsequently diverted into illicit manufacture;

(c) Mail services have often been used as a method of smuggling drugs, and reports are being received of that method being used to smuggle precursors, in particular those used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants;

(d) More information is required, in the form of chemical profiling of seized drug samples, to identify the chemicals actually used in their manufacture. That holds true in particular for *methylenedioxymethamphetamine* (MDMA) and its analogues, for which the reported seizures of the Table I substances that can be used in the manufacturing process are low in comparison with the amounts of tablets being seized. As a variety of non-controlled substitutes may be used

in the manufacturing process, chemical profiling is essential to identify whether any such non-controlled substitutes are in fact being used;

(e) Reports have been received of accidents at illicit laboratories manufacturing MDMA in Europe and North America where the operators have been killed or injured. In the past, operators in such laboratories usually had a rudimentary knowledge of chemistry, but since the recipes, required chemicals and equipment have become available from, for instance, the Internet, people with no background in chemistry can attempt to manufacture the substances, thus endangering both the community and themselves.

B. Trends in the illicit traffic in precursors and other chemicals and the illicit manufacture of drugs

1. Substances used in the illicit manufacture of cocaine

(a) Potassium permanganate

Seizures

77. For 1999, the *potassium permanganate* seized in the South American region was the highest ever reported. Those seizures continue to be reported from areas where the illicit manufacture of cocaine takes place, namely Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, and also, since 1998, from an increasing number of other countries in the region.

78. Over the years, Colombia has consistently seized multi-ton amounts of *potassium permanganate*, accounting for the majority of the substance seized in the region, as reflected in figure VII. That trend continued in 1999, with Colombia making significant seizures of over 70 tons of the substance. Furthermore, under Operation Purple (see chapter II above), the Colombian authorities have been able to identify the countries where the diversions took place, as well as the methods and routes employed by the traffickers.

79. Of the 70 tons seized, seven consignments, amounting to over 48 tons, or 67 per cent of the total,

were seized as a result of the activities carried out under Operation Purple. Five of those consignments were being smuggled into Colombia using the routes shown in figure VIII, with the countries from which the consignments were shipped being identified as the Republic of Korea (12 tons), Spain (11.6 tons), Mexico (10.5 tons), the Netherlands (9.6 tons) and the United States (0.8 tons). The traffickers had either relabelled the chemical containers or falsely described the consignments on the customs declarations in an attempt to avoid detection.

80. The seizure of the 12 tons of *potassium permanganate* smuggled from the Republic of Korea led the Governments concerned to initiate follow-up investigations. As a result of those investigations, a further 750 kilograms of potassium permanganate were seized in the Republic of Korea and nationals of Colombia and the Republic of Korea were arrested. The Board is aware that similar investigations are being carried out in the other countries from which potassium permanganate has been smuggled and successes have been achieved in dismantling smuggling networks, as was reported in both the annual report of the Board for 1999²⁶ and its report for 1999 on the implementation of article 12.²⁷

81. In addition to those cases of smuggling reported under Operation Purple, the seizure of a further 23 tons of *potassium permanganate* by the Colombian authorities shows that diversions from domestic distribution channels and cross-border trafficking remain a significant source of the potassium permanganate seized in the region. To counter diversions from those sources, Colombia is implementing a national potassium permanganate control plan that includes the determination of its licit demands for potassium permanganate, strengthening control mechanisms between the Government and the private sector to prevent diversions from domestic distribution channels and establishing border control mechanisms with neighbouring countries to counter smuggling. The Board trusts that all Governments in the region will support the Colombian initiative.