

several of the authorities that make up the committee. That has resulted in the absence of effective drug control policy measures. The Board therefore again calls on the Government of Senegal to improve inter-ministerial coordination, particularly among the drug law enforcement services but also with the Ministry of Health.

## **B. Americas**

### **Central America and the Caribbean**

#### **Major developments**

277. Drug trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean continues to involve mostly cannabis and cocaine, although heroin seizures have increased to unprecedented levels. Drug trafficking in the region takes place by land, air and sea (both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean). Arms trafficking continues to be reported in Central American countries; it is suspected that the arms shipments are mainly destined for armed groups in South America that abet drug trafficking. Drug trafficking and related crimes continue to have the potential to threaten political, social and economic development, especially on the smaller islands of the Caribbean.

278. The Central American and Mexican corridor and the Caribbean continue to be the transit route used for smuggling cocaine and heroin from Colombia into North America. The smuggling of cocaine through the Caribbean and into Europe appears to have been on the increase, while the smuggling of drugs into North America appears to have remained at approximately the same level since the mid-1990s.

279. Drug trafficking has contributed to the increase in drug abuse in Central America and the Caribbean. While sufficient up-to-date epidemiological data do not seem to be available, new drugs and methods of abuse are being detected sporadically, such as GHB, heroin, MDMA (Ecstasy), flunitrazepam and combinations of cocaine and cannabis or of cocaine and heroin.

280. The Board welcomes the increased attention being given to demand reduction in Central America and the Caribbean. Countries in the region have included more initiatives related to demand reduction in their national drug control strategies, have increased budget allocations to that end, have started to conduct

surveys in order to assess perception of risk and prevalence related to the abuse of drugs in certain segments of the population and have created more prevention programmes. Shortcomings remain in the level of financial support for treatment and rehabilitation and in the availability of relevant infrastructure.

#### **Treaty adherence**

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

#### **Regional cooperation**

282. The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States continues to be the main forum of overall regional cooperation and exchange of information for Central American and Caribbean countries, which, together with other countries in the Americas, participate actively in the CICAD Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism. Cooperation in areas such as judicial cooperation, law enforcement operations, and border control is usually in the form of bilateral agreements between countries. A number of Central American countries have agreements of this kind with Colombia and Mexico. The United States remains the single most important bilateral partner in drug control matters for most countries and territories, providing much needed assistance in the interdiction of drug trafficking.

283. The Board welcomes the fact that the issue of drug trafficking and money-laundering through the postal system was addressed in a workshop held in Barbados in November 2002. While most other modes of drug trafficking in the Caribbean have been targeted by law enforcement, this is a new regional effort to address drug trafficking through the mail system.

284. Several successes have been achieved in maritime drug law enforcement operations in the Caribbean through cooperation at the regional level and cooperation with authorities in Colombia and in countries in Europe and North America. In view of further economic integration of the Caribbean countries and the increasingly significant large-scale

drug trafficking by use of containers, continuous cooperation and efforts involving maritime drug law enforcement are required.

285. A regional agreement for the Caribbean based on article 17 of the 1988 Convention opened for signature in April 2003. The agreement provides a framework for strengthened cooperation between parties in combating illicit air and maritime traffic in and over the waters of the Caribbean in order to ensure that suspect vessels and aircraft are detected, identified and continuously monitored.

286. The Board notes the cooperation of countries in the Caribbean with the Netherlands and the United Kingdom to address the smuggling of drugs into Europe by large numbers of individual couriers. The Board notes that, since 2002, Curaçao and Jamaica have taken special measures at their airports to prevent boarding of drug couriers. Such measures must be coordinated with measures at other airports to prevent the displacement of such trafficking. For example, cooperation between the authorities of Jamaica and the United Kingdom, within the framework of Operation Airbridge, has resulted in a significant increase in the arrests of cocaine couriers. The Board encourages countries and territories to continue such cooperation.

287. The very limited law enforcement capacity and cases of high-level corruption in Haiti have made sustained joint operations with the law enforcement authorities of other countries almost impossible. The Board calls on Governments of countries in which the drugs originate and countries to which the drugs are sent to cooperate closely with one another in order to combat trafficking in the region.

288. The Board notes the completion of school surveys on drug abuse in several countries in the Caribbean through the Caribbean Drug Information Network, ensuring comparable data collection on drug abuse prevalence. Apart from data on drug abuse, the surveys also explored perceptions of the harmfulness of drug abuse.

289. The Permanent Central American Commission for the Eradication of the Illicit Production, Traffic, Consumption and Use of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances continues to be the main forum for cooperation and harmonization of drug control

activities and the coordination of the implementation of a regional action plan.

#### **National legislation, policy and action**

290. El Salvador is currently considering a reform of its national drug control legislation. The Board hopes that the Comisión Salvadoreña Antidrogas, created in 1995, will be able to effectively coordinate the work of all entities involved in drug demand and supply reduction activities and to implement the national plan in those areas covering the period 2002-2008.

291. The Board notes the strengthening of the drug control infrastructure of Costa Rica through the start of operations of the Costa Rican drug institute that coordinates drug control activities under the national drug control law.

292. The Board hopes that Nicaragua's recently approved national drug control plan will receive adequate resources and be successfully implemented. Law enforcement efforts to intercept illicit drug consignments passing through Guatemala appear to have increased again during 2003 after having been disrupted by cases involving high-level corruption.

293. Nearly all countries in Central America and the Caribbean have adopted national drug control plans in recent years. The Board urges the Bahamas, which is used as a significant transit point for cannabis and cocaine consignments, to adopt a national drug control plan and implement regulations on precursors/chemicals.

294. The Board hopes that the national drug control plan covering the period 2003-2008 drafted by the national drug commission of Haiti will be adopted and implemented without delay. The Board is concerned that the relatively low level of drug seizures in that country in recent years may indicate insufficient law enforcement efforts; however, the Board is encouraged by the fact that cocaine seizures increased in 2002.

295. Treatment and rehabilitation activities continue to remain mainly the domain of non-governmental organizations in the region. The Board is pleased to note that Governments of countries in the region have made efforts to further strengthen education in therapy and counselling for drug abusers. Since the beginning of 2003, major campaigns have been launched to stop the spreading of drug abuse, which the Government has linked to the opening of the country to

international trade and tourism, as well as to the transit traffic affecting the country.

296. Central American countries continue to seek ways to strengthen their capabilities to combat drug trafficking. Belize has continued efforts to improve its national drug control system, including by increasing the number of drug control officers and international assistance for training law enforcement officers, establishing a forensics laboratory and enhancing the capacity to prosecute cases involving illicit drugs.

297. The Board notes that further progress has been achieved in combating money-laundering activities in the Caribbean. Dominica and Grenada addressed the deficiencies identified by the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering were removed from the list of countries that the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering considers uncooperative in efforts to counter money-laundering. Some of the islands in the Eastern Caribbean remain especially vulnerable to money-laundering, for example, Dominica and Saint Kitts and Nevis have not yet abolished the practice of granting citizenship on the basis of economic and financial criteria.

298. Costa Rica has strengthened its legislation against money-laundering. It is hoped that amendments to the act against money-laundering in Belize will facilitate international cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of such cases in that country. In Honduras, new legislation against money-laundering entered into force in the second half of 2002 and a financial intelligence unit was established; the Board hopes that positive results will soon be obtained in that area. While Guatemala has enacted and implemented a law criminalizing the laundering of proceeds of crime, full monitoring has not yet been ensured and the country has not yet been removed from the list of countries that the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering considers uncooperative in efforts to counter money-laundering.

### **Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse**

#### *Narcotic drugs*

299. Cannabis continues to be cultivated in all countries in Central America, mainly to be abused locally or to be smuggled into neighbouring countries. Authorities report continued efforts to eradicate

cannabis manually. Cannabis continues to be the most widely abused substance, El Salvador and Honduras reporting the highest prevalence of abuse.

300. By far the largest seizures of cannabis in the Caribbean continue to be made in Jamaica, which is an important source of the cannabis trafficked outside the subregion. In the Eastern Caribbean, cannabis is grown mainly in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia and Dominica, primarily to be abused in the subregion. The smuggling of cannabis herb from the Caribbean into Europe and North America has continued to decline; cannabis produced in the subregion is increasingly abused locally or trafficked within the subregion.

301. Results from surveys indicate that cannabis is the most widely abused drug among students in secondary schools in the Caribbean. The percentage of students who abused cannabis in the previous year ranged from 3 per cent in Suriname to 16.6 per cent in Saint Lucia.

302. Cocaine production in the region remains insignificant. Panama continues to be the only country in the region to report minor sites of coca bush cultivation and cocaine laboratories. The transit traffic in cocaine continues to affect all countries in the region; cocaine consignments are transported both by air and by sea and, in the case of Central American countries, also by land. The volume of cocaine seizures is usually more than 1,000 kg annually in all countries in Central America except El Salvador and in almost one third of the countries and territories in the Caribbean. In a case uncovered in Guatemala, cocaine was smuggled into the Netherlands while MDMA (Ecstasy) originating in the Netherlands was smuggled into Guatemala. The volume of seizures has fluctuated in recent years, probably showing that drug trafficking organizations are constantly changing their modi operandi and trafficking routes in Central America and the Caribbean. In 2002, the volume of cocaine seizures increased significantly in Haiti, although it was still low; it also increased in El Salvador. Puerto Rico has remained the main point of entry into the United States for cocaine smuggled through the Caribbean. Eastern Caribbean countries and territories having strong ties with Europe are also used to a significant extent for smuggling cocaine into Europe.

303. The limited data available on drug abuse prevalence in Central America and the Caribbean show that the abuse of cocaine has increased and the age of

initiation into illicit drug consumption has decreased. Cocaine or crack cocaine is the second most widely abused drug in the Caribbean among students in secondary school, the annual prevalence rate ranging from 0.2 per cent in Guyana to 3.6 per cent in Anguilla. Countries through which cocaine is trafficked tend to have a higher level of cocaine abuse. In Curaçao, the abuse of crack cocaine has become a major problem.

304. Guatemala is the only Central American country reporting marginal cultivation of opium poppy; in that country, opium poppy was illicitly cultivated and eradicated in the area bordering Belize and Mexico. Heroin seizures, which have been reported in all countries in Central America and most countries in the Caribbean, have reached unprecedented levels; most of the seized heroin originated in Colombia. In recent years, the most important heroin seizures in Central America took place in Costa Rica, Guatemala and Panama, and the most important heroin seizures in the Caribbean took place in Aruba, the Dominican Republic, Netherlands Antilles and Puerto Rico. Heroin abuse continues to be marginal, except in Puerto Rico.

305. Central America is also a transit area for shipments of precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of narcotic drugs; those shipments are destined mainly for Colombia. There are, however, still shortcomings with respect to precursor control. Trinidad and Tobago imports significant quantities of chemicals for its petrochemical industry; the Board calls on the Government to exercise vigilance in order to prevent the diversion of such chemicals for use in the illicit manufacture of cocaine in South America. Trinidad and Tobago continues to be affected by trafficking in cocaine and heroin, mainly from Venezuela.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

306. Some Central American countries have reported sporadic seizures of MDMA (Ecstasy), mostly originating in Europe. In the past, only Costa Rica reported minor seizures of other amphetamine-type stimulants and lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), while El Salvador and Guatemala reported single seizures of depressants. The abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) is emerging in the region, but authorities maintain that an unspecified quantity of MDMA (Ecstasy) is trafficked mostly to the illicit markets in North America. As in

the case of narcotic drugs, there is a lack of recent data on the abuse of psychotropic substances, although it is generally acknowledged that pharmaceuticals containing psychotropic substances are routinely diverted from licit distribution channels; however, hardly any seizures of such drugs are made.

#### **Missions**

307. The Board reviewed progress made by the Government of El Salvador in the implementation of the Board's recommendations following its mission to that country in 2000. The Board notes that the Government has adopted a national drug control plan, covering the areas of supply reduction, demand reduction and the control of licit activities related to narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors, and encourages the Government to fully implement the plan in a coordinated and coherent way. While noting an improvement in the submission by the Government of statistical data as required under the international drug control conventions, the Board expects that the Government will take the necessary measures to strengthen the capacity of the council on public health to monitor more effectively the licit distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

308. The Board sent a mission to Panama in February 2003. The Board notes the vulnerability of Panama to illicit drug trafficking due to its geographical location, economic structure and intense commercial traffic. The Board appreciates the efforts made by the law enforcement authorities of Panama in the interdiction of drug trafficking. The Board notes that Panama has adequate drug control legislation but limited resources to implement it, although the national drug control strategy for the period 2002-2007 is aimed at improving the situation. The Board encourages the Government of Panama to ensure efficient coordination and communication between government entities and the recently created inter-institutional commission for chemical control.

309. The Board notes the increased attention being given to demand reduction in Panama's national drug control strategy for the period 2002-2007 and hopes that the Government will ensure adequate funding for such initiatives. For a variety of reasons, including financial constraints, the availability of basic health services in some areas of Panama are limited; the Board encourages the Government to expand, to the

extent possible, the access of its population in remote areas of the country to such services and include the treatment of pain with opioid analgesics. The international community may wish to provide assistance to the Government in its drug control efforts in general, including measures to ensure the medical availability of narcotic drugs for the population.

## **North America**

### **Major developments**

310. New regulations came into force in Canada for implementing the requirements of the 1971 Convention for all internationally controlled psychotropic substances and for introducing more adequate control over precursor chemicals. Canada's Parliament is currently considering legislation that would introduce alternative penalties for persons caught with small quantities of cannabis. Under the proposed legislation, persons apprehended possessing small quantities of this substance would no longer be subject to criminal prosecution; instead, they would be required to pay a fine.

311. The latest indicators for cocaine and heroin abuse in the United States do not show any clear trend. While the abuse of some illicit drugs appears to be falling among teenagers in the United States, it is increasing in Mexico; however, the level of drug abuse in Mexico is significantly lower than in the United States.

312. Mexico increased its law enforcement efforts against drug trafficking organizations and arrested a large number of major drug traffickers.

### **Treaty adherence**

313. All three States in North America are parties to the three international drug control treaties.

### **Regional cooperation**

314. The three countries in North America cooperated closely in their drug control efforts, conducting joint investigations and law enforcement operations. Cooperation between Mexico and the United States resulted in the arrest of a number of powerful drug traffickers suspected of numerous offences, including murder, money-laundering and racketeering. Some drug traffickers are also suspected of having negotiated

with Colombian guerrilla and paramilitary groups, arranging for Mexican trafficking organizations to provide arms in exchange for cocaine. There was also close cooperation in the region in matters concerning extradition, as Mexico extradited to the United States numerous suspected drug traffickers, including major figures in drug trafficking organizations.

315. In April 2003, the authorities of Canada and the United States completed a joint operation targeting trafficking in pseudoephedrine, a precursor used in methamphetamine manufacture. The operation resulted in 65 arrests in the two countries. Among those arrested were executives from three Canadian chemical companies, all of whom are alleged to have sold large quantities of pseudoephedrine to illegal manufacturers in the United States even though they knew that the chemical was intended for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine.

316. Mexico has played an increasingly important role in drug control in both North America and Central America. A joint operation involving law enforcement authorities of El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico resulted in a large seizure (roughly 2 tons) of cocaine. In December 2002, Mexico hosted the thirty-second meeting of CICAD, where high-ranking officials representing 34 countries met to discuss drug control issues. It was decided at that meeting that Mexico would provide the chairman for the 2003 meeting of CICAD.

317. The Board notes with appreciation that the Mexican authorities, in close cooperation with their Colombian counterparts, were able to stop the large-scale diversion in Mexico of potassium permanganate intended for use in the illicit manufacture of cocaine hydrochloride in Colombia. However, it was not possible to identify and arrest the drug traffickers involved.

### **National legislation, policy and action**

318. The Board notes that new regulations came into force in Canada in January 2003 completing the inclusion under appropriate national control of all internationally controlled psychotropic substances. The Board expects that, in future, scheduling decisions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs will be implemented by the Government of Canada in a more timely fashion, in accordance with international treaty obligations.

319. The Board notes that precursor control regulations in Canada came into force in January 2003, ensuring that internationally controlled precursors are subject to adequate national control. The diversion of certain precursors into the illicit traffic had reached such levels that it had become a matter of great concern to the Board, and the Board expects that the Canadian authorities will give high priority to the implementation of the new regulations.

320. The Board notes that Canada's Parliament is currently considering legislation by which simple possession of, in some cases, up to 30 grams of cannabis would result in a ticket and a fine. The new legislation would also introduce new penalties for the production of cannabis that vary according to the amount of cannabis produced. While the possession of cannabis would remain a criminal offence in Canada under the new legislation, the Board is concerned that the revisions could contribute to the mistaken perception that cannabis is a harmless substance.

321. In May 2003, Canada's Drug Strategy was adopted, significantly increasing the funding of drug-control activities over the next five years. The strategy contains provisions for a variety of community-based initiatives to address drug abuse issues, public education campaigns focusing on young persons and a biennial national conference to establish priorities in research and prevention. The strategy also expands the country's programme for drug treatment courts. There are currently two drug treatment courts in Canada, and there are plans for up to three new ones to begin operations in 2004. Preliminary findings indicate that drug treatment courts may be effective in ensuring that non-violent drug offenders undergo treatment.

322. In November 2002, the Government of Mexico introduced the National Drug Control Programme 2001-2006. The Programme designates drug trafficking as a national security issue and provides for greater involvement of local governments in combating drug trafficking and abuse. Under the new Programme, the Centre for Drug Control Planning (CENDRO), within the Office of the Attorney-General, will coordinate the efforts of local and regional committees. Government agencies are also to establish goals for their drug control efforts, which will be evaluated by CENDRO.

323. There are conflicting indications regarding recent trends in drug abuse among young people in the United

States. In its update to the National Drug Control Strategy, adopted in February 2003, the United States Government cited research showing that drug abuse among teenagers in the country had exhibited its "first significant downturn" in nearly 10 years, with levels of abuse for some drugs lower than they had been for nearly 30 years. The Strategy notes that the percentage of some age groups using illicit drugs was at its lowest level since the early 1990s. The Government states that it is progressing smoothly towards meeting the two-year goal of reducing illicit drug abuse by teenagers by 10 per cent, set out in the 2002 Strategy. However, the latest National Survey on Drug Use and Health appears not to confirm the downward trend in drug abuse among young people.

324. While evaluations of the National Youth Anti-Drug Campaign in the United States had shown little success, more recent evaluations suggest that the campaign has affected the attitudes of youth towards drugs. The Government has allocated funds to be provided to schools that wish to implement drug testing programmes, provided that it is ensured that students who test positive are able to undergo treatment. After the initial positive results, the United States Government is also expanding its drug court programme, which uses the coercive authority of a judge to require abstinence, as well as a change of behaviour through a combination of various programmes.

325. The Board notes with concern that, in June 2003, the Government of Canada approved the establishment of a drug injection room in the city of Vancouver, the first such site in North America. The drug injection room, which opened in September 2003, will be subject to an evaluation in three years' time.

326. The Board has on numerous occasions expressed its concern regarding the operation of drug injection rooms, where persons can inject drugs acquired with impunity on the illicit market. The Board reiterates its views that such sites are contrary to the fundamental provisions of the international drug control treaties, which oblige States parties to ensure that drugs are used only for medical or scientific purposes.

327. Mexico intensified its law enforcement efforts against drug trafficking and conducted many large-scale arrests of traffickers from a number of powerful drug trafficking organizations. The Government of Mexico also strengthened its efforts against corruption,

which is often linked with drug trafficking. In October 2002, a military battalion was dismantled after it was alleged that large numbers of soldiers had been involved in producing and trafficking in drugs. In January 2003, the special prosecutor's office dealing with drug-related crime was disbanded by the Government when it was learned that high-ranking officials had released drug dealers from detention and returned seized drugs to them. While appreciating the efforts of the Government, the Board notes that sustained efforts are required, as major drug trafficking organizations are still operating in the country.

328. The United States Government started substitution treatment, using buprenorphine, for persons dependent on opiates. Contrary to the practice of methadone prescription, which can only be dispensed in the United States by a small number of special drug treatment clinics, buprenorphine can be prescribed by doctors who have received special training. The Board notes that concern had been growing within the Government regarding increases in methadone-related deaths and reported diversions of methadone by persons in substitution treatment; the Board calls on the Government to take adequate measures to prevent diversions of buprenorphine, especially given the less stringent controls in place for the use of that substance.

329. In the United States, though the Government is a strong advocate of full implementation of the international drug control treaties, there is heated public debate in several states regarding the decriminalization or even legalization of cannabis. In November 2002, there were referendums considering such changes in the states of Arizona, Nevada, Ohio and South Dakota. The Board notes that, though support for the referendums had been organized by advocacy organizations, they failed, indicating a lack of public support for such initiatives. The Board is appreciative of the efforts of the Government, which had strongly expressed its concern regarding the intention of the referendums and had repeatedly expressed the necessity of compliance with the federal law, which is in line with international drug control conventions.

### **Cultivation, production, trafficking and abuse**

#### *Narcotic drugs*

330. Cannabis, the most abused drug in North America, continues to be produced in large quantities in all three countries in the region. According to

estimates of the United States Government, more than 10,000 tons of cannabis herb are produced in that country; in addition, more than 5,000 tons of cannabis are smuggled into the country. Almost 40 per cent of all cannabis herb seizures reported worldwide are made in Mexico.

331. Admission figures from drug treatment centres in the United States indicate that there has been a fall in the demand for cocaine in at least some areas of the country. While there appears to be an overall decline in drug abuse among teenagers, at least with regard to some drugs, research has shown that the abuse of cocaine and crack has remained more or less at the same level.

332. It appears that more stringent controls at the border between Mexico and the United States have resulted in an oversupply of cocaine in Mexico, which for many years has been part of the main route used for smuggling cocaine from Colombia into the United States and Canada. National surveys in Mexico show that the abuse of cocaine and crack has increased (though less than during the 1990s), in particular among young persons, and that cocaine and crack are increasingly being used as initiation drugs.

333. There are indications, in particular from data on admissions in treatment centres, that heroin abuse is rising in Mexico, with increased availability, lower prices and higher purity levels. Though the majority of heroin smuggled into the United States and Canada is of Colombian origin, a significant share is also manufactured in Mexico. Despite sustained efforts by the Government of Mexico to reduce illicit opium poppy cultivation, resulting in the eradication of 19,000 hectares in recent years, such cultivation appears to have continued.

334. The high-purity heroin smuggled into the United States can be inhaled instead of injected, making it more acceptable to many middle-class Americans. In addition, in June 2003, United States authorities discovered a field with 40,000 opium poppies in a remote area in California, giving rise to concern that, as in the case of cannabis, trafficking organizations are attempting to establish large-scale cultivation sites within the country.

335. Surveys show that the abuse of heroin is also increasing in Mexico. Heroin abuse is particularly serious in the northern part of the country, the area

bordering the United States, which, for many years, had a high rate of drug abuse; however, heroin abuse is also spreading to other areas.

336. Though the majority of drug abusers in Mexico are male, drug abuse among female students in secondary schools is increasing at a faster pace than among male students. One recent survey indicates that lifetime drug abuse prevalence among female students (12.6 per cent) is fast approaching that of male students (16.8 per cent).

#### *Psychotropic substances*

337. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine continues on a large scale in North America. Between 5 and 10 tons of methamphetamine are licitly manufactured worldwide each year; however, the United States Government estimates that between 106 and 144 tons of methamphetamine are illicitly manufactured in Mexico and the United States alone, and subsequently sold to approximately 1.3 million abusers of the substance in the United States alone. Clandestine laboratories have been found in all states in the United States; most of the uncovered laboratories have been small-scale facilities run by independent operators. During the period 1997-2001, the authorities in the United States dismantled a total of almost 30,000 such laboratories, accounting for 97 per cent of all detected methamphetamine laboratories reported in the world.

338. In 2002, the abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) among teenagers in the United States declined for the first time in several years, though it remained at high levels, with a lifetime prevalence of 10.5 per cent among students in their final year of secondary school (aged 17-18). The abuse of amphetamine and methamphetamine remained stable, again at a high level; for example, the lifetime prevalence of amphetamine abuse among students aged 13-14 was 8.7 per cent, among students aged 15-16 was 14.9 per cent and among students aged 17-18 was 16.8 per cent.

339. In Mexico, the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants has increased significantly among young persons and has reportedly become commonplace at rave parties. According to a recently released survey, the lifetime prevalence of abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants among students 15 years of age increased from 1.61 per cent in 1997 to 4.20 per cent in 2000.

Though the prevalence of illicit drug abuse in general is higher among male students than among female students, amphetamine-type stimulants are abused to the same extent by both genders.

340. Abuse of prescription drugs in the United States continues; it is exacerbated by the unlawful selling of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances by online pharmacies within and outside the United States. Between 1995 and 2002, there was an increase of 163 per cent in the number of emergency-room visits linked to the abuse of narcotic pain medication (see paragraphs 169-178 above).

#### **Missions**

341. A mission of the Board visited Canada in October 2003 to discuss recent policy developments in that country, including the functioning of Canada's Drug Strategy, new draft legislation regarding cannabis and newly introduced regulations strengthening the control of precursors and psychotropic substances. The Board notes that there is strong coordination among various ministries and agencies in the field of drug control in Canada and that the multifaceted nature of the drug problem is taken into account, for example, by the fact that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police plays a large role not only in law enforcement, but also in prevention activities. The Board also notes the initiatives of the Canadian authorities to deal with the persistent problem of indoor production of cannabis.

342. There has still been no survey at the national level in Canada focusing on drug abuse since 1994. The Board notes that Canada's Drug Strategy contains provisions for research on drug abuse trends. The Board hopes that those provisions will be adequately implemented, in order to ensure that the Government has adequate information on which to base its drug control policies.

343. The mission also visited the injection room that had recently been opened in the Canadian city of Vancouver. The Board remains concerned about that development and urges the Canadian Government to comply with its obligations under the international drug control conventions.



## South America

### Major developments

344. Drug control policy in South America has continued to receive increasing attention from Governments and gain in political importance. In Brazil, drug traffickers have defied the local authorities in a few cities and temporarily disrupted the public peace. In Colombia, the term “narco-terrorism” is increasingly being used to refer to the violent activities of armed groups that protect, or engage in, illicit drug production and trafficking. In Peru, insurgents protect illicit coca bush cultivation, and open clashes between police forces and drug traffickers are on the increase. There are continued reports of arms being exchanged for illicit drugs. Measures against the illicit drug trade and money-laundering are aimed partly at reducing the funds available to drug traffickers and insurgent groups, thereby reducing their operational capabilities. The increased focus on the political threat of the drug problem has led many South American Governments to devote an ever-increasing proportion of their limited resources to reducing illicit drug supply, including by the eradication of illicit crops, the interdiction of drug trafficking and the introduction of measures against money-laundering.

345. What was originally known as Plan Colombia, sponsored by the United States and aimed at reducing the illicit drug supply from Colombia and other South American countries, has evolved into a much broader effort named the Andean Counter-drug Initiative. As a result of that initiative, the United States Government is currently the most important provider of assistance in funds and in kind to countries in and around the Andean subregion for efforts aimed at drug control, drug abuse prevention and combating money-laundering. Colombia remains the principal recipient of assistance given under the Andean initiative. “Plan Colombia” now refers only to the social component of Colombia’s strategy, and it includes the development of alternative crops and sources of income, the strengthening of institutions and the creation of social infrastructure.

346. Since 2002, the debate over the decriminalization or legalization of cannabis and coca leaf has received renewed media attention in several countries in South America. The Board would like to remind all Governments to continue to ensure that activities

related to illicit crop cultivation and the production of and trafficking in illicit drugs, including their possession, are punishable offences, pursuant to article 36 of the 1961 Convention.

### Treaty adherence

347. With 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

348. South American countries continue to participate actively in the CICAD Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism. Regional cooperation in South America often takes the form of bilateral or multilateral agreements between States with common interests and shared geographical traits, such as Andean States, member States of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) and States with Amazonian territories or shared borders. Those agreements address such issues as law enforcement and judicial cooperation, border controls and joint training of drug control officials.

349. The Board notes the enhanced cooperation between Brazil and Colombia, including Brazil’s offer of the use of its surveillance system to improve intelligence-gathering in the area of the Amazon. Successful joint police force operations of Brazil and Colombia to combat drug trafficking were extended to include Peru, Suriname and Venezuela and in support of that bilateral agreements between those States and Brazil were signed.

350. Close cooperation with countries outside of South America also continues. The United States remains the principal contributor of resources for drug control in South American countries, mostly through bilateral agreements. Law enforcement and judicial cooperation with the United States continued to be very visible through extraditions, several interdiction operations and cooperation in money-laundering investigations. There are also cooperation agreements between South American and European countries on a variety of drug control issues, such as alternative development assistance, combined law enforcement operations and educational programmes. For example, an online Ibero-American master of arts degree in addiction studies was created in 2002 with the support of the

Government of Spain and the participation of universities in Colombia, Costa Rica, Peru, Spain and Venezuela.

351. The Board appeals to South American States to continue bilateral and regional cooperation in precursor chemical control and to comply with the pre-export notification system. The Board notes the various regional operations initiated in South America to address the diversion of and trafficking in chemicals.

#### **National legislation, policy and action**

352. In Brazil, new legislation on chemical precursors significantly increased the number of chemicals being monitored. The Board welcomes the fact that in Brazil the judicial system has begun focusing on drug traffickers while providing drug abusers with increasing alternatives to imprisonment under a drug court system. However, since the treatment and rehabilitation services provided free of charge by the Government are still limited, persons with low income have almost no access to such alternatives.

353. The Drug Observatory of Ecuador has been established. The Board notes that Ecuador is still in the process of revising its national drug control law, with a view to resolving shortcomings in the control of precursor chemicals and the prosecution of cases involving drug trafficking. Although Ecuador had increased its financial and human resources for drug law enforcement and had obtained foreign assistance for the improvement of border and customs controls, recent austerity measures have impeded the implementation of several aspects of the national drug control plan. In Peru, new legislation for strengthening the control of precursor chemicals has been adopted and a financial intelligence unit has been created.

354. The Board welcomes the adoption in Paraguay in 2002 of reforms to the drug control law that are intended to improve the ability of competent authorities to investigate and prosecute drug traffickers; the Board looks forward to the implementation of those reforms. Suriname approved legislation against money-laundering in the second half of 2002; the Board hopes that draft legislation on the control of precursor chemicals will also be approved soon. In Uruguay, the legal framework for the control of precursor chemicals was strengthened, but control provisions against money-laundering still need to be expanded to cover

certain susceptible financial sectors (accountants, casinos, real estate brokerage etc.).

355. In Venezuela, the drug task force created in 2001 has proved to be a successful operator. However, the Board notes that the Organized Crime Bill, which will enhance law enforcement efforts against drug traffickers, and amendments to the national narcotic and psychotropic drug law that will strengthen control over chemicals are still pending approval by the National Assembly.

356. The Board notes that all South American countries except Guyana and Suriname have already adopted either mandatory or voluntary minimum standards of drug addiction treatment, as proposed by CICAD. Argentina has expanded action related to the prevention and treatment of drug abuse to include free training of health and social workers for the prevention and treatment of addiction, as well as a programme for the provision of syringes to injecting drug abusers in order to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

357. The Board notes that there are general weaknesses in South America with respect to the control over the domestic distribution of pharmaceuticals, which may contribute to their diversion from licit channels and eventually to their abuse. There is mainly a need to enforce regulations on the prescription of controlled pharmaceuticals and the keeping of records on dispensation, distribution and sales. In addition, due to limited resources, the competent authorities are often unable to carry out sufficient inspections and to verify data related to end-user distribution. The Board hopes that increased attention will be given to that area and that adequate support will be provided to enable the relevant authorities to carry out their functions.

#### **Cultivation, production, manufacture, trafficking and abuse**

##### *Narcotic drugs*

358. Cannabis continues to be cultivated in almost every country in South America, mainly for local or regional markets. Unfortunately, there are almost no national data on the extent of illicit cannabis cultivation in the region. It is certain, however, that cannabis continues to be the most widely abused illicit drug in South America. Cannabis seizures in the region account for 6-8 per cent of such seizures worldwide.

Approximately one half of the cannabis seizures in South America were accounted for by Brazil; approximately one third of the seizures of that drug in the region were accounted for by Colombia. Those two countries also ranked among the top 10 countries in the world in terms of seizures of cannabis herb.

359. With respect to coca bush cultivation, combined data for Bolivia, Colombia and Peru indicate a decreasing trend in recent years. According to estimates of the Integrated System for Illicit Crop Monitoring (SIMCI) of Colombia, there were 69,000 hectares under illicit coca bush cultivation in the country in July 2003, a reduction of approximately 58 per cent compared with the peak year 2000. Most of the reduction has been attributed to aerial fumigation, while in some areas the coca bush cultivation sites were abandoned or the crops were eradicated voluntarily. Whether the overall reduction is sustainable will, to a large extent, depend on the creation of alternative sources of income for coca bush growers. Despite the reduction in illicit coca bush cultivation in most of the affected areas, in the provincial department of Nariño, which borders Ecuador, such cultivation appears to have increased sharply.

360. The success achieved through eradication efforts in Colombia may lead to a shifting of illicit coca bush cultivation, not only to the traditional coca-growing countries of Bolivia and Peru, but also to other countries such as Ecuador and Venezuela. The illicit cultivation of coca bush has no regard for political borders and thus it is very important for countries in the region to cooperate with each other in order to prevent the displacement of illicit crops.

361. In Peru, despite the continued eradication of coca bush crops, the total area under coca bush cultivation has remained stable. In Bolivia, after significant reductions in the area estimated under coca bush cultivation in previous years, there was a slight increase in 2002. The Board hopes that Bolivia will be able to add to its previous achievements in coca bush eradication. For various reasons, coca bush eradication in Bolivia and Peru is largely voluntary and, as in Colombia, its success depends on the Governments' ability to offer a sustainable alternative livelihood to small coca farmers and to take into account the fact that prices of coca are higher than those of licit crops. Continued support of alternative development

initiatives is essential to the reduction of coca bush cultivation in Bolivia and Peru. No illicit crop eradication campaigns have been conducted recently in Venezuela.

362. The potential total manufacture of cocaine remained at approximately 800 tons in 2002, showing a stable or declining trend in recent years, in line with total coca bush cultivation. The bulk of the illicit cocaine manufacture in South America continues to take place in Colombia, mainly in areas under the control of armed groups. In Colombia, cocaine is manufactured mainly from coca paste that is produced locally; however, it is also manufactured from coca base smuggled out of Peru. In 2002, Colombian authorities destroyed over 1,400 illicit chemical and drug laboratories. Cocaine laboratories have also been seized in recent years in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Venezuela. Recent seizures of large quantities of cocaine in Peru may indicate that manufacture of cocaine is increasingly taking place in Peru.

363. In Colombia, a total of 80 tons of potassium permanganate were seized in 2002, the largest quantity ever seized in one year. Since seizures had continuously declined in previous years, this may indicate that traffickers have succeeded again in obtaining the chemical, possibly through diversion from domestic distribution channels in the countries in the region.<sup>47</sup>

364. Besides the coca-producing countries, Brazil, Ecuador and Venezuela remain the transit countries reporting the largest seizures of cocaine. The United States is still the main market for South American cocaine, but since the early 1990s an increasing proportion of global cocaine seizures has been accounted for by European countries, mostly Spain. Other cocaine trafficking routes have been uncovered, such as a route leading from Peru to Australia via Argentina. Countries through which the Pan-American Highway passes should remain vigilant of the use of that thoroughfare by traffickers for transporting large-scale cocaine shipments in the region.

365. Unlike the case of illicit coca bush cultivation, a methodology has yet to be found for estimating illicit opium poppy cultivation in South America; due to the climate and geography, aerial reconnaissance and satellite imaging are of limited use in detecting fields of opium poppy. However, based on ground

reconnaissance and taking into account the total area of opium poppy eradicated, the Government of Colombia believes that in 2002 approximately 4,200 hectares were under opium poppy cultivation in the mountainous areas in the central and southern parts of the country. Eradication and seizure data indicate an increase in opium poppy cultivation in Peru, albeit on a small scale. The Government of Venezuela needs to monitor closely illicit opium poppy cultivation on its territory in order to prevent its expansion.

366. Heroin is manufactured in Colombia and smuggled mainly into the United States, using mostly individual carriers (“mules”); however, containerized ships and speedboats are also used. Routes from Colombia may lead directly through the Caribbean Sea or the Pacific Ocean, but also by land through several countries. In Argentina, for example, a trafficking network transporting Colombian heroin destined for the United States and cocaine destined for Europe was disrupted in late 2002. Total heroin seizures in South America have been increasing every year, the main seizures having been effected in Colombia, followed by Ecuador and Venezuela. There appears to be an increasing trend in heroin manufacture and trafficking in South America.

367. The low level of oxidation of the cocaine seized in recent years is evidence of the continued success of Operation Purple, the international tracking programme for the prevention of the diversion of potassium permanganate. The authorities of Colombia, which is the destination of most of the diverted chemical, have seized increasing quantities of precursors and dismantled clandestine laboratories for the illicit manufacture of potassium permanganate. Operation Topaz has prevented the diversion of large quantities of acetic anhydride, as evidenced by the significant decrease in seizures of that chemical in Colombia since 2001.

368. Governments of South American countries must increase their efforts to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals under international control and of other materials used in illicit drug manufacture, such as gasoline and its by-products, grey cement and kerosene. In particular, the authorities of countries neighbouring Colombia should remain vigilant of their own imports and manufactures of precursor chemicals in order to prevent the subsequent smuggling of those chemicals into Colombia. Improved controls over the

end-use of precursor chemicals will also limit the opportunities for their diversion from licit channels.<sup>48</sup>

369. According to competent national authorities in South America, drug abuse is continuing to increase in the region. Though cannabis is the most widely abused illicit drug in South America, the abuse of cocaine and crack cocaine is a problem in most countries in the region. In Chile, where regular surveys are carried out, annual prevalence of cocaine abuse among the general population was reported to be stable, after significant increases during the 1990s. The abuse of heroin is low in South America, compared with the situation in Europe and North America, and appears to be stable, although Argentina, Colombia and Venezuela have reported an increase in heroin abuse in recent years.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

370. There is no evidence that significant illicit manufacture of psychotropic substances is taking place in South America, although the Government of Colombia reported in 2002 the seizure of a laboratory for the manufacture of MDMA. However, there is growing awareness that South American drug traffickers could eventually engage in the manufacture of such synthetic drugs. Such drugs are increasingly being smuggled out of Europe and seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants and of hallucinogens, including MDMA (Ecstasy), have been reported in several countries in South America. Diversion and overprescription of a variety of psychotropic substances continue to be problems in most South American countries and the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants is increasing, especially in the more affluent segments of society.

#### **Missions**

371. The Board sent a mission to Colombia in February 2003. The Board noted the significant efforts made by the Government of Colombia in combating illicit drug production and trafficking, which have resulted in the continued reduction of illicit crops since 2000 and in sizeable seizures of controlled substances, laboratories and assets derived from drug trafficking. The mechanisms for control over the licit movement of controlled substances are effective. In the past few years, each successive Administration has taken steps to make the country's legislative framework more effective in the fight against drug-related crime,

in particular by strengthening procedures for asset forfeiture, the penal code and cooperation with other countries in judicial and law enforcement matters.

372. The Board hopes that recent changes in the drug control structure of Colombia will contribute to the effective implementation of the Government's drug control strategy and that sufficient resources will be allocated to demand reduction initiatives. The Board recognizes the importance of providing alternative development opportunities for the local population in coca-growing areas and that, to that end, increased resources are needed. The Board invites the international community to provide support to Colombia in the areas of alternative development and demand reduction.

373. The Board sent a mission to Ecuador in July 2003. The Board appreciates the initiatives taken by the Government of Ecuador to combat corruption, drug trafficking and money-laundering. The Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances Control Board (CONSEP) of Ecuador has recently been reorganized, and the Board expects that it will be provided with sufficient resources to coordinate more efficiently the legal, judicial, administrative, educational and, above all, the regulatory and health aspects of drug control.

374. The Board welcomes the establishment in 2002 of the Drug Observatory of Ecuador, which has integrated the activities previously carried out by the Sistema Ecuatoriano de Vigilancia Integral para la Prevención de Droga (Ecuadorian system of integral monitoring for drug prevention) (SEVIP) and has noted the progress in drug abuse prevention activities carried out by a non-governmental organization that would need further support to expand its network to include rural areas.

375. As a result of measures taken in neighbouring Andean countries, Ecuador became more vulnerable to drug trafficking activities, in particular the smuggling of chemicals of Ecuadorian origin into Colombia for the illicit manufacture of cocaine. The Board notes with concern that large quantities of a solvent commonly called white gasoline is among those chemicals and looks forward to the introduction of controls similar to those already adopted in other Andean countries.

376. Although Ecuador is in dire need of resources to combat drug abuse and trafficking, international

contributions seem to be decreasing. The Board would like to emphasize that, to tackle illicit drug cultivation and trafficking in the Andean subregion, international assistance to Ecuador must be increased.

377. The Board reviewed progress made by the Government of Paraguay in the implementation of the Board's recommendations following its mission to that country in 2000. The Board acknowledges the improvements made by the Government, particularly in streamlining the functions of various government agencies involved in drug control. The Board notes, however, that a number of its recommendations have still not been addressed; in particular fiscal controls and foreign exchange controls are insufficient to prevent money-laundering, there is a lack of adequate measures for the control of the domestic movement of controlled substances for licit purposes and there is a need to strengthen human and material resources in drug control bodies. The Board hopes that the Government will continue to make efforts to ensure that further progress is made in implementing the Board's recommendations.

378. The Board sent a mission to Peru in July 2003. The Board encourages the Government of Peru to implement the comprehensive National Anti-Drug Strategy 2002-2007 and the National Commission for Development and a Drug-free Lifestyle (DEVIDA) to coordinate the activities of drug control institutions and ensure the adequate evaluation of such activities.

379. The Board notes the continued efforts of the Government of Peru towards the elimination of coca bush cultivation and hopes that adequate alternative development will ensure the sustainability of reductions in such cultivation. The Board notes the decision of the Government to update the registry of farmers for the production of coca leaf considered licit under its national law and to estimate actual needs for coca leaf to evaluate more accurately the required cultivation area. The Board reiterates, however, that the production and distribution of coca leaf and products containing coca leaf, for which medical value has not yet been scientifically recognized, are not in line with the 1961 Convention.

380. While the Board notes an adequate system of control for precursor chemicals in Peru, insufficient attention has been given to the control of the licit movement of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Adequate resources should be ensured for the

health authorities, so that the Government of Peru may fulfil its national and international responsibilities with regard to drug control, improve the quality of its reporting to the Board and offer better health care to its population.

381. The Board notes with appreciation that drug abuse prevention programmes carried out by the Ministry of Education of Peru are well structured. The Board expects that assistance will be provided to ensure their continuity and expansion to rural areas. Peru requires increased international assistance to ensure the sustainability of alternative development efforts and to combat drug trafficking and related crime.

## C. Asia

### East and South-East Asia

#### Major developments

382. In East and South-East Asia, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation continued to decline in 2003. As in the previous year, a reduction in illicit opium production was seen in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. As a result of the Government's continued efforts, in Myanmar, the world's second largest producer of illicit opium and heroin after Afghanistan, opium poppy cultivation has declined by almost two thirds since 1996. The Lao People's Democratic Republic is the third largest producer of illicit opium in the world. Due to the Government's successful opium elimination programme, the total area under illicit opium cultivation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic has decreased by about 55 per cent since its peak in 1998. In Thailand and Viet Nam, the level of opium poppy cultivation has remained insignificant.

383. The illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants remains a major concern in East and South-East Asia. Judging from the demand for treatment, amphetamine-type stimulants, especially methamphetamine, have continued to be the main drug abuse problem in East and South-East Asia in recent years. The manufacture continues to take place mainly in China and Myanmar, and trafficking routes have developed considerably, reaching illicit markets in almost all countries in the region. There was

a significant decline in seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants in 2002 in China and Myanmar, where significant quantities used to be seized. In Thailand, more than 8 tons of amphetamine-type stimulants were seized in both 2001 and 2002. In Japan, seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants reached their peak in 1999, when approximately 2 tons were seized; however, such seizures have been declining since then, approximately 442 kg having been seized in 2002. The Board notes the dismantling of significant clandestine laboratories in the Philippines, where, in 2003, more than 4,000 kg of ephedrine were seized in only two laboratories. There appears to be a partial shift from ephedrine to 1-phenyl-2-propanone for use in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine and the Board wishes to alert all Governments to monitor orders of phenylacetic acid, an immediate precursor of 1-phenyl-2-propanone. Increases in trafficking in and abuse of MDMA (Ecstasy) have been noted in South-East Asia.

384. Countries in South-East Asia continue to have a high rate of HIV/AIDS infection as a result of injecting drug abuse and the sharing of injection needles.

#### Treaty adherence

385. Of the 16 States in East and South-East Asia, 12 are parties to all three of the international drug control treaties. The Board notes that Cambodia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Timor-Leste have not yet become parties to any of the treaties. The Board, however, commends Cambodia on having completed the preparations for its ratification of the three international drug control treaties and calls on Cambodia to ratify those treaties as soon as possible. The Board also notes that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is in the process of reviewing its national legislation with a view to becoming a party to the international drug control treaties.

386. The Board welcomes the accession of Mongolia to the 1988 Convention in June 2003 and the accession of Myanmar to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention in August 2003.

387. The Board is concerned that the Lao People's Democratic Republic has not yet acceded to the 1988 Convention. The Board calls on that State to become a party to the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention without further delay.