

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

main problem drugs. In Thailand, the abuse of opiates continues to follow a downward trend, in sharp contrast with the situation regarding the abuse of methamphetamine in that country. Japan has been facing the third wave of stimulant abuse since the Second World War.

358. Law enforcement efforts have resulted in significant seizures of amphetamines in East and South-East Asia. It is estimated that over 70 per cent of all the seizures of amphetamines made in the world took place in countries in East and South-East Asia, mainly China and Thailand. In recent years, most of the world manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants, with the exception of MDMA (Ecstasy), has taken place in the region. In particular, the manufacture of methamphetamine tablets poses a growing threat to other regions. That is evidenced by the fact that seizures and abuse of methamphetamine have been increasing in European countries and in the United States.

359. The incidence of HIV infection among injecting drug abusers continues to be very high in the region—over 70 per cent in some countries.

Treaty adherence

360. Of the 16 States in East and South-East Asia, only 11 are parties to all three of the international drug control treaties. The Board is concerned that Cambodia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have not yet become parties to any of the international drug control treaties. The Board encourages Cambodia, which has completed the preparatory work for its ratification of the treaties, to ratify the treaties without further delay. The Board welcomes information from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea indicating that the authorities of that State consider favourably its accession to the international drug control treaties; the Board urges the Government to take concrete steps in that direction. The Board encourages the newly independent State of Timor-Leste to become a party to the international drug control treaties as soon as possible.

361. The Board welcomes the accession of Thailand to the 1988 Convention in May 2002. The Lao People's Democratic Republic and Mongolia have not yet acceded to the 1988 Convention.

362. The Board also calls on the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar to become parties

to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention without delay.

Regional cooperation

363. A cooperative response to the drug problem continues to be a priority for the signatories to the 1993 memorandum of understanding on drug control between the countries in the Mekong⁴⁹ area (Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam) and UNDCP. The annual meeting of senior officials held in Beijing in May 2002 assessed progress in drug control cooperation under the memorandum of understanding and agreed on measures to counter the spread of HIV/AIDS infection among drug abusers in East and South-East Asia.

364. Activities within the framework of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) also play a major role in drug control efforts in the region. The first meeting of the task forces of the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD) Plan of Action was held in Bali, Indonesia, in November 2001.

365. A number of other efforts have been made to deal with specific drug-related problems in the region. In August 2002, representatives of Australia, China, Japan, Myanmar, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand held a forum in Zhongshan, China, focusing on cooperation in fighting trafficking in amphetamines in Asia.

366. The Board welcomes the continued bilateral efforts to combat illicit trafficking and drug abuse, including the bilateral agreement on setting up border liaison offices along the borders between Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. Such agreements are important to promoting cross-border cooperation in drug law enforcement. Several countries in the region have already exchanged drug liaison officers, including, most recently, China and Thailand.

National legislation, policy and action

367. The Board encourages the authorities of Thailand to enact the amended Narcotic Addict Rehabilitation Act to address the widespread addiction problems in the country.

368. In an attempt to deter trafficking in methamphetamine, some countries in East and South-East Asia have increased penalties for drug-related offences. In December 2001, the Senate of Thailand voted in favour of an amendment that would make a person possessing 15 or more methamphetamine tablets a dealer and therefore subject to harsher penalties. In the Philippines, harsher penalties for trafficking in methamphetamine were introduced in June 2002.

369. The Board is concerned that three countries in the region—Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines—continue to be on the list of countries and territories that the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering considers uncooperative in efforts to counter money-laundering, though the Financial Action Task Force has acknowledged that progress has been made in those countries. Laws against money-laundering were enacted in Indonesia in April 2002 and in Myanmar in June 2002. The law against money-laundering enacted in Indonesia includes harsh penalties for those convicted of money-laundering, reporting obligations for financial institutions and the establishment of a financial investigative office. In the Philippines, the Rules and Regulations Implementing the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001 went into effect in April 2002. The Board encourages Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines to implement the new legislation against money-laundering without delay.

370. In Japan, crimes involving stimulants account for 90 per cent of all drug-related crimes. In order to deal with that and other drug-related problems, the authorities in that country have been implementing the Five-Year Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy, covering the period 1998-2000. The Board would appreciate it if the experiences gained by the implementation of the Strategy could be shared with other interested Governments, as well as with the Board.

371. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is successfully implementing its five-year plan for elimination of illicit opium poppy cultivation by 2005. As a result of alternative development and law enforcement efforts, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in that country was reduced between 2001 and 2002. The Board welcomes those developments and encourages the Government to continue its efforts and further strengthen its alternative development programme.

372. The treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers have received increased attention from Governments of countries in the region. For example, the Government of Myanmar has opened 42 additional drug abuse treatment centres at public hospitals across the country, as part of its 15-year drug control plan. The treatment centres will also contribute to the prevention of drug-related diseases such as AIDS.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

373. There is limited information available on the situation with regard to cannabis production, trafficking and abuse in East and South-East Asia. However, reports suggest that abuse of cannabis continues to be widespread, especially in those countries in the region in which it is illicitly cultivated. Cambodia remains a major supplier of cannabis to countries in the region and in other parts of the world. Cannabis is cultivated not only in Cambodia, but also, on a smaller scale, on the islands of Java and Sumatra in Indonesia, in the southern part of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, in the Philippines and in the north-eastern part of Thailand.

374. In 2002, as in previous years, illicit opium poppy cultivation continued to decrease in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation is larger than in any other country in the region except Myanmar. The total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic is approximately 20 per cent of the total area under such cultivation in Myanmar. In Thailand and Viet Nam, opium poppy cultivation still occurs but to a limited extent, having declined significantly during the last decade.

375. Despite the significant decline in illicit opium poppy cultivation in East and South-East Asia, the region remains the second largest source of opium and heroin in the world. Significant amounts of heroin manufactured in the border areas of Myanmar continue to be transported through Thailand; however, China has become the main destination and transit area for heroin consignments, as evidenced by the significant increase in seizures of heroin in China during the past five years. Large amounts of heroin are also smuggled through China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic,

Cambodia and Viet Nam. Heroin traffickers in the region have been quick to take advantage of improved transport facilities. Australia continues to be one of the main countries of destination for heroin originating in South-East Asia. It is believed that chemicals necessary for the conversion of morphine into heroin, especially acetic anhydride, continue to be smuggled into Myanmar out of neighbouring countries, above all, China and India.

376. The geographical proximity of countries in the region to the producing areas in the Golden Triangle has facilitated the widespread abuse of opiates. The abuse of opium has continued to decline in the region. Among the officially registered drug addicts in Myanmar, the number of heroin addicts has surpassed the number of opium addicts. In Shan State in Myanmar, however, 2.4 per cent of the population aged 15 and above smoke opium daily. Estimates for the Lao People's Democratic Republic are similar. There continue to be significant differences between countries in the region with regard to trends in heroin abuse. While the number of new heroin addicts in Thailand has declined, China, Myanmar and Viet Nam have experienced an increase in the number of heroin addicts. The number of heroin addicts in the Lao People's Democratic Republic continues to be low compared with the number in the other countries in the region.

377. One worrying trend is the accelerating spread of HIV/AIDS infection along drug trafficking routes in the region. Intravenous drug abuse has become one of the driving forces behind the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the region. According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), HIV epidemics are occurring among injecting drug addicts in some provinces in China, the prevalence rate being higher than 70 per cent in some groups of addicts. In addition, more than 50 per cent of injecting drug addicts in Myanmar and Thailand have already been infected with HIV. Surveys show a high rate of needle-sharing among drug abusers in Viet Nam, where more than 60 per cent of HIV-positive are drug abusers.

Psychotropic substances

378. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine has increased significantly in the region. There continue to be indications that manufacturers of heroin are increasingly shifting their attention to methamphetamine, particularly in Myanmar. Methamphetamine continues

to be clandestinely manufactured on a large scale along Myanmar's border with Thailand and in China and the Philippines.

379. Ephedrine, used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in the region, is diverted and smuggled out of China and India. Caffeine, which is used as an adulterant in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine tablets, is mainly smuggled into Myanmar through its border with Thailand; the substance is being trafficked in such large quantities that the authorities of Thailand have imposed regulations on its control in the northern provinces of the country.

380. Methamphetamine continues to be the main drug of concern in Japan, the Philippines and Thailand. The Ministry of Health of Thailand has estimated that 3 million people, or about 5 per cent of the population, regularly abuse methamphetamine, which would make that country the world's largest per capita consumer of the substance. In Japan, authorities have also reported an increase in the abuse of stimulants; the quantity of stimulants seized, however, has declined in recent years.

381. A sharp increase in the abuse of methamphetamine has been reported in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia and Viet Nam. In China, there has been a significant increase in arrests related to methamphetamine. In Cambodia, the abuse of amphetamines among street children has significantly increased.

382. The Board continues to be concerned by the increasing abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) in the region, particularly among youth. The growing illicit demand for the substance is reflected in record seizures of MDMA (Ecstasy) tablets in China and Thailand. The illicit market for the substance is reported to be particularly large in Indonesia, where a clandestine laboratory manufacturing the substance was seized in May 2002. Although the illicit manufacture of MDMA (Ecstasy) in East and South-East Asia is reported to be increasing, it is believed that most of the MDMA (Ecstasy) seized in the region continues to originate in Western Europe.

Missions

383. A mission of the Board visited China in September 2002. The Board notes with satisfaction the consistent efforts of China to implement its obligations

under the international drug control treaties. In 2001, authorities in China uncovered more than 110,000 cases involving drug-related crime and seized 13.2 tons of heroin, 4.8 tons of methamphetamine and over 200 tons of precursors. The Government of China has made drug control one of its basic national policies and has incorporated it into its economic and social development programme. China's cooperation with the Board has been productive. China has regularly provided high-quality data to the Board.

384. The Board particularly appreciates the range of measures and activities introduced by the Government of China to effectively monitor international trade in precursors and to check the legitimacy of transactions involving such substances. The Government has been playing an active role in Operation Purple and Operation Topaz. Concerns continue to exist with regard to the diversion of precursors from domestic manufacture and distribution and their smuggling abroad, particularly from some provinces of China. The introduction of effective controls over the domestic manufacture and movement of all substances included in Tables I and II of the 1988 Convention would address those concerns.

385. The Board trusts that the authorities of China will continue to cooperate with it in finding the best ways and means of ensuring the application of the provisions of the international drug control treaties throughout the country.

386. In June 2002, the Board sent a mission to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to review the situation with regard to the Government's compliance with the international drug control treaties. The population of the country has been largely spared the problems of drug trafficking and abuse. Concerned about reports in recent years that the territory of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea may have been used for smuggling amphetamine-type stimulants into other countries, the authorities have expressed their willingness to cooperate at the regional and international levels in order to address drug control issues in a concerted manner.

387. The Board notes that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea attaches considerable importance to the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The national drug control legislation and policy coincide with the aims of the international drug control treaties and the existing

regulations appear to have been adequate. The Board welcomes the initiative of the Government to prepare a new consolidated law with a view to bringing its national legislation fully in line with the international drug control treaties, particularly the 1988 Convention.

388. The Board acknowledges the improvement of its cooperation with the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and trusts that the Government will continue to make efforts to fulfil its reporting obligations under the international drug control treaties. The Board notes the willingness of the Government to ratify the international drug control treaties.

389. In May 2002, the Board reviewed action taken by Japan pursuant to recommendations made by the Board after its mission to that country in June 1999. The authorities in Japan continue to apply strictly the provisions of the international drug control treaties. The provisions continue to be incorporated into several different laws and decrees.

390. The authorities of Japan have begun providing to the Board in a timely fashion all the reports required by the international drug control treaties. The reports show that controls over licit manufacture and trade are comprehensive and efficient. The Five-Year Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy, covering the period 1998-2002, is a comprehensive list of all activities related to drug control in the country. The Board encourages the Government of Japan to evaluate carefully the impact of the Strategy on the drug abuse situation and to share with other Governments its experiences, including its experiences in the treatment of stimulant abusers. The quantity of stimulants seized has decreased in recent years, after having peaked in 1999. The number of cases involving stimulant-related offences and the number of stimulant-related arrests have remained approximately the same. The authorities have intensified their efforts to combat the third wave of stimulant abuse in Japan, which started in the 1990s.

South Asia

Major developments

391. The subject of terrorism has come to the forefront of discussions in national and regional forums dealing with drug control issues. For example, the eleventh summit of the South Asian Association for Regional

Cooperation (SAARC), held in Kathmandu, Nepal, in January 2002, acknowledged the relationship between terrorism and drug trafficking by reaffirming its commitment to strengthening the SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk and the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk.

392. The military interventions in Afghanistan and increased security measures on the border between India and Pakistan led to temporary disruptions in the smuggling of South-West Asian heroin into India. The Board calls the attention of Governments of countries in South Asia to the resurgence of illicit opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and the possibility of large stocks of opiates existing in South-West Asia. Without strict measures to reduce the illicit drug supply in Afghanistan, drug trafficking will return to its previous high levels.

393. Cannabis and opium remain the main drugs of abuse in the countries of South Asia. However, the abuse of heroin and psychoactive pharmaceutical products is also widespread. The abuse of heroin (in the form of low-quality brown heroin base known as "brown sugar") has been reported even in Maldives, a country that until recently had not experienced any tangible drug abuse problem. In all countries in South Asia, the increasing heroin abuse is, in part, the result of the spillover effect of transit trafficking in consignments of heroin from South-West Asia and, to a lesser degree, from South-East Asia, mostly destined for European countries and, to some extent, the United States.

394. Measures for the control of the domestic manufacture and distribution of pharmaceuticals containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are not always strictly adhered to. In India, a legal framework, including strict licensing procedures, control provisions and severe penal sanctions, is in place but the Board urges the Government of India to ensure the effective implementation of those controls in order to prevent the diversion and abuse of drugs.

Treaty adherence

395. Of the six States in South Asia, five are parties to the 1961 Convention, four are parties to the 1971 Convention and all six are parties to the 1988 Convention. Despite recurrent appeals by the Board, Bhutan is still not a party to the 1961 Convention or the 1971 Convention and Nepal is still not a party to

the 1971 Convention. The Board urges Bhutan and Nepal to become parties to those Conventions without further delay.

Regional cooperation

396. The Meeting of the SAARC Legal Advisors held in Colombo in May 2002 recommended several measures to ensure effective implementation of the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, including the strengthening of the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk and the enacting of harmonized domestic legislation to give effect to that Convention. The newly established Technical Committee on Social Development will be in charge of issues relating to the prevention of drug abuse and the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

397. Since large quantities of precursor chemicals are manufactured and traded in South Asia, the Board welcomes the ongoing regional activities related to precursor control in SAARC member States aimed at strengthening control mechanisms and law enforcement capacities in order to prevent the diversion of chemicals for use in illicit drug manufacture.

398. India has entered into bilateral agreements on drug control matters with 15 States. A mutual legal assistance treaty was signed by India and the United States in October 2001. Cooperation between India and Myanmar includes holding, on a regular basis, meetings at the working level on the border or meetings at the policy level in New Delhi or Yangon. India and Sri Lanka continue to hold operational-level talks in order to coordinate efforts against drug trafficking. The Board appreciates that border coordination meetings between India and Pakistan, addressing security issues, including drug trafficking, have continued to be held.

National legislation, policy and action

399. The Government of India introduced in October 2001 significant amendments to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, in order to make it more effective. Those amendments include provisions relating to bail and provisions for the establishment as a criminal offence of the laundering of the proceeds of drug trafficking, for the rationalization of the sentence structure, for the

investigation of diversions of precursor chemicals and for controlled delivery operations.

400. In India, draft legislation to criminalize money-laundering has been finalized; the draft legislation would impose reporting requirements on financial institutions and intermediaries and would provide for the seizure and confiscation of assets related to the proceeds of crime. While India is not a major financial centre, money-laundering activities are organized in the informal banking system known as *hawala*. Large sums of money can be transferred from one country to another through that system.

401. The Board notes with concern that Nepal has not proceeded with legislative action against money-laundering and promoting mutual legal assistance and the protection of witnesses. The Government of Nepal has also not submitted scheduled amendments to its customs act to control chemicals, and legislation on the seizure of assets or against criminal conspiracy has not yet been drafted. The Board urges the Government of Nepal to proceed with those legislative actions without further delay.

402. In Maldives, a rapid assessment survey that has almost been completed will facilitate the development of the national drug control master plan. The Board encourages the authorities of Maldives to enhance their drug control activities.

403. In India, a national survey on extent, patterns and trends of drug abuse has been carried out that includes a rapid assessment survey and a national household survey, and a drug abuse monitoring system that utilizes information from treatment centres is being established. Programmes for the reduction of illicit drug demand are carried out in most states in India, as well as in Sri Lanka, and should be strengthened in view of the rising levels of drug abuse in those countries.

404. In Sri Lanka, the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board has continued its nationwide drug abuse education campaign, seminars for judicial officers, training courses for police officers, seminars for students, teachers and parents aimed at raising their awareness of the dangers of drug abuse, training programmes on drug abuse prevention and drug abuse treatment programmes at residential treatment centres. Prison diversion programmes for non-violent addicts are also being introduced in some prisons in Sri Lanka.

405. In Nepal, despite the enhancement of law enforcement capacity and expertise, customs and border control still remains weak, particularly along that country's border with India. The Board notes with appreciation the efforts of the Narcotics Drug Control Law Enforcement Unit to cooperate with their counterparts in countries in South Asia and in other regions in an effort to identify and arrest drug traffickers both in Nepal and in other countries.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

406. Cannabis is illicitly cultivated and abused in all countries in South Asia. Recently, Bhutan, a country that had never reported any drug abuse problems, has voiced concern about the cultivation and abuse of cannabis, particularly by the younger members of the population. Until recently, there was no abuse of cannabis in Bhutan, even though cannabis grows wild in abundance in remote areas of the country. The authorities of Bhutan are eradicating as many cannabis plants as possible and providing counselling to drug abusers.

407. Cannabis cultivation for the production of cannabis resin and herb and cannabis abuse are widespread in India and Nepal. Seizures in 2002 indicate that large amounts of cannabis are transported from Jammu and Kashmir to Gujarat and Mumbai. The cannabis produced in India, as well as the cannabis smuggled out of Nepal and into India is mostly for domestic abuse. In Nepal, the illicit cultivation of cannabis varieties that are more potent than those which grow wild is rising, particularly in lowland areas.

408. In Sri Lanka, cannabis is mostly abused in the southern and eastern parts of the country. In Bangladesh, cannabis is also a traditional drug of abuse. In Bangladesh, apart from some low-quality cannabis from domestic illicit cultivation, cannabis from India and Nepal is smuggled into the country. Cannabis eradication campaigns are carried out in all countries in South Asia where cannabis is illicitly cultivated. The most common drug abused in Maldives continues to be cannabis, which is smuggled out of other countries in the region; however, the abuse of other drugs is spreading.

409. In India, various agencies involved in drug control work, particularly the Central Bureau of Narcotics and the Narcotics Control Bureau, continue to take steps to curb drug trafficking and abuse in the country. While the Central Bureau of Narcotics oversees the licit opium production programme and the chemical industry of India, the Narcotics Control Bureau is responsible for efforts to counter drug trafficking and for drug law enforcement coordination.

410. Controls over the licit production of opiates in India were enhanced by improving surveys during the growing season and by increasing vigilance during the period in which the poppy capsules are lanced. In addition, the joint licit opium poppy survey agreed to by India and the United States will provide a firmer scientific basis for minimum qualifying yields for farmers in India. The Central Bureau of Narcotics of India continues to tighten controls to curtail the diversion of licitly produced opium. Illicit opium poppy cultivation occurs in India in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and, above all, Arunachal Pradesh, in the north-eastern part of the country. Most of the opium that is illicitly cultivated in India is used to meet the needs of local addicts.

411. India systematically is combating illicit opium poppy cultivation by combining remote sensing information with annual eradication efforts, as well as crop substitution programmes. The authorities in India are also considering the feasibility of increasingly using an aerial or satellite-based system to monitor licit and illicit opium poppy cultivation nationwide.

412. Some quantities of illicitly produced opium, as well as licitly produced opium that has been diverted, is processed into heroin in illicit laboratories in India. Those laboratories generally manufacture low-quality brown heroin base (known as "brown sugar"), but seizure and intelligence reports indicate that some heroin hydrochloride (known as "white heroin") is also manufactured. Seizures during the first half of 2002 indicate the continuation of trafficking in heroin illicitly manufactured in India.

413. Part of the heroin manufactured in India is for domestic abuse: persons addicted to opiates are shifting their drug of choice from opium to heroin, mostly the brown variety. Another part of the heroin manufactured in India is smuggled into neighbouring countries, such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, or into countries in other regions, although the quantity of

heroin involved is small compared with the quantities smuggled out of Afghanistan and Myanmar. India is also used as a transit country, mostly for heroin consignments from Afghanistan that are transported through India's border with Pakistan and, to a limited extent, for heroin consignments from Myanmar. It appears that most heroin consignments transported through India are destined for countries in Europe and, to a smaller extent, for the United States.

414. Illicit drug consignments continued to be smuggled by sea, mainly on small vessels, between the southern coast of India, especially the southern part of the Coromandel Coast, and the western coast of Sri Lanka. Colombo continues to be used as a trans-shipment point for illicit drug consignments that pass through India on their way to other countries. In Sri Lanka, the conflict with the Tamil Tigers has absorbed law enforcement and military capacities and has prevented more adequate patrolling of the country's 1,100 miles of coastline. In Sri Lanka, the trans-shipment of narcotic drugs from South Asia has increased. Sri Lanka has a comparatively modest drug abuse problem, but there continues to be slight but steady increases in the abuse of narcotic drugs, particularly heroin.

415. There may be some small-scale cultivation of opium poppy in Bangladesh and Nepal, but almost all of the heroin seized in those two countries originated in South-East or South-West Asia. Both countries are used by drug traffickers as transit countries. In both countries, as well as in Maldives and Sri Lanka, the locally abused heroin is of the brown variety. International drug traffickers may be using coastal areas of Bangladesh for trans-shipping illicit drug consignments from the Golden Triangle to larger vessels to be transported across the high seas to the west.

416. Pharmaceutical products containing narcotic drugs are abused in all countries in South Asia. In India, according to the national survey on the extent of, patterns of and trends in drug abuse, the intravenous injection of dextropropoxyphene and buprenorphine, both analgesics, has been reported in many states. Dextropropoxyphene has become the drug of choice in certain parts of India, as it costs about one tenth as much as heroin.

417. In India, codeine-based cough syrups continue to be diverted from the licit market and abused. They are also smuggled out of India and into Bangladesh and

Myanmar. In addition, large quantities of codeine-based cough syrups obtained using prescriptions in India are being brought into Bangladesh. The abuse of licit, codeine-based medicines has also been reported in Nepal. In Sri Lanka, drug abusers have been favouring, as an alternative to heroin, pharmaceutical preparations diverted from licit channels.

418. The large chemical industry in India produces a wide variety of precursors and essential chemicals, including acetic anhydride, *N*-acetylanthranilic acid, anthranilic acid and potassium permanganate, as well as ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, 1-phenyl-2-propanone and other chemicals used to manufacture amphetamine-type stimulants. The authorities of India fully control access to a number of chemicals scheduled under the 1988 Convention (such as acetic anhydride, *N*-acetylanthranilic acid, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine), control exports and imports of 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone, 1-phenyl-2-propanone, methyl ethyl ketone and potassium permanganate, and control imports only of ergometrine, ergotamine and piperonal. The authorities have agreed to consider controls on additional chemicals as soon as evidence is presented that those chemicals have been diverted from companies in India.

419. In Sri Lanka, the preparation of precursor control legislation is still at an initial stage. A voluntary code of conduct has been prepared, together with the chemical industry of Sri Lanka, in order to monitor the licit manufacture of and trade in precursors for amphetamine-type stimulants and to prevent their diversion into illicit channels. Rules and regulations on precursor control have been drafted by the Ministry of Home Affairs of Nepal, but they have yet to be finalized and adopted.

Psychotropic substances

420. Pharmaceutical preparations containing psychotropic substances are abused in all countries in South Asia. The problem is most evident in India, where the large pharmaceutical industry manufactures a wide range of preparations containing various psychotropic substances. According to the national survey on the extent of, patterns of and trends in drug abuse in India, benzodiazepine-type sedatives and anxiolytics, such as diazepam and nitrazepam, and buprenorphine are among the abused substances.

421. India has significantly increased its measures for controlling manufacturers of psychotropic substances and retailers and prescriptions are required for all preparations containing controlled substances. However, the diversion of controlled substances from domestic distribution channels continues, supplying the illicit market in India as well as in other countries. In Bangladesh, there have been reports of the abuse by injection of buprenorphine smuggled out of India.

422. The abuse of sedatives and tranquillizers is a more recent problem in Bangladesh. In response to that development, the sale of psychotropic substances has been brought under a licensing system. In Sri Lanka, the abuse of diazepam is one of the most favoured alternatives to heroin abuse. The Board notes with concern that, despite its numerous appeals, controls of psychotropic substances in line with the 1971 Convention and the related Economic and Social Council resolutions have not been introduced in Sri Lanka.

423. While the abuse of methamphetamine is considered to be a relatively minor problem in India, there have been seizures of methamphetamine tablets smuggled out of Myanmar. Cases involving the abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) have been reported by the authorities of Maldives.

424. The Board notes that, in India, full control will soon be established over anthranilic acid, a chemical used for the illicit manufacture of methaqualone, which continues to take place in that country. Seizures of methaqualone have been effected in recent years not only in South Africa but also in India; two laboratories illicitly manufacturing methaqualone were dismantled in India in May 2002, resulting in the seizure of more than 2 tons of methaqualone.

Missions

425. A mission of the Board visited Sri Lanka in June 2002. The Board appreciates the commitment of the Government to fully implementing its obligations under the international drug control treaties and to following a strict policy of drug control.

426. The Board is concerned that controls over psychotropic substances in Sri Lanka are not yet fully in line with the provisions of the 1971 Convention and the related Economic and Social Council resolutions and that the authorities of Sri Lanka have therefore

failed to provide adequate statistical reports on imports of substances listed in Schedules III and IV of the 1971 Convention. The Board wishes to remind the authorities that the lack of adequate control over psychotropic substances may lead to the increasing diversion of such substances to the illicit market. The Board therefore recommends that the Government of Sri Lanka give high priority to finalizing the draft drug control legislation prepared more than five years ago and to adopting that legislation so that it may fully implement the provisions of the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention.

427. The smuggling of heroin into Sri Lanka has been on the increase in recent years. Heroin abuse, which was once confined mainly to Colombo, has spread to the entire country. Law enforcement authorities should continue to strengthen action against trafficking in heroin. The Board urges the authorities of Sri Lanka to take special measures against the abuse of preparations made from cannabis, which are widely abused in the country.

West Asia

Major developments

428. In Afghanistan, the political and social situation has contributed to the continued opium poppy cultivation in that country and smuggling of opiates from that country. The ban on opium poppy cultivation introduced by the Interim Administration in January 2002 and its decree on the eradication of drug crops, issued in April 2002, could not be implemented in large areas of the country. Opium production in Afghanistan in 2002 is of the same order of magnitude as during the mid-1990s. The smuggling of opiates originating in Afghanistan into and through the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan has returned to the levels attained prior to the ban on opium poppy cultivation introduced by the Taliban in 2000, as evidenced by seizures effected in those countries. The countries in Central Asia continue to be used as transit countries, forming one of the primary routes for transporting illicit drugs from Afghanistan to the Russian Federation and then to countries in Eastern and Western Europe.

429. The smuggling of opiates and cannabis in West Asia undermines the economic and social stability of some countries and jeopardizes peace and security in

the region as a whole. Addressing the problems of drug trafficking must remain high on the agenda of regional security consultations in the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Corruption linked to drug trafficking remains a serious issue throughout West Asia. At the same time, the Board is convinced that measures to counter corruption and to alleviate poverty can help to resolve the drug problem in the region.

430. The anticipation of a good opium poppy harvest in Afghanistan in 2002 did not cause prices of opiates to decline, with the exception of the price of opium in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Prices of opiates continued to rise in Pakistan and Tajikistan. In 2002, as in the previous year, the price of heroin on illicit markets was not affected. Opium and morphine, of which there was a shortage during 2001, again appeared to be available in more than sufficient quantities on illicit markets in West Asia, and the availability of heroin remained high. Partly due to more effective interdiction methods, the quantity of heroin seized in countries in Central Asia continued to increase in 2002. The purity level of heroin also increased.

431. Most countries in West Asia are used as transit points for smuggling opiates into Europe and other regions. Chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of heroin continue to flow in the opposite direction. Seizure statistics for countries throughout West Asia show that in Afghanistan the processing of opium into other opiates has returned to levels reached prior to 2001.

432. Because of drug trafficking activities in West Asia and increased illicit crop cultivation, the extent of drug abuse in the region is not declining. Opiate addiction rates in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan continue to be among the highest in the world. The abuse of opiates by injection has been increasing rapidly in both countries. The Board is concerned that increased drug trafficking and in-kind payments to drug couriers throughout Central Asia is leading to the rapid spread of drug abuse. There is an apparent shift from cannabis to opium and heroin as the drugs of choice; that has been accompanied by a rapid increase in drug injection, which has had serious implications for the spread of HIV/AIDS in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Treaty adherence

433. The Board notes with satisfaction that all of the 24 States in West Asia are parties to the 1961 Convention, the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Convention.

434. The Board notes with satisfaction that the Islamic Republic of Iran has acceded to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention and that Israel has acceded to the 1988 Convention. The Board encourages Afghanistan, the only State in the region that is a party to the 1961 Convention in its unamended form, to accede to the 1972 Protocol.

Regional cooperation

435. The Board notes with appreciation that extensive regional cooperation activities related to drug control continue in West Asia. The seventh summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Cooperation Organization, held in Istanbul, Turkey, in October 2002, reiterated the importance of a regional approach to preventing illicit drug production, trade and use.

436. The Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior and the League of Arab States remain dedicated to promoting regional and international cooperation and harmonization of drug control efforts by Arab countries. The Organization of the Islamic Conference provided legal training for its member States in September 2002 to assist in harmonizing national drug control legislation. The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) and the Economic Cooperation Organization continue to be active in fostering cooperation and coordination among their member States in the field of drug control.

437. The Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime became fully operational in December 2001; it offered several international and national training programmes during 2002. In September 2002, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) decided to set up an agency to combat drug trafficking in Central Asia, to pursue joint measures in investigating drug-related crime and to promote drug abuse prevention activities.

438. The Third International Conference of Drug Liaison Officers was held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, in November 2001; as in the previous conferences, many countries from West Asia and from other regions were represented. The South-West Asian

heroin strategy conference was organized jointly by the Government of Turkey and the Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States in February 2002 to promote international law enforcement cooperation. Attending the conference were law enforcement officers from countries in Europe and West Asia, as well as from the United States, who considered new ways of combating heroin trafficking.

439. In the first six months of 2002, multiple initiatives were launched in Central Asia to promote cooperation in sharing information, providing technical assistance and countering drug smuggling. Those initiatives led to the signing of several agreements and protocols on the coordination of efforts among the competent authorities of Afghanistan, China, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan among others. Furthermore, a conference on judicial cooperation in Central Asia in the framework of United Nations conventions was held in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, in March 2002, a conference on drug abuse in Central Asia was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in June 2002 and a conference on drug trafficking via the Silk Route was held in Tashkent in October 2002.

440. The Board welcomes various new bilateral agreements on drug control between countries in West Asia, such as the bilateral agreements between the Islamic Republic of Iran and each of the following countries: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The Board also welcomes the continued close cooperation between law enforcement agencies in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan.

National legislation, policy and action

441. While drug-related legislation in Afghanistan is inadequate, the Board notes that, in January 2002, the Interim Administration issued a decree banning the cultivation, production, processing and abuse of and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs. A decree issued by the Interim Administration in April 2002 confirmed the ban and provided for measures to eradicate illicit drug crop cultivation; furthermore, the repayment of financial loans with opium was made illegal. Efforts to implement the ban, which was issued after the sowing season, have been unsuccessful for social and political reasons and because of strong opposition by local leaders and farmers. The Interim Administration remains committed to eradicating opium poppy cultivation and combating illicit drug trafficking.

442. The Board notes that, in Afghanistan, a national security adviser was appointed by decree to be in charge of all activities related to preventing illicit drug production, consumption and trafficking and that a Counter Narcotics Department was created within the National Security Council to coordinate all activities of the Government related to drug control. The Board encourages the Government to adopt as soon as possible efficient drug control legislation, including provisions for the control of international trade in and the domestic distribution of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors for licit purposes.

443. The Board notes with satisfaction that the Government of Turkey has introduced stricter controls over narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors to and from free trade zones.

444. The Islamic Republic of Iran has drafted a new five-year national drug programme and has restructured and strengthened the Drug Control Headquarters, giving it a regular budget, independent of the proceeds of seized narcotic drugs and confiscated assets. The Islamic Republic of Iran has also drafted a new drug law amending criminal provisions and combining law enforcement elements with initiatives for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse. The Board notes that, in 2001, a significant corruption case involving drug trafficking was uncovered in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

445. The Board notes that in Pakistan direct controls by the North West Frontier Province will be extended to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. In Pakistan, special narcotics courts dealing with cases related to drug trafficking are now functioning and civil and criminal courts are being separated. As a result, some of the backlog of drug-related cases has been dealt with. In view of different sentencing practices of drug cases and the persistent backlog of drug-related cases, the Board encourages the Government to continue upgrading its judicial system.

446. In March 2002, the Government of Uzbekistan adopted a programme for countering drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the period 2002-2005, which provides for the strengthening of law enforcement activities, the prevention of drug abuse and the expansion of international cooperation in drug control. The Board notes with satisfaction that the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan

and Uzbekistan have designated their national authorities in charge of mutual legal assistance pursuant to article 7 of the 1988 Convention.

447. The Board continues to be concerned over the lack of adequate knowledge about the nature and extent of drug abuse in West Asia. The Governments of many countries in the region tend to focus solely on the abuse of opiates. The Board appreciates that Lebanon conducted an assessment of drug abuse covering different types of substances. Its findings, which pointed to the need for a continued central and standardized monitoring system that includes substance abuse data collected from different settings, may also apply to other countries in the region. A rapid situation assessment on drug abuse in all countries in Central Asia except Turkmenistan has been finalized. The Board encourages all Governments in West Asia to start monitoring, or to continue to monitor, all types of drug abuse in their countries, including the abuse of cannabis and pharmaceutical preparations diverted from licit channels.

448. The Board welcomes the fact that the Governments of some countries in West Asia, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan and Kazakhstan, have strengthened their facilities for the treatment and reintegration of drug addicts. Approximately 90 government centres offering increasingly diverse types of drug abuse treatment are operating in the Islamic Republic of Iran; the number of such centres has tripled since 2000. In Pakistan, three "drop-in" centres for persons infected with HIV/AIDS have become fully operational and the establishment of a network of centres for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers is under way. However, in most countries in the region, treatment and rehabilitation services for drug addicts are still inadequate; they are mostly run by private non-governmental organizations, and most drug addicts do not know of their existence. Moreover, in many countries in the region, drug abuse treatment is only offered to persons addicted to opiates. The Board urges all Governments to expand activities aimed at the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, including by raising the awareness of drug addicts regarding the services that are available to them.

449. In view of the illicit manufacture of heroin in West Asia, the Board stresses the need for tightened precursor control. Uzbekistan is the only country in Central Asia participating in Operation Topaz, under

which international trade in acetic anhydride is monitored. The Board urges all Governments not participating in Operation Topaz to become more involved in coordinated measures to prevent chemicals from being used in illicit drug manufacture, mainly in Afghanistan.

450. The Board welcomes recent efforts in several countries in West Asia to adopt or strengthen measures against money-laundering. The Board welcomes, in particular, the cooperation between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates to prevent money-laundering through the *hawala* system. In Saudi Arabia, the first international conference on prevention and detection of fraud, economic crime and money-laundering was held in May 2002. In the United Arab Emirates, a financial intelligence unit was established in 2001. In Israel, such a unit became fully operational in 2002. In Lebanon, a workshop on combating money-laundering was held in January 2002; in May 2002, the Special Investigation Commission released its first findings about the cases that it had identified. In view of those positive developments, the Board encourages the Government of Lebanon to take the necessary steps to withdraw its reservation on the provisions against money-laundering in the 1988 Convention. The Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen have drafted new legislation against money-laundering.

451. Because they are becoming increasingly integrated into the global economy, countries in Central Asia are vulnerable to money-laundering activities. The Board welcomes the initiative of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe to conduct a series of workshops on combating money-laundering in the subregion, beginning with those held in Astana and Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan and in Bishkek in September 2002. However, as multiple cases of money-laundering were reported in the subregion, the Board urges the Governments of the five countries in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) to enact a comprehensive legislative structure to combat money-laundering as soon as possible.

Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse

Narcotic drugs

452. Cannabis continues to be the most widely abused substance in West Asia. In Afghanistan, the extent of the illicit cannabis cultivation is not known but is assumed to be considerable. In that country and in Pakistan, cannabis also grows wild. Cannabis resin from both countries continues to be smuggled into countries in Europe, as well as into other countries in West Asia. Illicit cannabis cultivation has increased in the Bekaa valley in Lebanon, where it had been eradicated in the early 1990s, although eradication efforts are still being undertaken on a regular basis. Small cannabis cultivation sites have also been reported in Turkey. Among the arrested drug traffickers, most are arrested for trafficking in cannabis. It has been reported that in several countries (the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel and Saudi Arabia) trafficking in cannabis has increased. In Kazakhstan, there are extensive areas where cannabis grows wild, for example, the Chu valley. There is a risk that the wild-growing hemp will be exploited by drug traffickers. The Board notes the ecological functions of such growth and the intention of the Government of Kazakhstan to replace it with a variety of cannabis with a low THC content, thereby allowing it to be used for industrial purposes and preventing possible misuse.

453. In Afghanistan, opium poppy cultivation is estimated to have reached the level of the mid-1990s, but that is still lower than the level in the peak years 1999 and 2000. In particular, opium poppy cultivation has increased in the north-eastern parts of the country. In addition, opium poppy cultivation in the summer, prior to the usual planting season, which is in the autumn, has been reported in some districts in the south of the country. Approximately 3,400 tons of opium are believed to have been harvested during 2002. Data on stocks of opiates held in Afghanistan from previous years are not available.

454. Eradication of illicit crop cultivation in Afghanistan must proceed in line with preventive measures against such cultivation in countries in Central Asia, given the favourable climatic conditions in those countries. While the Board notes that, fortunately, illicit opium poppy cultivation in the subregion is currently very limited, the Governments of the five Central Asian countries are urged to

strengthen their capacities for monitoring and for reducing illicit drug supply in order to prevent displacement (that is, the emerging, reoccurring or increasing of such cultivation in other countries).

455. In Pakistan, the Government was able to eradicate illicit opium poppy cultivation on 70 per cent of the total area under which such cultivation had resumed in 2001 (about 1,000 hectares). In Lebanon, small-scale illicit cultivation of opium poppy has also taken place in the Bekaa valley; eradication efforts are undertaken on a regular basis. In Turkey, poppy straw from licit cultivation continues to be used for the extraction of alkaloids. No diversion of opiates into illicit markets has been reported in that country.

456. In Afghanistan, the large-scale manufacture of heroin is believed to have resumed after the events of 11 September 2001, as indicated, for example, by the detection of chemicals for the conversion of morphine to heroin at the opium market in Ghani Khel, and by the increasing seizures of heroin in neighbouring countries. In Tajikistan, the purity level of heroin from seized consignments intended for illicit markets in Europe is becoming increasingly higher. No manufacturing of heroin in significant quantities has been reported in Pakistan. In Turkey, clandestine heroin laboratories continue to be detected and dismantled.

457. No laboratories used for illicit drug manufacture have been detected in Central Asia. However, there is a chemical industry in Central Asia and large shipments of chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs destined for Afghanistan were detected in the recent past. During the period 1996-1999, over 120 tons of acetic anhydride were reported to have been seized in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Concerned by the lack of reporting on current seizures of precursor chemicals, the Board urges the Governments of all countries in West Asia to take measures to monitor border crossings so that the smuggling of chemicals and illicit drugs may be detected.

458. Since the ban on opium poppy cultivation issued by the Taliban in 2000 and the resulting decline in the total amount of opiates from Afghanistan seized in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the amount of opiates seized in that country has again increased. However, opium prices have fluctuated, reflecting the high demand for that drug in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In Pakistan, it is predominantly morphine and heroin that are being

seized, while seizures of opium have further decreased, underlining the role of Pakistan as a transit country and indicating that the abuse of heroin in that country is more common than the abuse of opium.

459. The volume of drugs seized in Central Asian countries continued to increase in 2001, reaching 10.5 tons, more than 80 per cent of which was seized in Tajikistan alone. No drug seizures were reported in Turkmenistan. A considerable part of the opium, morphine and heroin from Afghanistan is increasingly being smuggled out of Tajikistan via Kazakhstan into the Russian Federation and then towards the west. Authorities of the Russian Federation estimate that over 100 tons of heroin enters that country each year through its border with Tajikistan, while 93 per cent of the cannabis herb, 85 per cent of the cannabis resin and 78 per cent of the opium seized in the Russian Federation has entered that country through Kazakhstan.

460. Since heroin is more profitable and easier to transport than opium, its share in the total volume of seized opiates in Central Asia continued to increase, from 75 per cent in 2000 to over 90 per cent in 2001. In Tajikistan, the share of heroin in the total amount of drugs seized in the first half of 2002 tripled in comparison with the same period in 2001. Similarly, in Kyrgyzstan, four times more heroin was seized during the first months of 2002 compared with the same period in 2001.

461. As in the recent past, a significant portion of the opiates produced in West Asia is destined for illicit markets in Europe. However, a considerable amount of those opiates remains in countries in West Asia to meet illicit demand. In those countries, drug addiction remains one of the main social problems and drug-related crime and drug addiction are the main reasons for being arrested. Drug abuse in Afghanistan is expected to increase as a result of the return of refugees to areas where opium poppy is cultivated or opium is abused.

462. In Tajikistan, the Central Asian country most affected by increased drug trafficking activities, drug abuse has increased sharply in recent years. It is estimated that there are 720 drug addicts for every 100,000 inhabitants in Central Asia as a whole, the Central Asian country with the highest rate being Kyrgyzstan (1,644 drug addicts per 100,000 inhabitants), followed by Kazakhstan

(1,110 drug addicts per 100,000 inhabitants). Opiates, administered by injection, are becoming the drugs of choice in all Central Asian countries. At the same time, the age of first drug abuse is rapidly dropping throughout the subregion, while the proportion of women among drug abusers has increased.

463. Drug abuse by injection has been identified as the prime cause of the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS in Central Asian countries and in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In some parts of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, up to 80 per cent of those persons who have contracted HIV are drug injectors; at least half of those drug injectors infected with HIV are under the age of 30. Despite limited resources, preventive measures against the spread of HIV are being intensified in Central Asian countries and in the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially in high-risk groups such as drug addicts. Throughout Central Asia, in addition to the efforts being made to raise public awareness about drug abuse, syringe exchange points are being opened and drug substitution programmes are to be launched.

464. As indicated in the report of the Board for 2001,⁵⁰ pharmaceutical preparations, obtained through overprescription, under-the-counter sales in pharmacies or diversions from licit channels, are often abused in West Asia. Preliminary findings of an assessment carried out in Lebanon confirmed that buying pharmaceuticals without prescription continues to be easy in that country, as well as in some other countries in the region. The Board urges all the countries concerned to take the steps necessary to comply with the provisions of the international drug control treaties and to prevent the diversion of such drugs from licit trade into illicit channels.

465. The extent of cocaine abuse and trafficking in West Asia remains insignificant. However, a very large seizure of cocaine was reported in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2001. In Lebanon, seizures of cocaine effected during 2001 increased considerably in comparison with previous years, as a result of successful international law enforcement operations. An increasing number of seizures of small quantities of cocaine has also been reported in Israel.

Psychotropic substances

466. Trafficking in and abuse of illicitly manufactured stimulants (often reported as Captagon) continue to be

causes for concern in the eastern Mediterranean area and on the Arab peninsula. Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey continue to report seizures of Captagon, believed to be illicitly manufactured in the south-eastern part of Europe. The precise composition of most of the seized stimulants has not been made known by the authorities. The Board would welcome reports on the content of the seized drugs, following full laboratory analysis. In 2002, as in previous years, the majority of the stimulants seized were destined for countries on the Arab peninsula. Data on the actual extent of the abuse of the stimulants in those countries remain scarce. The abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) is a problem in Israel, Lebanon and, to a lesser extent, Turkey, as reflected by seizure data.

467. In the West Asian countries suffering most from the abuse of opiates, the abuse of sedatives and analgesics, in lieu of or in addition to opiates, is a problem. For example, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the abuse of ampoules of buprenorphine ("synthetic heroin") by persons addicted to opiates has been reported.

468. Israel is the only country in West Asia in which seizures and abuse of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) and other hallucinogens, including psilocine and psilocybine, have been reported. The abuse of flunitrazepam preparations (Rohypnol), *gamma*-hydroxybutyric acid (GHB) and ketamine has also been reported in Israel.

469. The wild-growing plants of the genus *Ephedra* are found in many parts of Central Asia, most notably in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. While no licences have been issued for the legal harvesting of *Ephedra*, law enforcement agencies have reported an increase in seizures of raw materials and illicit home-made drugs containing ephedrine, methamphetamine and methcathinone.

Missions

470. In August 2002, the Board sent a mission to Afghanistan to continue its consultations under article 14 of the 1961 Convention (see paragraphs 185-193 above).

471. In September 2002, the Board sent a mission to Kazakhstan. The Board notes with satisfaction that the Government of Kazakhstan is committed to fighting

illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and encourages the Government to strengthen the mechanisms for coordination among drug law enforcement agencies. The licit trade in and distribution of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors in the country has been found to be well regulated. While in Kazakhstan, as in other countries in Central Asia, drug abuse has increased, the Government of Kazakhstan has taken significant measures to upgrade drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation services in the country.

472. Due to the geographical position of Kazakhstan (on one of the key routes for smuggling opiates from Afghanistan into Europe) and because of the fact that Kazakhstan is a manufacturer of acetic anhydride (the key chemical used in the illicit manufacture of heroin), the Board invites the Government to consider participating in Operation Topaz, in order to tighten further the control over that substance.

473. In January 2002, the Board sent a mission to Tajikistan. The Board notes with satisfaction the commitment of the authorities to meeting their obligations under the international drug control treaties and undertaking a comprehensive set of measures to counter drug trafficking. The Board appreciates the fact that the authorities of Tajikistan have been cooperating closely with the authorities of the Russian Federation in the area of border control, particularly in dealing with the problem of trafficking in opiates from Afghanistan. Considering the increasing amount of illicit drugs being smuggled through Tajikistan and the increasing number of nationals of Tajikistan involved in those drug trafficking operations, the country may well become a target for money-laundering. The Board encourages the Government to enact legislation against money-laundering as soon as possible. As the share of heroin seizures in total volume of drugs seized is reported to be increasing, the Board welcomes the draft regulation on precursor control prepared by the Government and urges the Government to adopt the regulation, to tighten controls over chemicals used for illicit heroin manufacture and to participate in Operation Topaz with a view to enhancing control of the movement of acetic anhydride in West Asia.

474. In January 2002, the Board sent a mission to Turkmenistan to evaluate the progress made in the country in developing effective drug control strategies since its previous mission in 1997. While measures to

prevent the diversion of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances seem to be in place in Turkmenistan, the Board calls on the Government to improve its data collection and reporting mechanisms and to share its data with international organizations and other Governments. The Board notes with concern that the authorities have not reported any seizures of opiates and chemicals since 2000, although significant quantities had been seized in previous years.

475. Current legislation in Turkmenistan, which dates from the time of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, imposes many restrictions on the health sector. The Board notes that the existing procedures for importing medicines are unnecessarily complex and stresses the importance of ensuring adequate availability of essential drugs, especially in the context of the State Health Programme of the President of Turkmenistan.

476. The Board encourages the Government of Turkmenistan to expedite the finalization of the law on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and the health law. Furthermore, given the fact that it is becoming increasingly integrated into the international economy, Turkmenistan is vulnerable to money-laundering activities. The Board urges the Government to enact legislation against money-laundering as soon as possible. Legislation on precursors has not yet been enacted in Turkmenistan. In view of its proximity to Afghanistan and the risk of diversion of acetic anhydride, the Board urges the Government of Turkmenistan to formally tighten the controls over precursor chemicals, adopt relevant legislation without further delay and participate in Operation Topaz.

D. Europe

Major developments

477. In Europe, there continues to be considerable illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, particularly MDMA (Ecstasy), which are then smuggled not only within the region, but also into other regions throughout the world, predominantly North America and Oceania and, to a lesser extent, Africa and parts of Asia. Although there is no estimate of the volume of illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, large seizures of such drugs indicate that there is a constant supply and high availability. The Board believes that further