

B. Americas

244. Drug abuse and trafficking affect all countries in the Americas. Thus, close cooperation at the regional and interregional levels must be an important part of the response to the many facets of those problems. All countries in the Americas have continued to cooperate closely through a number of mechanisms at the interregional, regional and subregional levels.

245. The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States (OAS) issued its 2001 Progress Report in Drug Control in January 2002. The report, which concluded the first round of the CICAD Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism, indicated that OAS member States had made significant efforts and progress in fulfilling recommendations of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism on improving national drug control, including the development of national drug control plans. The report recognized that many countries lacked the technical and financial resources to tackle the problem of illicit drugs and implement their national drug control plans more effectively. The Board encourages countries to maintain adequate financing for drug control at the national level and to continue cooperating at the multilateral level through regional and international organizations working to prevent drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

246. The inter-American system has continued to emphasize the need to collect and evaluate, through a drug observatory network, information on drug abuse and its socio-economic costs, as well as on illicit drug supply, while recognizing the need to improve the comparability of the available data. Increasingly reliable data will have a positive impact on the effectiveness of efforts by States to reduce illicit drug demand. The Board appreciates that national observatories on drug use have been established in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

Central America and the Caribbean

Major developments

247. Drug trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean continues to involve mostly cannabis and

cocaine, but seizures of heroin and MDMA (Ecstasy) have increased. Heroin from Colombia is being shipped to illicit markets in the United States and, increasingly, to Europe, while heroin abuse in the region remains limited. Shipments of MDMA (Ecstasy) arrive from Western Europe, destined mainly for illicit markets in North America; however, the abuse of that substance has recently become a matter of concern in some countries in Central America. Drug trafficking continues to be linked with trafficking in firearms and to be facilitated by corruption. Illicit drugs and arms are sometimes used as interchangeable commodities. Most of the firearms come from countries such as El Salvador and Nicaragua, where civil conflicts have ended, resulting in large caches of firearms, and are transported to guerrilla insurgency groups in countries in South America, mainly Colombia. Illicit drugs and arms are often transported along the same routes but in opposite directions.

248. Free trade areas, mainly in the Caribbean, are being exploited by drug traffickers. The Board reminds all Governments that, in line with article 31 of the 1961 Convention, such areas must be controlled in the same way as other parts of a national territory and that more drastic measures should be applied where the situation so warrants. The Caribbean Drug Control Coordination Mechanism has estimated that 40-50 per cent of the cocaine being transported through the Caribbean in containers on ships passes through free trade areas.

249. Progress has been achieved in recent years in most countries in the development and adoption of more appropriate drug control legislation and the establishment of national and subregional institutions and cooperation mechanisms. In order to be sustainable and to ensure the implementation of that legislation, those efforts need appropriate funding from sources within and outside Central America and the Caribbean. The Board calls on Canada, the United States and countries in Europe, as the main destinations of the illicit drug shipments, not to reduce their drug control assistance in favour of measures against terrorism but to look for new ways to combine both.

Treaty adherence

250. The Board notes with satisfaction that, in December 2001, Belize and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines acceded to the 1961 Convention as

amended by the 1972 Protocol and to the 1971 Convention. All States in Central America and the Caribbean are now parties to the 1961 Convention and the 1988 Convention. The Board calls once again on Haiti, Honduras and Saint Lucia to become parties to the 1971 Convention and on Nicaragua to ratify the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention.

Regional cooperation

251. The High-level Meeting on Drugs and Crime, held in Port-of-Spain in December 2001, made recommendations on the review of the implementation of the Plan of Action on Drug Control Coordination and Cooperation in the Caribbean (also known as the Barbados Plan of Action). The Thirteenth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, held in Belize City in February 2002, endorsed those recommendations. In determining the direction to be taken in the fight against drugs and crime, a number of priority elements for enhancing the Caribbean subregional strategy were adopted. In addition, in July 2002, a strategy was adopted to address the various aspects of crime and security, which included measures against drug trafficking. The Board notes that, through the secretariat of the Caribbean Community, a subregional strategy for the reduction of illicit drug demand was completed. A subregional maritime law enforcement agreement between States and territories in the Caribbean has been negotiated and is open for signature.

252. The Board considers the wide qualitative and methodological differences in epidemiological research to be the main impediment to assessing and comparing the magnitude of and developments in drug abuse and trafficking and to evaluating the impact of drug control measures in the Caribbean. The Board notes with appreciation that the first workshop in the Caribbean on building capacity for the development of national networks for data on drug use and abuse and rapid assessment surveys was held in Barbados in November 2001. The Board also notes that, within the framework of the Drug Abuse Epidemiological and Surveillance System Project of the Caribbean Drug Information Network, some States in the subregion are developing a joint methodology for implementing a system for the collection of data on drug abuse.

253. With regard to money-laundering, the Board welcomes the decision of the Inter-American Development Bank to finance, on the basis of proposals of CICAD, a programme for the creation and strengthening of financial intelligence units. The Board also notes the ongoing activities of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force and the Caribbean Anti-Money-Laundering Programme to assist countries in the subregion.

254. In April 2002, heads of law enforcement in Central America and the Dominican Republic participated in a meeting in El Salvador that ratified joint plans in efforts against drug trafficking and terrorism. The joint strategies include the strengthening of national border security, the promotion of stricter laws against drug trafficking and other types of organized crime and the creation of a statistical system with information on crime in Central America and the Caribbean. In June 2002, a similar meeting was held in Nicaragua for drug law enforcement authorities from the Central American countries, Mexico and the United States, resulting in an agreement to improve telecommunications infrastructure in order to be able to exchange, through a regional network, information on efforts to counter drug trafficking. The agreement is part of the Plan sin Fronteras (plan without borders) against organized crime in the area between the southern border of Mexico and Panama. The Board notes that Governments in Central America are developing a subregional plan for guiding the formulation of projects for the reduction of illicit drug demand and supply.

255. There are numerous bilateral law enforcement agreements among countries in Central America and the Caribbean, as well as between those countries and countries in North America and South America. Bilateral agreements between Central American countries include agreements on police cooperation in the control of porous borders and of adjoining territorial waters. Countries such as Costa Rica and Panama have also concluded agreements on police cooperation with Colombia, to counter the activities of the South American drug trafficking cartels in Central America. The United States continues to be the main partner of most countries in Central America and the Caribbean in bilateral action against drug trafficking, usually action involving maritime interdiction, but also drug abuse prevention, judicial cooperation, police training and technical assistance. European countries

also assist law enforcement authorities in Central American and Caribbean countries, facilitating training and operations, and sponsor regional conferences and meetings for the discussion of problems related to drug control.

National legislation, policy and action

256. Nearly all countries in Central America and the Caribbean have adopted national drug control plans in recent years. The Board notes with satisfaction that El Salvador approved a national drug control plan in January 2002 and urges the country to implement it. The Board also encourages Nicaragua to conclude the approval and implementation of its national drug control plan. The Board trusts that other countries, if necessary with the assistance of CICAD and UNDCP, will soon complete their national drug control plans. National coordinating bodies should be established in all countries. The Board trusts that the adoption and implementation of national drug control plans will lead to an expansion of demand reduction activities. Most countries have continued to focus and rely on their penal systems, while efforts aimed at the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug abusers are faced with limited public resources.

257. While public awareness campaigns are carried out in some form in most countries in the region, many countries are not yet able to provide rehabilitation programmes and institutionalized treatment for drug abusers. When available, those programmes are usually provided with the assistance of non-governmental, private or religious organizations. The accessibility and quality of facilities for the treatment of drug abuse are generally poor, partly because of lack of resources and partly because of the relatively low importance attached to such treatment.

258. The Board welcomes the drug abuse prevention programmes carried out in Cuba within the framework of its integrated national programme for the prevention of drug abuse, which together with strict law enforcement measures, has contributed to the low prevalence of drug abuse in that country. Trinidad and Tobago has carried out extensive public information programmes within its National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Programme. In Saint Kitts and Nevis, the National Council on Drug Abuse Prevention is working on a programme to evaluate and determine the efficacy of demand reduction programmes.

259. Several countries in Central America and the Caribbean have, for years, been criticized for allowing the laundering of money derived from drug trafficking and other criminal activities. However, the Board notes that continued attention is being given to combating money-laundering in the region. In June 2002, the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering removed Saint Kitts and Nevis from the list of countries and territories that it considered uncooperative in efforts to counter money-laundering, after having removed the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands from the list in June 2001. Dominica, Grenada, Guatemala and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines remain on the list. It should be noted that Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines have enacted most of the legislation against money-laundering required to remedy the situation, while Dominica and Guatemala are also making efforts in that direction. It should also be noted that in January 2002 Belize ended its economic citizenship programme, whereby foreigners could obtain Belizean citizenship in exchange for making investments in the country. The programme had been misused by money-launderers.

260. Belize's accession to the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol and to the 1971 Convention in December 2001 and the increase in law enforcement and demand reduction measures in that country are important steps towards improving its national drug control system. The Board encourages Belize to continue working towards the review and implementation of legislation for the control of chemical substances and to continue improving its cooperation with the Board in terms of fulfilling the reporting obligations under the international drug control treaties.

261. The Board welcomes initiatives aimed at improving efforts to determine the extent of illicit cannabis cultivation in the region. In Barbados, the police are working on the improvement of their intelligence-gathering capability, especially by developing a network of informants and increasing joint interdiction patrols involving the police and the military. The Royal Bahamas Police Force has established a system of weekly aerial surveillance flights throughout the Bahamas with the capacity to locate illicit crops, which can then be eradicated by ground units. Unfortunately, such detection activities are not carried out by a number of countries in the

region, mostly due to limited resources and because the terrain is difficult to patrol.

262. With little risk of being arrested, an increasing number of airplane passengers on direct flights from certain countries in the region to Europe have been engaging in small-scale drug smuggling. For example, the authorities of Jamaica and the United Kingdom have estimated that approximately 10 per cent of passengers on flights from Jamaica to the United Kingdom are smuggling drugs. The Board calls on the Governments of the countries concerned to develop a strategy to curtail such smuggling.

263. The Board notes with appreciation the improvement in the control system for chemicals in, for example, the Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada and Panama. Considering both the proximity of the region to major illicit drug production areas and the risk of clandestine laboratories being moved to countries in the region, the Board would like to encourage all countries in Central America and the Caribbean to continue to improve their capabilities to control chemicals, including by clearly defining the competencies of the authorities involved in chemical control and ensuring that there are adequate legal provisions for the application of criminal, civil or administrative sanctions against the diversion of controlled substances for illicit purposes.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

264. Central America and the Caribbean is the main area through which illicit drug consignments are transported from South America to North America and Europe, but the region is also affected by illicit crop cultivation, illicit drug manufacture and drug abuse, the latter being partly attributable to the spillover effect of the transit traffic.

265. Cannabis continues to be cultivated in all countries in Central America and most countries in the Caribbean, mostly to be abused locally. However, trafficking in cannabis has declined over the last two decades. Cannabis eradication efforts continue to take place in most of the countries in Central America and the Caribbean. For example, in Belize and Jamaica, the total area under cannabis cultivation in 1980 was estimated to be five times the area currently under

cannabis cultivation. That reduction has been achieved through intensive eradication campaigns. Despite those efforts, Jamaica continues to be an important source of supply for illicit markets in North America and, to some extent, the Eastern Caribbean; it also constitutes the main illicit market for cannabis in the Caribbean. The Board therefore notes with concern the attempts to decriminalize the personal use of cannabis in Jamaica and in a number of other Caribbean countries. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is the major supplier of cannabis for the Eastern Caribbean. Growers of licit crops sometimes turn to cannabis production when the market conditions for their licit crops become unfavourable.

266. Although almost all manufacture of cocaine in the Americas takes place in South America, there is increasing evidence of cocaine manufacture in some countries in Central America. In 2001, some Governments in Central America expressed concern over the possible establishment of laboratories for processing cocaine in the subregion by South American drug trafficking organizations, partly with a view to developing the Central American market for illicit drugs. There are indications of the existence of small coca bush cultivation sites and cocaine laboratories in Panama. Central America is also a transit area for chemicals used in the manufacture of cocaine and heroin, mainly in Colombia. In November 2001, a precursor chemical laboratory was seized in Belize, the first such seizure in the country.

267. Cocaine transit trafficking continues unabated in Central America and the Caribbean. While the Central American and Mexican land corridor continues to be essential to such trafficking, the Pacific route is becoming increasingly important, either as an independent route or as a complementary route. For example, there have been cases in which shipments of cocaine originating in Colombia were transported by sea along the Pacific coast and would have continued by land towards Mexico and the United States had they not been seized in Panama. Drug trafficking organizations in Central American countries appear to have established partnerships with criminal organizations in Colombia and Mexico as part of a trafficking network extending from South America to North America.

268. Increased seizures of narcotic drugs in some Central American countries do not necessarily reflect

an increase in drug trafficking through the subregion; instead, they may reflect the effectiveness of national law enforcement authorities or changes in the drug trafficking routes that pass through certain countries. National authorities have indicated that cocaine transit trafficking in the Caribbean has increased. The major trans-shipment points are the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica, but other countries have also been affected by that development.

269. It appears that, mainly as a spillover of the transit traffic, cocaine and crack abuse in Central America and the Caribbean has increased in recent years. It is estimated that, in the Caribbean, approximately two thirds of those who abuse cocaine abuse it in the form of crack and that new and younger abusers from the more affluent segments of the population prefer sniffing cocaine in powder form.

270. Opium poppy cultivation continues on a very small scale in Guatemala, as evidenced by seizure reports in 2000 and 2001. Neither opium poppy cultivation nor heroin production takes place in the Caribbean. The heroin consignments trafficked through Central America and the Caribbean are mostly destined for the United States and are mostly of Colombian origin. Heroin consignments have been seized regularly in all Central American countries and in some Caribbean countries, though much less regularly and in smaller quantities than cocaine.

Psychotropic substances

271. Trafficking in MDMA (Ecstasy) through Central America and the Caribbean has developed in recent years and there are indications that some of the transit trafficking in MDMA (Ecstasy) is linked to the transit trafficking in cocaine. MDMA (Ecstasy) is supplied by European sources, mainly in the Netherlands; most of the MDMA (Ecstasy) trafficked in the region is destined for illicit markets in the United States. The main trans-shipment points are in Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles (which, like Suriname in South America, have close economic ties with the Netherlands) and the Dominican Republic.

272. The lack of epidemiological data does not allow any firm conclusions to be drawn on trends in the abuse of psychotropic substances in the region. It appears that flunitrazepam and diazepam are the licitly manufactured substances that are most often diverted and abused. As for illicitly manufactured psychotropic

substances, the abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) is reported to have increased.

273. In Haiti, deficient control over the licit distribution of drugs has led to a large parallel market for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. A study identified psychoactive substances as the main drugs abused by street children in Port-au-Prince. The substances abused and illicitly traded in Haiti are diverted from domestic distribution channels or from international donations and smuggled out of the Dominican Republic or countries in Central America. Recognizing the humanitarian relief objective of donor countries and organizations, the Board requests the competent authorities of Haiti to ensure that such donations are not diverted for illicit purposes. The Board also calls upon donors of pharmaceuticals to Haiti and to other developing countries to ensure, to the extent possible, that the internationally controlled substances included in their donations are adequately controlled in the receiver countries.

Missions

274. The Board reviewed action taken by the Government of the Bahamas pursuant to recommendations made by the Board after its mission to that country in June 1999. The Board welcomes the adoption of legislation by the parliament of the Bahamas to strengthen activities against money-laundering and noted that the Financial Action Task Force removed the Bahamas from the list of countries and territories that it considered uncooperative in efforts to counter money-laundering.

275. The Board noted that steps are being taken in the Bahamas to strengthen institutional capabilities to deal with drug control issues, including the development of a comprehensive national drug control plan, the final text of which is expected to be approved soon by the Government. The Board noted that the Bahamas was making progress in fulfilling its reporting obligations under the 1961 Convention and the 1971 Convention.

276. However, the Board also noted the continuing lack of reporting by the Bahamas on issues related to precursor control. As draft legislation on the control of precursor chemicals is still to be adopted by the parliament and in view of the recently reported export to the Bahamas of large quantities of chemical substances that can be used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs, the Board recommends to the

Government to improve observance of its obligations under article 12 of the 1988 Convention.

277. A mission of the Board visited Haiti in December 2001. The Board is concerned by the serious problems related to drug abuse and trafficking in that country. Haiti has become one of the hubs for drug trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean, adversely affecting the drug control activities of other countries in the region. It is estimated, for example, that 15-20 per cent of the cocaine trafficked in the region passes through Haiti. The lack of adequate control over the licit trade in drugs and chemicals has led to the development of a vast parallel market for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the country. The abuse of all kinds of psychoactive substances poses a serious threat to the health of large segments of the population, especially young people.

278. The Government of Haiti has taken some steps to remedy the situation. In April 2001, a law against the laundering of assets derived from drug trafficking and other serious offences was passed by parliament but has yet to be implemented. The adoption in October 2001 of a law on the control and suppression of drug trafficking provides the legislative framework for controlling narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors. The Board urges the Government to finalize the review and regulations necessary for implementing both laws as soon as possible. The Board notes that an interministerial drug control commission was created by presidential decree in May 2002. The Board invites the Government to continue to demonstrate that it has the political will to address the drug problem and to ratify the 1971 Convention.

279. In view of the gravity of the drug abuse and trafficking situation in Haiti, the Board will continue its close monitoring of developments in that country. The Board calls on the Government to address the urgent situation by increasing its efforts, allocating the required financial resources and obtaining the necessary assistance from bilateral and multilateral donors.

280. In July 2002, the Board sent a mission to the Netherlands Antilles. The airports and the seaports of the five islands that comprise the Netherlands Antilles, especially Bonaire and Curaçao, are used as transit points for shipping cocaine consignments from Colombia and Venezuela. The drug law enforcement authorities in the Netherlands Antilles continue to be successful in seizing significant quantities of illicit

drugs destined for Europe and North America. While noting the active participation of the Netherlands Antilles in joint law enforcement and intelligence-sharing programmes involving Aruba, the Netherlands, Suriname and the United States, the Board encourages closer cooperation between the authorities of those islands in order to ensure the continued success of their law enforcement efforts.

281. Crack cocaine remains the main drug of abuse in the Netherlands Antilles. Drug abuse is spreading, as local drug traffickers, being increasingly paid in kind, are developing new illicit markets. There is a need to address the problem of drug smuggling on direct flights to the Netherlands by "body packers" (persons concealing illicit drugs on their persons), who believe that they face little risk of arrest in the Netherlands Antilles. The Board welcomes the closer cooperation with the authorities of the Netherlands.

282. The Board notes with satisfaction the creation in the Netherlands Antilles of a special financial intelligence unit for preventing money-laundering and investigating suspicious transactions. However, chemical controls and a demand reduction programme have yet to be developed and should be part of the drug control strategy that is to be adopted.

283. The Board sent a mission to Trinidad and Tobago in July 2002. The Government has enacted several laws to give effect to the provisions of the drug control treaties at the national level; however, those laws may have to be consolidated into a single law in order to simplify the organization of the control of drugs and chemicals. Law enforcement activities are well developed and coordinated at the national level and carried out in close cooperation with other countries.

284. While the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is fully committed to drug control, lack of treaty-mandated reporting on narcotic drugs may indicate deficiencies in the national control system, which may result in the diversion of those substances into illicit markets. The Board trusts that the Government will take the appropriate action to ensure that its reports are submitted in future.

285. The Board noted with appreciation that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is aware of the importance of controlling chemicals used in illicit drug manufacture in other countries and encourages the

Government to review and strengthen existing mechanisms to prevent trans-shipments from being diverted for illicit use.

North America

Major developments

286. Following the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001, the amount of drugs seized at airports and border crossings in both Canada and the United States decreased considerably, possibly owing to the fact that drug traffickers feared detection because of enhanced border controls. That resulted in reduced availability of cocaine and heroin on illicit markets, which has generally led to increased prices.

287. The abuse of cannabis and cocaine has significantly increased in Mexico over the past few years. The abuse of heroin, which was previously confined to certain areas of the country, has also become more widespread. The increasing drug abuse in Mexico needs to be adequately addressed, though the prevalence of drug abuse in that country remains far below that observed in Canada and the United States.

Treaty adherence

288. All States in North America are parties to the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, to the 1971 Convention and to the 1988 Convention.

Regional cooperation

289. Canada, Mexico and the United States continue to cooperate closely with each other in their efforts to address drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The Governments of those countries have also enhanced the security at their national borders, a step that will contribute to the effectiveness of drug interdiction efforts.

290. Canada, Mexico and the United States have all concluded with countries outside of North America bilateral agreements aimed at facilitating effective law enforcement action against the drug problem, in particular to suppress drug trafficking. Canada, Mexico and the United States also cooperate through CICAD.

291. In November 2001, the fourth annual Binational Drug Demand Reduction Conference was held in Mexico City in order to strengthen the cooperation of

Mexico and the United States in addressing the problem of drug abuse. As a result of the Conference, plans have been made for the establishment of electronic communications networks to improve access to the most up-to-date drug abuse prevention, treatment and survey data.

National legislation, policy and action

292. The Board notes the pre-publication of precursor control regulations in Canada in June 2002 and expects that those regulations will enter into force not later than January 2003. The regulations provide for controls on the import, export, production and distribution of precursors, yet avoid introducing undue restrictions on their legitimate needs. The Board calls on the Government of Canada to accelerate the enforcement of the regulations since, in the absence of such control regulations, trafficking in some precursors from Canada has assumed significant proportions. A sound legislative base and strengthened cooperation between both regulatory and law enforcement authorities involved in precursor control at the national level are essential if the problem of trafficking in precursors is to be effectively addressed.

293. The Board notes that the Government of Canada has taken action to bring under national control all substances listed in the 1971 Convention. The Board hopes that the Government will ensure that, in future, scheduling decisions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs will be implemented in a timely fashion, in line with the provisions of article 2, paragraph 7, of the 1971 Convention.

294. In November 2001, the Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States approved research on the effects of smoked cannabis in human beings. The research programme will assess the safety and efficacy of using cannabis compounds as an alternative in treating certain medical conditions. The Board would like once again to express its support for sound scientific research projects on possible medical uses of cannabis and other narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

295. The Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada became operational in November 2001. The Centre collects and analyses reports of suspicious financial transactions from financial institutions and intermediaries, as well as other information, and makes disclosures to law

enforcement authorities, where appropriate. The Board welcomes the publication of three sets of regulations to combat money-laundering and terrorist financing that will enable the Government of Canada to fully enforce the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act.

296. In Mexico, intensified action against drug trafficking organizations resulted in the arrest of several persons suspected of being key drug traffickers and the dismantling of large trafficking organizations, which will have a significant impact on the flow of cocaine into North America and on drug-related corruption in Mexico. The Government of Mexico has continued its efforts to reorganize the Office of the Attorney-General in order to strengthen its capacity.

297. The Government of the United States has evaluated the extent to which the goals of the 1998 National Drug Control Strategy of the United States have been achieved. The Board notes that, while progress has been made in reducing the crime and violent consequences of drug trafficking and drug abuse, the objectives set with respect to the reduction of illicit drug demand have not been reached and encourages the Government to further investigate the reasons. The Board hopes that in future more progress will be made in reducing illicit drug demand, thereby ensuring that a sustainable reduction of illicit drug supply can also be achieved.

298. The 2002 National Drug Control Strategy of the United States has as its three national priorities the prevention of drug abuse, the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers and the suppression of illicit drug trafficking. The Government proposes to spend, over a five-year period, an additional \$1.6 billion on treating and rehabilitating drug addicts and to increase funding for drug courts (courts that deal with drug-related cases).

299. The Board notes the results of the semi-annual evaluation of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign that is being implemented in the United States in collaboration with non-governmental organizations. A study by the Government found that, while the campaign advertisements aimed at parents had a small positive impact, those targeting the youths themselves had no discernible impact. The Board appreciates the continuous evaluation of the campaign and expects that the results will be fully taken into

account by authorities in designing and executing drug abuse prevention campaigns.

300. In December 2001, a drug court opened in Vancouver, Canada, where non-violent drug abusers charged with possession of and trafficking in cocaine and heroin under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act of Canada are offered judicial supervision, multiphase treatment for their dependency and a range of other community support services as an alternative to imprisonment. Drug courts have operated for some years in the United States and preliminary findings have shown that such courts can be effective in directing non-violent drug offenders to treatment.

Cultivation, production, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

301. Cannabis remains the most common drug of abuse in Canada, Mexico and the United States and is widely available in all three countries. The hydroponic cultivation of cannabis continues to be a problem in Canada and the United States. Canadian companies continue to sell over the Internet cannabis seeds and paraphernalia for growing cannabis. A significant portion of the cannabis produced in Canada is smuggled into the United States. The seventh national survey of attitudes on substance abuse in the United States revealed that, for the first time, a higher percentage of teenagers surveyed in the United States found cannabis easier to buy than both cigarettes and beer. At the same time, the percentage of teenagers reporting having tried cannabis increased from 21 per cent to 25 per cent.

302. The Board notes that, in several states in the United States, discussions on liberalizing or legalizing cannabis continue. The Board appreciates that the Government continues to ensure that national laws in line with the international drug control treaties are enforced in all states.

303. In the United States, a study conducted by the Government found that first abuse of cannabis before age 15 is associated with a greater risk of illicit drug dependence or abuse at age 26 or older. In comparison with adults who had started abusing cannabis at age 21 or older, adults who had first abused cannabis before age 15 were six times as likely to be dependent on other illicit drugs such as cocaine and heroin. The

Board reminds Governments of the need for drug abuse prevention efforts that specifically target adolescents.

304. The Board is concerned that the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs of Canada, in a report issued in September 2002, proposed to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act by introducing a criminal exemption and regulatory scheme for the production, possession and distribution of cannabis for non-medical purposes. The Board trusts that the Government of Canada will act in accordance with its obligations under the international drug control treaties.

305. Cocaine is smuggled primarily into North America via Central America and the Caribbean, Haiti and Jamaica being used as the two main trans-shipment points for illicit consignments transported by air. In addition, Canadian trafficking groups smuggle Canadian cannabis into the United States and often return with cocaine shipments. The purity level of cocaine in the United States declined from 86 per cent in 1998 to 78 per cent in 2001, according to an analysis of samples of cocaine that had been seized from traffickers or bought from street dealers.

306. While cocaine abuse had been stable or declining in the United States for some years, the 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse showed that it has increased slightly. In Mexico, the abuse of cocaine has increased considerably over the past decade, the lifetime prevalence of cocaine abuse having increased from 1 per cent to 5.2 per cent among secondary school students. The number of cocaine abusers in Mexico has remained at a much lower level than in Canada and the United States.

307. The Government of Mexico has continued its campaign to eradicate a significant portion of the illicit opium poppy cultivation in that country. The heroin found on illicit markets in North America is primarily of Colombian origin, but Mexican and Asian heroin continues to account for an important share. Among young heroin abusers in the United States, there has been a continuation of the trend whereby fewer young heroin abusers are injecting heroin and more of them are sniffing or inhaling the substance.

308. There are indications of the illicit use of prescriptions for semi-synthetic narcotic drugs, particularly oxycodone and hydrocodone, in the United States. In chat rooms on the Internet, there are

discussions on how those substances can be purchased for non-medical use. The Board encourages relevant national authorities to introduce prescription monitoring programmes that require pharmacies to report all data on prescriptions to a state agency. Currently, only 17 states in the United States have such programmes, but those states have the lowest number of diversion problems. According to the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse of the United States, the number of persons reporting use of oxycodone for non-medical purposes at least once in their lifetime increased fourfold from 1999 to 2001 and was estimated at 957,000 in 2001.

Psychotropic substances

309. Methamphetamine continues to be manufactured in large quantities in North America. In the United States, nine large facilities used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamines were dismantled in January 2002. Trafficking in pseudoephedrine, an essential chemical for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine, continues along the United States-Canadian border. Pseudoephedrine is being diverted from companies that licitly import that chemical into Canada. In 2001, customs authorities of the United States seized more than 111 million pseudoephedrine tablets on that country's border with Canada. In June 2002, a consignment of 5 tons of pseudoephedrine was intercepted by the United States customs authorities. Methamphetamine is also smuggled into the United States out of Mexico.

310. The abuse of methamphetamine in the United States remains widespread, partly because of the erroneous belief that the drug is a "safe alternative to cocaine". The Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States has therefore launched a campaign aimed at increasing awareness of the consequences of methamphetamine abuse. In Mexico, admissions to treatment services show that the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants has been increasing in recent years.

311. The abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) in the United States continues to increase among teenagers, although the rate of increase is beginning to decline. The abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) first began to rise sharply in 1999. The number of persons reporting that they had ever tried MDMA (Ecstasy) rose from 6.5 million in 2000 to 8.1 million in 2001, an increase of 24 per cent. The

number of MDMA (Ecstasy) tablets seized in Canada totalled over 1.8 million in 2001 and over 2 million in 2000, a fivefold increase from 1999. Although the bulk of the MDMA (Ecstasy) is smuggled into the region out of Western Europe, the substance is also manufactured in clandestine laboratories in Canada and the United States.

312. In the United States, law enforcement authorities are concerned about the increasing number of children who are exposed to illicit drug activities in their homes and who suffer through the neglect of parents, guardians or others who engage in activities involving illicit drugs. Children are exposed to toxic chemicals in clandestine laboratories used to manufacture methamphetamine. In 2001, 2,028 children were found at seized methamphetamine laboratory sites in the United States, more than double the number found at such sites in 1999.

313. Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the number of new prescriptions for benzodiazepines in the United States increased by 11 per cent between September and October 2001. The number of such prescriptions rose by 23 per cent in New York and by 14 per cent in Washington, D.C.

Other substances

314. The amount of khat seized in the United States more than doubled from 1996 to 2001: 17.6 tons were seized in 1996 and 37.2 tons were seized in 2001. The abuse of khat appears to be limited to East African communities in the United States.

315. Health Canada issued a stop order for all products containing kava, a herb grown in Pacific Island States, after a safety assessment concluded that there was insufficient evidence supporting its safe use. Kava is found in herbal or homeopathic preparations and has been reported to be used as a treatment for anxiety, insomnia and similar conditions.

South America

Major developments

316. The drug problem in South America, particularly in the countries in the Andean subregion, is increasingly being linked to political issues and national security issues. In Colombia, guerrilla and

paramilitary groups not only provide protection to drug traffickers for a fee, but also control drug trafficking and laboratories for illicit drug manufacture in many parts of the country; in addition, the groups are exchanging illicit drugs for firearms. In Peru, the Government is concerned that insurgency groups that had been disbanded may be regrouping and liaising with drug traffickers in a similar fashion. Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela are concerned that Colombian insurgency groups may be entering their territories, bringing with them their drug trafficking activities.

317. Efforts by Governments of countries in South America to combat such groups are being combined with the efforts of other members of the international community, led by the Government of the United States, in the global war against terrorism; that has had a marked effect on the level and nature of the assistance that countries receive for combating the illicit drug trade. Although alternative development and drug abuse prevention and treatment are still important parts of national drug control strategies in South America, the emphasis in some countries in the region is on law enforcement and suppression, in which military forces have come to play a key role.

318. Plan Colombia, with the support of the United States, continues to be the single most significant effort aimed at reducing the illicit drug supply in South America. Action taken within the framework of Plan Colombia has been coordinated with similar action taken in other countries in the region. The Andean initiative covers Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and Venezuela. The United States provides to countries in South America not only significant financial assistance, but also assistance in kind, such as training and equipment.

Treaty adherence

319. The Board welcomes the accession of Guyana to the 1961 Convention in July 2002. All States in South America are now parties to the 1961 Convention, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention.

Regional cooperation

320. CICAD continues to be the main body for regional cooperation among countries in South America, although there has also been significant cooperation among members of the Andean Community. There continues to be bilateral

cooperation between countries in South America and countries in Central America and the Caribbean and in North America. The United States remains the most important bilateral partner, contributing financial, technical and human resources to drug control efforts in South America.

321. The Board appreciates that the countries in the Andean subregion have cooperated in strengthening institutions in their national drug control systems, for example by planning subregional seminars. They have agreed to establish a mechanism for cooperation in the control of trade in chemical substances and for coordinated operations involving the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) and national law enforcement and customs authorities aimed at the detection of chemical substances.

322. Bilateral cooperation involving Colombia and other countries in combating illicit drug activities has been of particular importance, especially cooperation with Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela in the area of border control and with Ecuador in the area of illicit crop eradication. A high-level security and judicial cooperation mechanism was agreed upon by Colombia and Peru in order to strengthen efforts to combat drug trafficking, terrorism and firearms trafficking. There has been close bilateral cooperation among several countries in the region involving judicial matters, including extradition.

323. The Board notes with satisfaction the establishment in Buenos Aires of a secretariat for the Financial Action Task Force of South America against Money Laundering (GAFISUD). The secretariat will act as coordinator and organizer of training in countering money-laundering in the region. The Board also notes the continued implementation by GAFISUD of its mutual evaluation programme, which has contributed to the identification of ways to strengthen efforts to counter money-laundering.

National legislation, policy and action

324. Venezuela has created a drug task force to carry out criminal investigations and gather and analyse intelligence, with a view to enhancing its law enforcement efforts against drug trafficking. The Board encourages the Government of Venezuela to adopt and implement the Organized Crime Bill and the amendments to the national narcotic and psychotropic drug law in order to conduct interdiction operations,

combat money-laundering and control precursor chemicals in a more effective manner.

325. In Paraguay, a new law enforcement unit was created in 2001 for the interdiction of cocaine trafficking in the Chaco area, in the western part of the country. The Board encourages the Government of Paraguay to finalize the adoption of and implement reform concerning the drug control law that will improve the ability of competent authorities to investigate and prosecute drug traffickers.

326. Ecuador is revising its national drug control law in order to resolve some shortcomings regarding the control of precursor chemicals and the prosecution of drug trafficking cases. The Government of Ecuador has increased financial and human resources for drug law enforcement and has obtained foreign assistance for the improvement of border and customs controls.

327. The Board notes with satisfaction that, in August 2002, the Government of Colombia issued a decree on the development of a new law to replace the 1996 law on the confiscation of assets, which has not yielded the expected results.

328. During 2001 and the first half of 2002, Colombia took important steps in the development of its policy for the reduction of illicit drug demand. The steps include the formal establishment of a State programme addressing drug abuse; the issue of a resolution by the Ministry of Health for the regulation of centres for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers, with a view to improving the quality of the technical, scientific and administrative work of those centres; and the creation of a system for the evaluation of drug abuse treatment centres. The Board urges the Government of Colombia to update its 1996 general evaluation of the drug abuse situation in the country.

329. Aerial fumigation continues to be used for the eradication of mainly large-scale illicit cultivation of coca bush and opium poppy. In its report for 2001,⁴⁸ the Board expressed its hope that the Government of Colombia would make an adequate and balanced assessment of the environmental and health impact of aerial fumigation. The Government of Colombia studied the issue and concluded that neither the herbicide used nor the way in which it is applied poses serious risks to the environment or human beings. The Government stated that the aerial eradication programme is one of the pillars of its national drug

control programme and that the eradication programme will be extended and strengthened in the coming year. In order to deal with the environmental impact of illicit crops on protected areas, Colombia is implementing its environmental management plan for illicit crop eradication and is seeking to strengthen the Ministry of the Environment. The Board is looking forward to the evaluation of the national alternative development plan (PLANTE) of Colombia.

330. The Board notes the motion in the Peruvian congress to ask the Government to support the idea of changing the status of coca leaf in the 1961 Convention. The Board is of the view that any action that might be taken should take into consideration the strict control required over the production of coca leaf, as coca leaf is the raw material used for the manufacture of cocaine.

331. The Board welcomes the measures that have already been taken by the Government of Chile since the Board sent a mission to that country in June 2001; those measures have been taken in order to strengthen mechanisms for precursor control in Chile with a view to preventing diversion and facilitating the detection and prosecution of cases involving the diversion of precursors. Chile has established a schedule for the development and establishment of a new system for identifying the legitimate needs of the national industry for precursor chemicals and for the establishment of a licensing system for the import and export of precursor chemicals and for their domestic manufacture and distribution. The Board urges the Government to continue working on the development of its new system for precursor control. The adequate control of precursor chemicals in Chile is vital to efforts to prevent the diversion or smuggling of such chemicals to be used for illicit drug manufacture. The Board encourages the member States of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) to continue to be on the alert for cases involving misuse of the free trade system by traffickers of drugs and precursor chemicals.

332. The Board notes with satisfaction that, in Chile, nearly 200 centres for drug abuse treatment have been established and/or strengthened and drug abuse prevention programmes for schools have been implemented throughout the country.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

333. Colombia continues to be the main source of illicit drugs, in particular cocaine and heroin, smuggled into North America and is also the source of cocaine smuggled into Europe. Drug trafficking organizations pose a significant threat to public order in most countries in which they are based, particularly in the countries of the Andean subregion and in Brazil, while drug abuse appears to be increasing throughout South America.

334. The cultivation and abuse of cannabis continue to be widespread in South America. The cannabis produced in South America is mainly destined for local or regional markets. Cannabis remains the most widely abused illicit drug in the region. Cannabis is also produced in Colombia to be smuggled into the United States. All the countries in South America have reported cannabis seizures; together, they account for approximately 8 per cent of global seizures of cannabis herb. Of all the seizures of cannabis in South American countries Brazil accounted for one half and Colombia for approximately one fourth. Those two countries were followed by Paraguay, Argentina, Ecuador and Venezuela, which also ranked among the top 20 countries in the world in terms of seizures of cannabis herb. Paraguay has experienced a significant increase in the illicit cultivation and abuse of cannabis, as well as in the smuggling of cannabis into other countries.

335. Government efforts to eradicate illicit coca bush cultivation in Bolivia and Peru were highly successful until 2000; since then, however, there have been mixed results. On the one hand, in both countries, those efforts have met with opposition from small farmers growing coca bush; thus, the rate of eradication has slowed and the areas under coca bush cultivation have increased slightly in Bolivia and barely decreased in Peru. On the other hand, voluntary eradication has continued (over 9,000 hectares of coca bush were eradicated in the Chapare area in Bolivia in the first six months of 2001 and over 6,000 hectares of coca bush were eradicated in Peru in 2001) and alternative development programmes continue to be implemented. Prices for coca leaf remained high during 2001 and 2002 and, for small farmers growing coca bush, were

an added incentive to replant. Illegal coca markets have remained active in the Andean subregion.

336. According to the Integrated System for Illicit Crop Monitoring (SIMCI) of Colombia, in 2001, Colombia witnessed, for the first time in many years, a decrease in the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation (from 163,000 hectares in 2000 to 144,000 hectares in 2001), the result of a combination of factors such as the aerial fumigation programme, voluntary manual eradication and higher farm-gate prices for several licit crop products. That is a significant achievement for Colombia, where most of the world's coca leaf is illicitly produced and most of the world's cocaine is manufactured. Experience has shown, however, that eradicating coca bush cultivation in one country may result in it emerging, reoccurring or increasing in other countries. Bolivia and Peru are countries in which such a development is a matter of particular concern. Small-scale coca bush cultivation has been detected in Ecuador and Venezuela.

337. Cocaine is manufactured in Colombia from coca paste produced locally and from coca leaf and coca paste smuggled out of Bolivia and Peru. Drug traffickers have based their activities in areas of Colombia controlled by insurgency groups, in particular in the southern part of the country, along its border with Ecuador and Peru, and in the north-eastern part of Colombia, along its border with Venezuela. Despite difficulties in accessing those areas, law enforcement authorities in Colombia have continued to intensify their efforts against illicit drug manufacture and trafficking, as evidenced by the seizure of over 1,500 illicit drug laboratories and the destruction of 55 clandestine runways in the country in 2001.

338. The eradication of coca bush and seizures of cocaine laboratories in Ecuador and Venezuela in 2001 indicate that illicit drug manufacture and trade in Colombia spread to neighbouring countries. Brazil and Venezuela are used as major trans-shipment areas for consignments of illicit drugs originating in Colombia and destined for the United States and countries in Europe. Illicit drug consignments are hidden mostly in container shipments. It appears that individual carriers ("mules") are used more frequently to transport illicit drug consignments to Europe than to the United States. Brazil and Venezuela are also the source of significant quantities of precursor chemicals diverted to Colombia.

Ecuador is the main transit country used for smuggling drugs across the Pacific.

339. Countries bordering Bolivia and Peru are also affected significantly by the cocaine trade. Argentina and Chile continue to be vulnerable to the cocaine transit traffic and the diversion or smuggling of precursor chemicals; a number of cocaine laboratories were seized in those two countries in 2000 and 2001. In Argentina, more than 90 tons of coca leaf and 350,000 litres of precursor chemicals were seized in 2001. The cocaine transit traffic in Paraguay appears to have increased. In Uruguay, the authorities have expressed concern that that country may be included in new routes for smuggling cocaine as a result of increased interdiction efforts in the Andes related to Plan Colombia.

340. Most of the cocaine manufactured in Colombia is mainly transported by ship in containers, although other means of transporting Colombian cocaine, such as "go-fast" boats on the Caribbean routes and fishing boats on the Pacific routes continue to be popular. South America accounts for more than 40 per cent of all the cocaine seizures made in the world. Of the cocaine seizures made in South America, Colombia accounts for approximately 70 per cent and Peru and Venezuela each accounts for approximately 8 per cent. Those three countries were followed by Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Argentina and Chile, which also ranked among the top 20 countries in the world in terms of cocaine seizures.

341. The abuse of cocaine and its derivatives remains a problem in transit countries in South America, above all in Argentina, Brazil and Chile. In view of the significant manufacture of cocaine in Colombia, the Board welcomes the recently conducted national survey of psychoactive substance abuse among youth, which provided some up-to-date information for the evaluation of drug abuse in that country, thus contributing to the formulation of measures to reduce illicit drug demand. Brazil continues to promote demand reduction programmes, including in the area of drug abuse prevention, in border areas affected by drug trafficking.

342. The total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in Colombia is larger than that of any other country outside of Asia. Intensified efforts to eradicate illicit opium poppy cultivation in that country contributed to a significant decrease in the total area

under such cultivation in 2001. Illicit opium poppy cultivation in Peru seems to be increasing, although it has not been possible to make a more precise assessment of the total area under such cultivation. The Board therefore welcomes the fact that the Government of Peru has started to map the areas under illicit opium poppy cultivation in order to be in a better position to assess the problem and respond to it adequately. Illicit opium poppy cultivation has begun in Venezuela on a small scale. It should be noted that illicit opium poppy cultivation also began on a small scale in Colombia in the early 1990s and it appears to have spread to other countries in the region.

343. The heroin manufactured in Colombia is mainly smuggled into the United States using individual carriers (“mules”), although there is increased heroin trafficking by sea along the same routes used for cocaine trafficking. According to the Government of the United States, approximately 60 per cent of the heroin seized in the United States has been of Colombian origin. Heroin seizures have increased continuously in the last few years in Colombia, having risen sharply from 80 kg in 1996 to over 790 kg in 2001. In Ecuador, heroin seizures also increased, from 53 kg in 1997 to more than 250 kg in 2001. Although heroin seizures in other countries in South America have fluctuated in recent years, heroin seizures in the region as a whole have increased.

344. Colombia has been the main destination of precursor chemicals smuggled into South America or diverted from licit international trade for the purpose of manufacturing illicit drugs. With the help of Operation Purple, Colombian authorities, in close cooperation with their counterparts at the national and international levels, have prevented the smuggling and diversion of potassium permanganate. Samples of cocaine seized in the United States and other countries show lower levels of cocaine oxidation than when Operation Purple started. There is increasing evidence that drug traffickers in Colombia are also manufacturing their own potassium permanganate. During 2001, Colombian authorities seized increasing quantities of precursors, in addition to 10 clandestine laboratories, used for the illicit manufacture of potassium permanganate. Seizures of acetic anhydride, used for the manufacture of heroin, also increased in 2001 as a result of the implementation of Operation Topaz. Drug traffickers in Colombia are also recycling

more of the precursor chemicals used in illicit drug manufacture.

345. The Board encourages countries in South America to pay continued attention to areas that offer drug traffickers opportunities to divert all types of precursor chemicals—that is, not only international trade in potassium permanganate and acetic anhydride, but also the controls over other chemicals (such as solvents) that may be used for illicit drug manufacture.

Psychotropic substances

346. In South America, seizures of methamphetamine and hallucinogens, including MDMA (Ecstasy), were reported in Brazil, Colombia, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela. Suriname continues to be used as a gateway for smuggling European MDMA (Ecstasy), mainly originating in the Netherlands, into South America and onwards to North America, mostly by air, using individual carriers (“mules”). In Colombia, a large MDMA (Ecstasy) laboratory was seized in 1999 and another was seized in May 2002, indicating that illicit drug manufacturers and traffickers in that country are diversifying their operations.

Missions

347. The Board reviewed the follow-up made by the Government of Brazil to recommendations of the Board pursuant to its mission to that country in 1999. The Board had repeatedly expressed its concerns about the problems of drug control in Brazil and of the Government’s reporting to the Board in line with the international drug control conventions.

348. The Board acknowledges Brazil’s efforts to carry out various actions to address drug trafficking and abuse and to comply fully with the provisions of the international drug control treaties. A number of legislative changes have recently come into effect to improve controls over narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors. In December 2001, a national anti-drug policy was adopted and a national drug information observatory was to be established during 2002. A survey of the prevalence of drug abuse in 107 major cities in Brazil was completed in 2002.

349. The Board notes the active participation of the Government of Brazil in regional law enforcement programmes against trafficking in drugs and precursors. The Board welcomes improvements in the

Government's submission of data on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, which were received in 2002 in a timely manner. The Board trusts that the Government will continue efforts to coordinate its various drug control activities.

350. The Board sent a mission to Guyana in July 2002. In the same month, Guyana acceded to the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol, thus becoming a party to each of the three international drug control treaties. The Board welcomes the accession of Guyana to the 1961 Convention in its amended form, as that move will further enhance the control over narcotic drugs and help to ensure that those substances are not diverted into illicit channels.

351. Guyana has adopted comprehensive drug control legislation and has developed a national drug control policy. The Board encourages the Government to strengthen the National Anti-Narcotic Commission in order to enable it to carry out its functions of coordination, monitoring and review. While Guyana has systems in place for the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the Board invites the Government to further develop its control system for chemicals, in order to prevent the country from being used for the diversion of precursors for illicit drug manufacture.

352. A mission of the Board visited Suriname in July 2002 as follow-up to its mission to that country in 1998. While the nature and extent of drug abuse in that country have not yet been assessed, it appears that cannabis cultivation and abuse, in addition to the abuse of crack cocaine, are widespread.

353. Drug trafficking routes that lead from Colombia and Venezuela through Suriname appear to have gained in importance. The Board encourages the Government of Suriname to further streamline coordination and information-sharing among its national government agencies and the authorities of the countries along the drug trafficking routes. High priority should be given to securing adequate resources for the National Anti-Drug Council of Suriname and the national agencies involved in drug control. More cooperation is required with the authorities of the countries into which the drugs are being smuggled.

354. The Board trusts that the revised National Anti-Drug Strategy will be finalized and adopted without delay and that Suriname will soon have the legislation

and mechanisms necessary to counter money-laundering and to prevent the diversion of chemicals.

C. Asia

East and South-East Asia

Major developments

355. As a result of intensive law enforcement action and continuing efforts in alternative development and illicit crop eradication, illicit opium production in East and South-East Asia has decreased further. In particular, illicit opium poppy cultivation and illicit opium production in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar have followed the downward trend of the previous five years. In Myanmar, it was reported that, in 2002, eradication efforts alone reduced by about 7 per cent the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation, thus contributing significantly to the general decline in such cultivation in that country. Also, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation decreased from 2001 to 2002. Thailand, with its continuing highland development programmes and sustained measures against illicit opium poppy cultivation, is no longer a major source of opium and heroin. Viet Nam has also significantly reduced its illicit opium poppy cultivation in the past decade; in that country, the level of such cultivation has become insignificant.

356. Because opium poppy cultivation has resumed at a relatively high level in Afghanistan, Myanmar has again become the second largest producer of illicit opium in the world, its opium production levels having decreased by some 50 per cent since 1996. In general seizures of opiates have been stable or declining in countries in South-East Asia, the exception being China, where increased seizures reflect both a growing drug abuse problem and intensified law enforcement efforts.

357. The increasing illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants, particularly methamphetamine, in East and South-East Asia are a major concern. Many countries in the region have reported a significant increase in the abuse of methamphetamine in recent years. In Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand, amphetamines (above all, methamphetamine) are the