

III. Analysis of the world situation

A. Africa

Major developments

180. Many countries in Africa are burdened by major economic, political and social problems. Civil strife and war, poverty, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), crime and corruption in some countries are closely related to the drug control problem in the region and need to be taken into consideration when formulating drug control programmes.

181. Despite eradication efforts and significant seizures in some countries in Africa, the region remains a major supplier of cannabis. While cannabis continues to be the most widely abused drug, the abuse of psychotropic substances is widespread, because of inadequate systems for licensing and inspecting trade in such substances. The illicit manufacture and abuse of methaqualone continue in southern and eastern Africa. Recently, heroin and cocaine abuse has become more widespread in urban areas. Although Africa serves mainly as a transit point for smuggling heroin and cocaine, the falling prices of those substances in cities across sub-Saharan Africa have resulted in increased abuse of the substances.

182. In 1999, seizures of cannabis, heroin and psychotropic substances in Africa increased markedly, compared with 1998, while cocaine seizures decreased. The total amounts reported seized continue to be comparatively small and probably do not reflect the extent of the trafficking in, availability of and abuse of those substances in the region. Lack of resources for drug control remains the main obstacle in the fight against illicit crop cultivation and illicit drug production and trafficking in Africa.

183. Western African syndicates, with their experience in smuggling cannabis and heroin, are actively looking for new connections in Latin America and are bringing cocaine trafficking to all parts of sub-Saharan Africa, notably in southern and western African countries. They are also using a growing number of nationals of different African countries as drug couriers and smugglers. Cocaine abuse is especially prevalent in southern Africa, where, in cities such as Harare and Johannesburg, the price of cocaine has fallen so

sharply in the last five years that it competes with that of methaqualone.

184. In eastern Africa, most illicit drugs arrive by sea, often concealed in container cargo, through ports in Djibouti, Eritrea and the United Republic of Tanzania. Ocean-going vessels with multi-ton consignments of illicit drugs have been lying in international waters and feeding the consignments to small supply vessels off the coast of countries in eastern Africa, in particular Somalia, which continues to lack the necessary government structure to deal with the problem.

185. In most countries in Africa, drug abuse appears to be rising, the age of initiation to drug abuse is falling and the number of women and children abusing drugs is growing. The mode of administration is also changing, the most noticeable trend being the injecting of heroin. Even though the rate of injecting drug abuse is still comparatively low, this is a particularly worrisome development, as the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is high in most parts of Africa, especially in countries in southern Africa. The link between drugs and HIV/AIDS was also highlighted at the XIII International Conference on AIDS, held in Durban, South Africa, in July 2000.

Treaty adherence

186. In March 2000, the Comoros became a party to the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention and Kenya acceded to the 1971 Convention.

187. Angola, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea and Eritrea are not yet parties to any of the three main international drug control treaties. In addition, Algeria, Chad and Morocco have not yet acceded to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention; Liberia and the United Republic of Tanzania are not yet parties to the 1971 Convention; and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Liberia, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda and Somalia are not yet parties to the 1988 Convention. The United Republic of Tanzania is taking action to ensure its accession to the 1971 Convention. The Board urges the States concerned to participate in the international drug control system by acceding to those treaties.

Regional cooperation

188. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) convened a third expert group meeting on drug control in Algiers in February 2000 to monitor the implementation of the OAU plan of action on the control of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in Africa. The Board notes with appreciation that, in the plan of action agreed to by the first Africa-Europe summit, held under the aegis of OAU and the European Union in Cairo in April 2000, the Governments involved expressed their commitment to the fight against illicit drug trafficking, arms trade and terrorism in Africa. It is hoped that those initiatives and the renewed political commitment made by African Governments will lead to more prioritization of drug control by OAU and African Governments.

189. A number of subregional organizations have addressed the issues of drug control and the promotion of cooperation among States in Africa. The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community have developed a draft protocol on combating drug trafficking within eastern Africa, modelled on a protocol developed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in order to establish an institutional framework under the treaty of the East African Community, signed in 1999.

190. The SADC regional drug control programme, developed on the basis of the SADC protocol against illicit drug trafficking, became operational, the allocation of funds having taken place in early 2000. SADC activities include a project aimed at increasing drug awareness and involving the mass media in southern Africa, a study to assess the needs of law enforcement agencies with regard to sharing and exchanging information on drug-related issues, and work to enhance coordination among the various national drug control bodies in the subregion.

191. In eastern Africa, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania are intensifying drug control cooperation between their police anti-narcotics units through biannual meetings on information exchange for heads of criminal investigation departments. That cooperation has already yielded positive results, such as joint operations involving Kenyan and Ugandan police aimed at curbing cannabis trafficking along their common border and a heroin seizure at the border between Rwanda and Uganda.

192. The first meeting of ministers of the interior and the third meeting of the committee of police chiefs in eastern Africa, organized in Khartoum in June 2000 by the Government of the Sudan in collaboration with Interpol, decided to gather and share information on drug trafficking and to hold meetings on a regular basis to discuss trends in drug trafficking and operations aimed at countering the problem.

193. Countries in northern Africa participate in activities of the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior related to drug control and crime prevention.

194. The third meeting of the inter-ministerial drug control coordinators of western Africa of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), held in November 1999, proposed, inter alia, the creation of an intergovernmental African group against money-laundering. That proposal was officially adopted during the ECOWAS Conference of Heads of State and Government held in Lagos in December 1999.

195. The Board notes the holding of the seminar on money-laundering organized under the auspices of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) in Dakar in July 2000 to sensitize and inform national authorities and financial institutions throughout the subregion about money-laundering issues and to accelerate the development and adoption of legislation and an institutional framework to support efforts to fight money-laundering in the member States of the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

196. The Government of Egypt concluded a bilateral agreement with the Government of Pakistan on drug control cooperation, strengthening an existing agreement between the two Governments. Nigeria signed memoranda of understanding on drug control with the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation.

197. The Board notes the planned establishment of an African international law enforcement academy in Botswana, which will further law enforcement education and cooperation in the region. In Senegal, the operational capacity of the national narcotics laboratory has been increased, making it a regional training and reference centre for the identification and testing of substances.

National legislation, policy and action

198. The Board notes that in many countries drug laws and drug policies continue to be updated. Such action has already led to encouraging results.

199. National drug control strategies have been adopted in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya and Togo and are under preparation in the Central African Republic, Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania. Mauritius is developing a package of legislation that is needed to enable it to become party to the 1988 Convention. In Egypt, the drafting of a law against money-laundering, initiated in 1998, is to be finalized soon.

200. Partly as a result of improved interdiction efforts in Nigeria, Ghana is increasingly being used as a transit point for smuggling cocaine and heroin. The Narcotics Control Board of Ghana has submitted proposals to the Government to amend the narcotics law of 1990 and has completed its national plan of action for the period 1999-2003, which foresees coordination of the activities of all governmental and non-governmental organizations. At the same time, the Government of Ghana has initiated a number of drug prevention activities, such as the inclusion of drug prevention education in the curriculum of all secondary schools and teacher training colleges and the establishment of drug-free clubs in all secondary schools.

201. The Government of Kenya has increased its efforts to limit the production, sale and consumption of cannabis. Cannabis seizures increased significantly in 1999 and two consignments of cannabis resin totalling over 6 tons were seized in Mombasa in January and March 2000.

202. The Government of Lesotho has established a division within the police and the national intelligence service to coordinate law enforcement efforts against drug syndicates. The Board has noted that new legislation to counter the corruption of public servants is under consideration.

203. In Nigeria, since the launching of the national drug control master plan in 1999, the Government has continued to streamline the institutions and structures responsible for drug control and to increase the national budget for drug control. The first rapid assessment of the drug abuse situation was released by the President of Nigeria in June 2000. The commitment

of the Government and the high priority accorded to drug control are reflected in the establishment of committees on drugs and financial crime in the two chambers of the parliament and the appointment of a senior special assistant to the President on drugs and financial crime. Existing legislation against money-laundering has been tightened, shifting the onus of proof to the accused in cases involving money-laundering.

204. Rwanda, which is emerging from a long period of civil conflict, has started to build new infrastructure for drug control. In 1999, the police formed a small anti-narcotics unit in Kigali; later that same year, the unit seized 4 kg of heroin without ever having received specialized training or the means to identify illicit drugs.

205. The Board notes with appreciation the establishment of an asset forfeiture unit in May 2000 by the Government of South Africa under the Prevention of Organized Crime Act 1998. It also notes that new legislation against money-laundering is now under preparation. At the end of 1999, a new law enforcement unit was established to fight high-profile crime and corruption, including drug crime. The Board encourages the Government to establish as soon as possible the envisaged central drug authority, which is to coordinate the implementation of the national master plan for drug control adopted in February 1999.

206. The Board encourages the Government of Uganda to enact as soon as possible the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Control) Bill, which will create a better legal basis for combating crime involving the distribution of drugs and other drug-related crime.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

207. Cannabis remains the most widely grown and abused drug on the African continent, but in many African countries, the extent of the area under cannabis cultivation is not known.

208. Despite law enforcement efforts and, in particular, the strengthening of customs control in Morocco, that country remains a major source of cannabis resin destined mainly for western Europe. According to the World Customs Organization and

Interpol, 70-80 per cent of the cannabis resin seized in Europe and about one half of the cannabis resin seized worldwide in 1999 originated in Morocco. In July 2000, Senegalese authorities seized some 5.3 tons of cannabis resin of Moroccan origin at the port of Dakar. The drugs had been shipped by sea in freight containers and were allegedly destined to be smuggled via Sierra Leone into the Netherlands. Significant cannabis cultivation continues in countries in western Africa. Due to its high THC content, cannabis from Ghana is in high demand in other countries in western Africa. The annual prevalence of cannabis abuse as a percentage of the population aged 15 and above in western Africa is among the highest in the world. South Africa remains one of the world's largest producers of cannabis herb. Most of the cannabis herb produced in South Africa continues to be sold on illicit markets and abused in that country or in other countries in the subregion of southern Africa; however, the amount smuggled into countries in Europe and into the United States continues to increase. Countries in eastern Africa continue to be used as transit points for smuggling cannabis herb and resin.

209. According to the World Customs Organization, 7 kg of opium bound for South Africa was intercepted in Zambia in 1999, marking the first time that opium was seized in Africa. The only confirmed report of illicit opium poppy cultivation in Africa has come from the Sinai peninsula in Egypt, where there is opium abuse but apparently no heroin manufacture. In 1999, opium prices rose sharply, a development that has been attributed to successful efforts to eradicate the opium poppy on the Sinai peninsula.

210. While the total amount of heroin seized in Africa has remained small, heroin seizures increased markedly in 1999, particularly in countries in eastern and western Africa through which heroin, mainly from India, Pakistan and Thailand is smuggled. Heroin also continues to be smuggled into South Africa, destined to a large extent for illicit markets in Europe.

211. Cocaine originating in countries in South America and shipped mainly from Brazil is transiting countries in western and southern Africa, on its way to Europe. While the bulk of the cocaine entering South Africa is probably destined for countries in Europe, the consumption of cocaine, both in its hard crystalline form ("crack"), and in powder form, is increasing in South Africa.

212. The abuse of cocaine, including "crack", and heroin has become a cause of concern in several countries in western Africa, particularly among the urban population. In Cape Verde, heroin, followed by cocaine (and "crack"), has become the most abused substance on the island of São Vicente, a development attributed to the spillover effect of drug trafficking. Heroin abuse is also a serious problem in Mauritius, where, during the past two years, there has been a substantial increase in the purity of the heroin that is available, with white heroin replacing the lower-grade heroin known as "brown sugar".

Psychotropic substances

213. Over the past few years, trafficking in and abuse of ephedrine, pemoline, amphetamine and benzodiazepines (mainly diazepam) have increased in countries in western and central Africa. Sedative-hypnotics are increasingly being diverted from licit distribution channels. Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances continue to be available over the counter, as there is no proper control over pharmaceutical products. The situation has been aggravated by the sale of fake drugs on the street and by the diversion of medicines into illicit channels.

214. In 1999, the total amount of psychotropic substances reported seized in Africa was more than double the amount reported seized in 1998. South Africa is probably the country with the world's highest prevalence of methaqualone abuse. In South Africa, only cannabis is more widely abused than methaqualone.

215. While the abuse of methaqualone continues to be a problem in countries in eastern and southern Africa, such abuse has also been reported in countries in western Africa. As India has ceased to be a major source of methaqualone, the difference in supply is compensated mostly by local illicit manufacture, primarily in South Africa but also in some eastern African countries. Some illicit laboratories, such as those in Kenya, have only tableted methaqualone using powder smuggled out of India in small quantities; however, other reported activities seem to have involved the actual manufacture of the substance, though the origin of the required precursors is unknown.

216. The bulk of the methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDMA, commonly known as Ecstasy) abused in

South Africa is smuggled into that country out of countries in Europe, notably the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In the last few years, however, some clandestine laboratories manufacturing MDMA (Ecstasy) and methamphetamine have been detected in South Africa. MDMA (Ecstasy) is the most recent drug of abuse to appear in the region.

217. Flunitrazepam preparations (Rohypnol) from European countries, mainly Greece, are increasingly being smuggled into Egypt. Egypt has rescheduled the substance, placing more severe penalties on both trafficking in and abuse of the substance. The manufacture of the amphetamine-type stimulant Maxiton Forte, for local abuse, continues to take place in Egypt in makeshift laboratories.

218. Another recent development is the injecting of Subutex (buprenorphine) by drug addicts in Mauritius. The substance is smuggled into the country out of Réunion, a neighbouring island. In Mauritius, the authorities have reacted to the development by placing buprenorphine on the list of prescription drugs in line with the requirements of the 1971 Convention.

Other issues

219. In 1999, Uganda announced its intention to make khat illegal. Khat is already prohibited in the United Republic of Tanzania. It is grown in countries in eastern Africa (mainly Ethiopia and Kenya and to a lesser extent the Comoros, the northern part of Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania) and exported in multi-ton quantities to the major consumer countries (Djibouti, Eritrea, Somalia and Yemen) and to countries in Europe and North America.

Missions

220. In September 2000, the Board sent a mission to Senegal. The newly elected Government of Senegal, in power since April 2000, expressed its willingness and its commitment to meeting its obligations under the international drug control treaties and the Board is confident that this will translate into the timely submission of information required under the treaties.

221. Cannabis is cultivated in large areas throughout Senegal, particularly in the southern part of the country, and national law enforcement authorities have seized cannabis plants and made large seizures of cannabis. The Board encourages the Government of

Senegal to continue its action against the cultivation of cannabis in the country.

222. Preparations containing psychotropic substances are widely available on street markets in the major urban centres of Senegal. The capacity of the national health authorities should therefore be enhanced to improve the monitoring of imports and the distribution of psychotropic substances and narcotic drugs as well. At the same time, the Board urges the Government to strengthen the system of control over the pharmaceutical supply system in order to prevent the dispensing and sale of pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled drugs without medical prescription.

223. While Senegal does not manufacture precursor chemicals, there are indications that parts of the country, especially its main seaports, could be used by traffickers as transit points. The Board expects that the Government of Senegal will take the necessary measures to prevent the diversion of controlled chemicals into illicit channels, as required under article 12 of the 1988 Convention.

224. In September 2000, the Board sent a mission to the United Republic of Tanzania, which is a party to the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol and to the 1988 Convention. The Board urges the United Republic of Tanzania to deposit with the Secretary-General its instrument of accession to the 1971 Convention without further delay.

225. The Board welcomes the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Anti-Drug Commission, which is to coordinate all drug control efforts in the United Republic of Tanzania and to define, promote and implement government policy in the area of drug control. The Board hopes that the Commission will be provided with adequate staff, training and equipment to enable it to fulfil its functions and that international support will continue to be provided. The Board notes that the Government is in the process of finalizing a comprehensive national master plan for drug control. These are important first steps towards confronting the drug problem in the country, which ranges from cannabis trafficking and abuse to transit trafficking in heroin and to a lesser extent cocaine, and reducing the impact of such trafficking on trends in drug abuse.

226. The Board urges the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to strengthen controls in order to

prevent the diversion of pharmaceuticals containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as chemicals, into illicit channels. At the same time, steps must be taken to ensure that essential narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are made available to those who need them for medical purposes.

227. The Board notes that there is a proposal to designate the port of Zanzibar as a “free port”. Given that the coastline of the United Republic of Tanzania is part of a key drug trafficking route, the Board stresses that measures to suppress illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals in such “free ports” should be no less stringent than those applied in other parts of the country, as required under article 18 of the 1988 Convention.

228. The Board has reviewed the follow-up by the Government of Togo to the recommendations made by the Board after its mission to that country in June 1995. The Board is pleased to note that Togo has implemented several recommendations made by the Board. In particular, Togo adopted in March 1998 a comprehensive drug control law, based on the UNDCP model legislation, which provides for high financial penalties, long sentences and forfeiture of assets in cases involving illicit drug activities. The Government has already begun to enforce that law. In addition, a presidential decree issued in 1998 created an inter-ministerial body for drug control coordination. In June 1998, Togo reported at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly that it had initiated the preparation of a national drug control strategy. The Government has also significantly improved its reporting in line with the requirements of the international drug control treaties.

229. Noting with appreciation the above-mentioned developments, the Board urges the Government of Togo to complement those positive steps by addressing the problem of the parallel market of psychotropic substances.

B. Americas

230. The Board welcomes the significant advances made in implementing the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism, which is being developed by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Commission (CICAD) of the

Organization of American States. At present, few regions have such a mechanism.

231. It is hoped that the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism will soon become an effective instrument for monitoring the progress of the individual and collective efforts of Governments to combat illicit trafficking in and abuse of drugs.

Central America and the Caribbean

Major developments

232. Drug traffickers continue to take advantage of the fact that the region of Central America and the Caribbean is located between major drug-producing areas and significant illicit drug markets, that the Caribbean is comprised of hundreds of relatively small islands with myriads of cays and that the socio-economic situation in most of the countries in the region is difficult. The relatively weak institutional and political situation in some of the countries and the large number of political entities in the Caribbean pose challenges to efforts to ensure strategic coordination in the fight against illicit drug trafficking and abuse. Nonetheless, substantial progress towards increasing cooperation and coordination has been made through various regional and subregional mechanisms.

233. In Central America, the smuggling of drugs, mostly cocaine hydrochloride, coca paste (*basuco*) and “crack” in large and (more and more often) small shipments by land, continues unabated. It appears that, in Central America, ports on the Caribbean Sea and on the Pacific Ocean are increasingly being used for the trans-shipment of illicit drugs. As the Board has stated in previous reports,⁴² the spillover of that drug traffic is having a noticeable impact on the abuse of drugs, in particular cocaine and “crack”.

234. In the Caribbean, a common practice is to airdrop illicit drug consignments into coastal waters and then have them picked up by speedboat. Private vessels, fishing boats, cruisers and pleasure ships are also increasingly being used in maritime drug trafficking. Because of the increased efforts by the authorities of some countries to combat drug-related crime, drug traffickers have turned to quickly moving their operations to weaker jurisdictions. In addition, illicit drug stockpiling in isolated locations has become a more common practice.