

0.2 per cent of drug abusers in Brazil inject drugs. Uruguayan authorities estimate that 0.3 per cent of drug abusers in their country inject drugs.

508. The UNODC estimate of the past-year prevalence of cannabis abuse among the general population in South America is 3.4 per cent. The prevalence of cannabis abuse was the highest in Argentina and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), exceeding 7 per cent of the adult population. According to the eighth national survey of drug abuse in Chile, conducted in 2008, cannabis continues to be the most abused illicit drug in the country. About 6.4 per cent of Chileans aged 12-64 years reported having abused cannabis at least once in the previous year. The national study on the use of psychoactive substances in households conducted in 2008 showed that cannabis is also the most abused drug in Colombia. The past-year prevalence of cannabis abuse among persons aged 12-64 years in Colombia increased slightly from 1.9 per cent in 2003 to 2.3 per cent in 2008. Almost half of the individuals surveyed responded that cannabis was easily available in the country.

509. The estimated annual prevalence of cocaine abuse in South America among persons aged 15-64 was 0.9 per cent, approximately double the world prevalence rate of cocaine abuse (0.4-0.5 per cent). Although Colombia is one of the world's main producers of cocaine, according to the 2008 national study of drug abuse, past-year prevalence of cocaine abuse in Colombia was 0.7 per cent, which is slightly less than the prevalence rate for the region as a whole. Cocaine abuse has continued to increase in some countries in the region. In 2008, the abuse of cocaine was reported to have increased in Ecuador, Paraguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). In Uruguay, the annual prevalence of cocaine abuse among persons aged 12-65 rose from 0.2 per cent in 2001 to 1.4 per cent in 2007. In Chile, the lifetime prevalence of the abuse of cocaine, including cocaine base, increased from to 3.5 per cent in 1994 to 7.7 per cent in 2008. In Peru, the annual prevalence of cocaine abuse was stable. The lifetime prevalence of cocaine abuse among persons aged 12-64 in Peru was 1.4 per cent.

510. The past-year prevalence of the abuse of opiates in South America was 0.3 per cent. According to UNODC, levels of opioid abuse are stable in a number of countries in the Americas, including Brazil, Chile and Paraguay. Nevertheless, rising levels of opioid

abuse in 2008 were reported in Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The largest population of opioid abusers in South America, in particular those abusing synthetic opioids, was found in Brazil.

511. According to the latest data, the annual prevalence of the abuse of MDMA ("ecstasy") among the general population in South America is estimated at 0.2 per cent, which is one of the lowest rates of all regions. In the past few years, increased abuse of "ecstasy" among secondary school students was reported in several countries in the region, including Argentina, Chile and Colombia. According to the 2008 study on drug abuse, an estimated 55,000 Colombians, or 0.3 per cent of the population aged 12-64 years, had used "ecstasy" in the previous year. Most of those persons were men aged 18-24 years. About 1.7 per cent of the persons surveyed in Colombia had received an offer to try or buy "ecstasy" in the previous year.

## C. Asia

### East and South-East Asia

#### 1. Major developments

512. States in East and South-East Asia have made progress in reducing illicit opium poppy cultivation over the years. However, it appears that they have recently been experiencing some setbacks. In 2008, the area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in the region increased by 3.3 per cent compared with 2007.

513. In addition, there was a significant increase in the trafficking in methamphetamine and the illicit manufacture of MDMA ("ecstasy"). Moreover, for the first time in recent years, the illicit manufacture of GHB was reported.

514. Seizures of new types of products containing mixtures of synthetic drugs were reported in China. In December 2008, tablets consisting of a mixture of methaqualone and ephedrine were seized in northern China (in the autonomous region of Inner Mongolia). In January 2009, mixtures of GHB, MDMA and ketamine concealed in bottles labelled "traditional cough medicine" were seized in the autonomous region of Guangxi, China.

515. Drug traffickers are increasingly using social networking sites to recruit South-East Asian women to

work as “mules” in countries in East and South-East Asia, including Singapore. The traffickers are believed to be targeting single women between the ages of 20 and 30 who do not have a criminal record and who are unemployed or work in clerical, sales or service jobs.

516. The Board notes with satisfaction the progress made by Viet Nam in the strengthening control measures since the mission of the Board visited that country in 2007.

517. Although ketamine is not under international control, its illicit manufacture, trafficking and abuse are becoming major problems in many countries in East and South-East Asia. An increase in the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in ketamine was reported in the region. In China, 44 laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of ketamine were dismantled in 2007.

518. The link between HIV transmission and drug abuse by injection remains a concern in many countries in East and South-East Asia.

## 2. Regional cooperation

519. The thirtieth meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Senior Officials on Drug Matters was held from 29 September to 20 October 2009 in Phnom Penh. During the meeting, participants endorsed the action-oriented ASEAN Work Plan on Combating Illicit Drug Production, Trafficking and Use (2009-2015), as well as a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the workplan. Aimed at making ASEAN member States free of illicit drugs by 2015, the workplan will guide ASEAN member States in reducing, in a sustainable manner, illicit crop cultivation, illicit drug production, drug trafficking, the prevalence of illicit drug use and drug-related crime. The eighth meetings of the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD) Task Force on Civic Awareness and of the ACCORD Task Force on Demand Reduction were held in Jakarta on 5 and 6 August 2009. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the progress made by ACCORD member States in meeting the goals set out under the thematic “Pillars” of civic awareness and demand reduction, as contained in the ACCORD Plan of Action. Participants reiterated the need to shift the focus of policy interventions from public security to public health. The twenty-ninth ASEAN Chiefs of Police Conference was held in Hanoi from 13 to

15 May 2009. Participants resolved to formulate best practices with regard to precursor chemicals in order to stem the illicit diversion of those substances for use in the manufacture of illicit drugs and to share experiences in rehabilitating drug abusers.

520. The Sixth Asian Youth Congress was held in Bali, Indonesia, from 4 to 7 August 2008. During the meeting, participants shared their experiences in peer-led activities to reduce drug abuse in schools and worked together to identify community-based strategies to address drug abuse issues among youth. The eighteenth Anti-Drug Liaison Officials’ Meeting for International Cooperation was held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 24 to 26 September 2008. One of the key proposals of the meeting was that the participating countries establish a common Internet server to exchange information on drug-related crimes. The Response Beyond Borders South-East Asia Regional Workshop was held in Phnom Penh on 8 and 9 October 2008. The objective of the workshop was to foster greater cooperation in improving the quality of life of drug abusers in Asia, by sharing country experiences and best practices. The Thirty-third Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, was held in Denpasar, Indonesia, from 6 to 9 October 2009. Issues such as emerging trends in drug trafficking and measures to counter the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants were discussed at the meeting. Governments were encouraged to ensure that their legal framework was in compliance with the international drug control conventions. In addition, Governments were urged to support increased cooperation among their law enforcement, forensic and chemical control authorities, to ensure a safe and environmentally friendly approach to the disposal of seized chemicals and products of clandestine laboratories.

521. In 2008, China continued to provide training at its police academies in Yunnan Province and the autonomous region of Xinjiang to drug control officers from Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam. The officers studied national drug control efforts in China and were trained in drug detection skills. In Thailand, the Office of the Narcotics Control Board of the Thai Ministry of Justice, with technical assistance provided by Japan, implemented a regional cooperation project on capacity-building in the area of drug analysis with the aim of improving drug law enforcement in Cambodia,

the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. In 2009, training courses on the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers were conducted by Thai law enforcement authorities for the relevant authorities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

522. In October 2008, the National Narcotics Board of Indonesia and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency signed a memorandum of understanding on the strengthening of cooperation against the illicit production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals, including in the area of joint law enforcement operations. In April 2009, the national food and drug administrations of China and the Republic of Korea signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in ensuring the safety of drugs and medical devices: the two administrations will share information on licensing and regulatory systems in their respective countries. The Board continues to encourage international cooperation in drug control and looks forward to the signing of similar memorandums of understanding in the future.

523. Countries in East and South-East Asia continued to cooperate through joint drug control investigations. In February 2008, the cooperation of law enforcement authorities from China and Myanmar resulted in the arrest of drug traffickers and the seizure of 50 kg of methamphetamine. In July 2008, Chinese and Philippine law enforcement authorities cooperated in an operation that resulted in the dismantling of a clandestine methamphetamine laboratory in Quezon, Philippines. Methamphetamine, precursor chemicals and laboratory equipment were seized at the laboratory in Quezon and at a warehouse in Laguna. In early 2009, Vietnamese border forces, in cooperation with law enforcement authorities of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, seized 25,800 tablets of amphetamine-type stimulants in Thanh Hoa, Viet Nam.

524. At the end of June 2008, the Drug Seizure Immediate Notification System for Asia and Oceania, which had been launched in January 2008 in Hong Kong, China, completed its pilot phase, during which 257 kg of drugs were seized and the participating countries issued 78 notifications. On the basis of the success of the pilot phase, the participants agreed to continue to utilize the system and extend it to other regions.

525. The Board encourages countries in East and South-East Asia to continue to cooperate in the areas of drug control and drug abuse prevention.

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

526. China has established a drug control intelligence and forensic centre under its Ministry of Public Security to implement its Narcotics Control Law, which entered into force in June 2008. The main objective of the centre is to enhance the drug control intelligence and investigation capacities of law enforcement agencies, particularly at the central level. The centre is responsible for the collection, research and application of drug control intelligence and information, the international exchange of drug-related intelligence, research on drugs, the study of advanced forensic technologies and the provision of drug control training. In addition, a circular was issued in July 2008 to instruct the relevant agencies to strengthen drug abuse prevention and education, enhance treatment and rehabilitation for addicts, strengthen law enforcement and drug control to prevent diversion and reinforce international cooperation in the area of drug control. In November 2008, the National Narcotics Control Commission of China organized a joint meeting to provide an overview of national drug control efforts and the current drug control situation and to delegate tasks in combating drug-related crime. Representatives of the police forces, postal services and border control, customs and other agencies attended the meeting.

527. In August 2008, China placed hydroxylamine, a precursor for ketamine, under national control. In November 2008, China introduced a new requirement for drug regulatory agencies to impose further controls on compound pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine (with the exception of traditional medicines containing ephedra). In December 2008, China further strengthened control measures for compound oral solutions containing codeine. In order to prevent the diversion of such preparations, measures to control their production, wholesale and retail have been strengthened.

528. In May 2008, a seminar on precursor chemical control for shipping agents, air freight forwarders and cargo operators dealing with precursor chemicals was conducted in Hong Kong, China. The seminar was aimed at strengthening cooperation between law enforcement authorities and industry in preventing the

diversion of precursor chemicals, covering such topics as legal requirements for the import, export and trans-shipment of precursor chemicals and the liability of operators in handling shipments of such substances.

529. In 2008, *N*-methyl-*N*-[1-(3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl)propan-2-yl]hydroxylamine (*N*-OH MDMA) was designated as a narcotic drug under the Narcotics and Psychotropics Control Law of Japan.

530. In November 2008, the Lao People's Democratic Republic announced that the recent increase in drug trafficking would be addressed through its comprehensive drug control master plan covering the five-year period 2009-2013. The master plan provides, inter alia, for the recent increase in and proliferation of drug abuse, drug trafficking and other drug-related criminal activities. Under the drug law of the Lao People's Democratic Republic adopted by presidential decree in 2008, opium is subject to strict control and may be used for scientific, medical and industrial purposes only. According to the law, the commercial cultivation of opium poppy is prohibited, and offenders may be punished under civil and criminal law.

531. In August 2008, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency joined forces with a telecommunications provider to launch a pilot project to combat illegal drug-related activities. The project was initially implemented for a two-month period in the Metropolitan Manila area. Under the project, subscribers to the telecommunications provider were able to provide information on suspected illegal drug-related activities through a secure Web-based text messaging system. In October 2008, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency signed a memorandum of understanding with chemical and pharmaceutical companies to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals. Forty chemical and pharmaceutical companies and three associations signed the agreement to become proactive counterparts in cutting off the supply of precursor chemicals to clandestine laboratories. The Board welcomes this initiative in the Philippines and encourages the Governments of other countries to follow suit. In that regard, Governments may wish to consult the Guidelines for a Voluntary Code of Practice for the Chemical Industry, developed by the Board in 2009. In December 2008, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency reiterated its appeal to judges and prosecutors to expedite trial proceedings in connection with drug-related cases. The

Director-General of the Agency stated that only 21 per cent of the 99,434 drug-related cases initiated had been resolved, while the remainder were pending.

532. In March 2008, the Republic of Korea revised its Act on the Control of Narcotic Drugs. Under the revised Act, the disposal of expired narcotic drugs for medical use must be conducted in the presence of a competent national authority. In addition, the treatment and rehabilitation of persons addicted to narcotic drugs was transferred from the Korea Food and Drug Administration to the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs.

533. In the Republic of Korea, the Decree enforcing the Act on the Control of Narcotic Drugs added two substances to the list of substances under national control: benzylpiperazine was added to the list of psychotropic substances under control and GBL was added to the list of precursor chemicals under control.

534. According to the Central Narcotics Bureau of Singapore, opiate abusers, who account for the overwhelming majority of arrested drug abusers, have been undergoing a rehabilitation regime in centres for the treatment of drug abuse in Singapore. In August 2007, the rehabilitation regime was expanded to apply to persons arrested for the first, or second time for abusing cannabis or cocaine. Drug abusers who are arrested three or more times for the abuse of those drugs face imprisonment. Eventually, the system of rehabilitating persons arrested for the first or second time for the abuse of certain types of drugs and imprisoning persons arrested for three or more times for that offence will be expanded to cover all drugs of abuse.

535. In April 2008, Singapore strengthened its efforts to prevent the abuse of inhalants, particularly among youth. The Central Narcotics Bureau of Singapore regularly conducts operations to counter the abuse of inhalants and has also intensified law enforcement efforts by working with the police, teachers and counsellors to gather information on meeting points used by abusers of inhalants. Preventive education campaigns, aimed at raising awareness about the harm caused by abusing inhalants, is conducted at schools. A referral procedure for cases involving the abuse of inhalants or drugs has been developed to guide schools in reporting such cases to the Bureau. Parents are educated on the dangers of abusing drugs or inhalants

through talks organized for parent support groups in schools, workplace talks and publications.

536. In June 2009, the National Assembly of Viet Nam passed a law to amend and supplement the Penal Code. According to the new law, illicit use of narcotic drugs is no longer a criminal offence; moreover, the death penalty is no longer imposed for the offence of organizing the illicit use of narcotic drugs but remains in force for offences related to illegally stockpiling, transporting and trading in or appropriating narcotic drugs.

#### **4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking**

##### *Narcotic drugs*

537. The illicit cultivation of cannabis continued to be reported throughout East and South-East Asia. In 2008, 290 ha of illicitly cultivated cannabis plants were eradicated in Indonesia and 3,385 cannabis plants were eradicated in the Republic of Korea. In the Philippines, there continued to be reports of the illicit cultivation of cannabis for the domestic market. In Mongolia, while most of the cannabis seized in 2008 had been illicitly cultivated in that country, some of it originated in the Russian Federation. Cannabis continues to be cultivated illicitly in the south-west provinces of Viet Nam; nearly 1 ha of illicit cannabis cultivation was reported in 2008. In Japan in 2008, cannabis with a high THC content was illicitly cultivated from seeds smuggled from overseas and sold over the Internet.

538. The Philippines continued to seize significant amounts of cannabis. In 2008, it seized about 4 million cannabis plants (compared with 2.5 million in 2007) and 3.7 tons of cannabis (compared with 1.2 tons in 2007). In 2008, Japan, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea reported having seized the largest quantity of cannabis in recent years. In November 2008, police in the Lao People's Democratic Republic seized 600 kg of cannabis concealed in a truck transporting furniture to Thailand. In April 2009, China seized 87 kg of cannabis at Beijing International Airport from the baggage of a passenger travelling from Qatar to China. Vietnamese police reported that a new, more potent strain of cannabis was emerging on the illicit market, particularly in northern and southern Viet Nam.

539. Illicit opium poppy cultivation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar has

recently begun to increase. In Myanmar, despite the eradication of 4,820 ha of illicit opium poppy crops (an increase of 34 per cent compared with 2007 in terms of the total area eradicated), the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation increased by 3 per cent (to 28,500 ha) in 2008. The area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in 2008 also increased to 1,600 ha in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, to 288 ha in Thailand and to 99 ha in Viet Nam. Data on the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in South-East Asia in 2009 are not yet available. Both the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar have significantly reduced the area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in their respective territories in recent years, achieving record lows of 1,500 ha in 2007 and 21,500 ha in 2006, respectively. In order not to lose ground on the successes achieved thus far, the Board urges the Governments of countries in East and South-East Asia to strengthen their efforts to eradicate the illicit cultivation of opium poppy.

540. China reported the seizure of 1.4 tons of opium in 2008. The opium seized in Mongolia during 2008 originated in China and had been intended for domestic use rather than for re-export. In 2008, 31 kg of opium were seized in Viet Nam. Myanmar and Thailand also reported seizures of opium in 2008. Seizure data indicate that the United Wa State Army in Myanmar is attempting to smuggle drugs into other countries, mainly into Thailand, in order to procure arms and ammunition and is also selling drugs in exchange for money in preparation for the possibility of again going to war with the Government of Myanmar. The Board notes with concern that development and encourages the Government of Myanmar to strengthen its control over the movement of illicit drugs, particularly along its borders.

541. In 2008, Hong Kong, China, and Thailand were identified as trans-shipment areas for heroin trafficking. Traffickers attempted to transport the drug from countries in South Asia, South-East Asia, West Asia and (East, Southern and West) Africa through Hong Kong, China, to destinations elsewhere in East Asia and Oceania. The route through Thailand favoured by heroin traffickers was from South Asia and South-East Asia to East Asia, Europe and Oceania. Heroin consignments smuggled through Hong Kong, China, mainly arrived by air and departed by air or train. Heroin consignments were smuggled through Thailand mainly along air routes. In 2008, heroin

continued to be smuggled mainly from the Lao People's Democratic Republic into Viet Nam and from Viet Nam into China. In early 2009, Thai police seized 16 kg of heroin and arrested a number of persons suspected of using a popular Internet chat service to trade in illicit drugs.

542. The decreasing trend in heroin seizures continued in China, which reported the seizure of 4.3 tons of heroin in 2008 (compared with 4.6 tons in 2007). Between November 2008 and April 2009, law enforcement authorities in Thailand seized 12 kg of heroin in nine separate incidents at Bangkok International Suvarnabhumi Airport. In March 2008, 49 kg of heroin concealed in carpets arriving from Karachi, Pakistan, were seized by Chinese authorities at Ürümqi Airport.

543. In 2008, customs authorities in Hong Kong, China, seized 21.7 kg of cocaine. In 2008, the Republic of Korea seized 8.8 kg of cocaine in two separate incidents. In August and September 2008, law enforcement authorities at Incheon International Airport seized cocaine bound for Japan en route from Brazil.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

544. The illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants remained a problem in countries in East and South-East Asia. In February 2009, 200 kg of amphetamine were seized at a clandestine laboratory in Taiwan Province of China. In 2007, two clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were dismantled in Cambodia and one laboratory was dismantled in the Republic of Korea. In 2008, 10 clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were dismantled in the Philippines. During 2008 and the first half of 2009, laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine continued to be dismantled in China, particularly in central and southern China, where seven such laboratories were dismantled in 2008.

545. Traffickers continued to attempt to smuggle methamphetamine from Cambodia and China into the Republic of Korea and from the Lao People's Democratic Republic into Thailand. While some of the methamphetamine seized in the Philippines in 2008 originated in China (including Taiwan Province of China), some had been illicitly manufactured domestically. Traffickers had intended to transport the

methamphetamine through Thailand to countries in North America and Europe and to other countries in South-East Asia. In early 2009, Thai police seized 60,000 amphetamine tablets and arrested a number of persons suspected of using a popular Internet chat service to trade in illicit drugs.

546. In 2008, most of the countries in East and South-East Asia, including China, Indonesia, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, reported seizures of methamphetamine. In 2008, 6.2 tons of methamphetamine were seized in China. In 2008, the Philippines seized 855 kg of methamphetamine (compared with 369 kg in 2007), while the Republic of Korea seized 26 kg of the drug. Thailand reported the seizure of 22 million tablets of methamphetamine in 2008, a significant increase over 2007, when 14 million tablets were seized. In July 2009, law enforcement authorities in Quang Binh province, Viet Nam, seized 806,000 methamphetamine tablets from four persons purportedly attempting to cross the border between Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In August 2008, about 1.7 tons of methamphetamine were seized at a clandestine laboratory in Guangdong Province, China. In November 2008, customs officers in Japan seized approximately 300 kg of methamphetamine on a vessel in the seaport of Moji (Fukuoka, Japan). In March 2009, 90 kg of methamphetamine were seized at a laboratory involved in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in Guangzhou, China.

547. In 2007, Indonesia dismantled 16 laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of MDMA ("ecstasy"). In Mongolia, all the "ecstasy" seized in 2008 originated in China and had been intended for domestic use rather than re-export. "Ecstasy" seized in the Philippines in 2008 reportedly originated in Thailand.

548. In 2008, many countries in East and South-East Asia, including China, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Thailand, continued to report seizures of MDMA ("ecstasy"). Indonesia reported the seizure of 1,071,266 "ecstasy" tablets, while customs authorities in Japan seized 27 kg of the drug from passengers arriving from the Netherlands at Narita International Airport. In October 2008, 10,000 "ecstasy" tablets

were seized in Hong Kong, China. In May 2009, 7.1 kg of “ecstasy” were seized in Zhejiang Province, China.

549. In 2007, the Republic of Korea dismantled a laboratory involved in the illicit manufacture of GHB. In December 2008, Vietnamese customs officers at the international airport at Ho Chi Minh City seized 796,500 tablets of a pharmaceutical preparation containing nimetazepam; the tablets had been manufactured in Japan and concealed in a shipment of loudspeakers from Taiwan Province of China. Several seizures of nimetazepam had also been reported in China earlier in 2008. Customs authorities in Thailand seized 75 kg of diazepam trafficked by mail in 2008; the United Kingdom had been the intended destination of the majority of the mailed items.

#### *Precursors*

550. Significant quantities of precursor chemicals continued to be seized in countries in East and South-East Asia. The Philippines reported the seizure of numerous precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. For example, more than 200 kg of ephedrine were seized at warehouses and clandestine laboratories during 2008. In 2008, the Philippines also reported having seized a significant quantity of acetone (902 litres) and hydrochloric acid (385 litres). In 2008, China again reported having seized a large quantity of precursor chemicals, including acetic anhydride (5.6 tons), ephedrine (6.7 tons), P-2-P (2.9 tons) and pseudoephedrine (1.1 tons). The Republic of Korea seized acetic anhydride (14.8 tons) and pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine (2.2 kg) in 2008. In 2008, 192 kg of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine were seized in Thailand, purportedly bound for Australia.

551. In March 2008, law enforcement authorities in the Republic of Korea seized 2.8 tons of acetic anhydride concealed in used car parts at the port of Busan. The consignment was bound for Afghanistan via the Islamic Republic of Iran. In April 2008, China dismantled two clandestine laboratories and seized 37.5 kg of pseudoephedrine in Hunan Province. In June 2008, three suspects were arrested in the Philippines for selling 67 litres of acetone to an undercover agent in Quezon. Under Philippine drug control legislation, the sale of more than 1 litre of acetone to the same individual within a one-month

period is prohibited. Traffickers have obtained precursor chemicals in Viet Nam and smuggled them into other countries, where the chemicals are used for illicit drug manufacture. In August 2008, Vietnamese police dismantled a criminal group involved in smuggling a pharmaceutical product containing pseudoephedrine into Australia. In October 2008, 20 tons of sulphuric acid were seized in Yunnan Province, China. In February 2009, 119 kg of ephedrine were seized at a clandestine methamphetamine laboratory in Taiwan Province of China. In February 2009, rangers from the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia, in cooperation with law enforcement authorities, dismantled two clandestine sassafras oil laboratories in the western part of the Cardamom mountain range. In June 2009, Ministry of Environment rangers seized 5.7 tons of sassafras oil in Veal Vêng District (Pursat Province).

#### *Substances not under international control*

552. Countries in East and South-East Asia continued to report seizures of ketamine. In January 2008, 300 kg of ketamine were seized in Chengdu, China. In November 2008, 307 kg of ketamine were seized in Hong Kong, China. The ketamine was concealed in an air freight consignment of loudspeakers arriving from Singapore. In April 2009, 246 kg of ketamine were seized in Taiwan Province of China. In 2008, the Philippines reported a seizure of 10 kg of ketamine. Myanmar continued to report seizures of ketamine in 2009. Singapore also reported the seizure of a small amount of ketamine in 2009. The Philippines continued to report seizures of precursor chemicals not under international control but used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine; the chemicals seized included iodine (4.7 tons), palladium chloride (2 kg), red phosphorus (1.5 tons), sodium hydroxide (2.5 tons) and thionyl chloride (41 litres).

### **5. Abuse and treatment**

553. Methamphetamine is the most widely abused drug in Japan, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea. In Thailand, 69,145 people were treated for methamphetamine abuse in 2008. Japan reported a significant increase in methamphetamine abuse in 2008 and, in recent years, an increase in the practice among methamphetamine abusers of sharing injection equipment. A recent increase in the abuse of MDMA

(“ecstasy”), especially among youth, was also reported in Japan.

554. Heroin remained the most commonly abused drug in China, Malaysia and Viet Nam. By the end of 2008, data on more than 1 million drug abusers had been collected and entered in the system for monitoring drug abusers in China. Some 877,700 of those drug abusers abuse heroin, and 60 per cent are under the age of 35. In 2008, 264,000 drug abusers underwent compulsory treatment and rehabilitation in China. Between June and December 2008, 16,300 drug abusers participated in community-based rehabilitation. The HIV epidemic in China began among heroin abusers in Yunnan Province in the late 1980s. By 2002, HIV had spread along drug trafficking routes to all 31 provinces in China. By 2007, infected drug abusers accounted for more than 38 per cent of the estimated 700,000 persons infected with HIV.

555. In Malaysia, 61 per cent of drug abusers abuse heroin and an estimated 120,000 persons abuse drugs by injection. The number of new cases of HIV infection among persons who abuse drugs by injection has been falling since 2002, when it reached a peak of more than 5,000. In 2008, under the Malaysian national programme to prevent the spread of HIV among persons who abuse drugs by injection, 3,495 persons were provided with a variety of services at “drop-in” centres. The services included the provision of information relating to the dangers of drug abuse, basic counselling and referrals, basic health care and assistance in establishing support groups.

556. In November 2008, 173,603 drug abusers were registered with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Viet Nam, representing a decrease of 2.6 per cent compared with 2007. Of that total, 82 per cent were heroin abusers. Fifty-five per cent of drug abusers in Viet Nam have become infected with HIV as a result of sharing needles. Since May 2008, when a pilot project for methadone maintenance therapy was launched in Hai Phong and Ho Chi Minh City, 455 drug abusers have been treated in six clinics in the two cities. There are proposals for replicating the pilot project in 10 provinces, including Hanoi.

557. The Lao People’s Democratic Republic reported a decrease in the prevalence rate of opium abuse (expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 and above) in the northern provinces from 0.3 per cent in 2007 to 0.2 per cent in 2008. However, the

relapse of opium addicts continues to be a problem: 4,906 opium addicts were identified as having relapsed in 2008. The total number of opium addicts in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic is estimated at 12,680.

558. Cannabis is the most widely abused drug in Mongolia and Thailand and remains the second most abused drug in the Philippines and the Republic of Korea. In Macao, China, an increase in the abuse of ketamine among young persons aged 14-25 has been noted in the past two years.

559. In Singapore, the treatment regime for cocaine and cannabis abusers is similar to the current regime for opiate abusers, which takes into account the individual abuser’s needs and readiness for change and treatment and the severity of the addiction. All drug abusers undergo a thorough classification and assessment process. The treatment programmes focus on teaching abusers how to overcome behavioural problems resulting from addiction. Key components of the regime include motivation to change, skills training, family-based programmes and religious counselling.

560. The findings of a survey of students 12-14 years old conducted in 2008 in Japan supported the hypothesis that there is a close link between abuse of organic solvents and abuse of cannabis and methamphetamine. In a number of countries in East and South-East Asia, an increase in the abuse of inhalants was reported. Following the enactment of the Intoxicating Substances Act in 1987 in Singapore, the number of arrested inhalant abusers decreased from a high of 1,112 in 1987 to a low of 120 in 2005. However, inhalant abuse has recently been increasing. The majority of the inhalant abusers are reported to be under the age of 20.

561. In late 2008 and early 2009, within the framework of the HIV/AIDS Asia Regional Program (HAARP), country programmes were launched in Cambodia and China with the aim of reducing, over a five-year period, HIV transmission associated with drug abuse by injection. Similar programmes have been designed for the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam. The United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) programme supports HIV prevention, treatment and care programming for persons who abuse drugs by injection in Viet Nam. Several countries in East and South-East Asia also benefit from the Global

Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria grants, which support national programming to reduce HIV transmission among persons who abuse drugs by injection.

562. As problems of drug abuse may not always be confined to high-risk groups, the Board encourages the Governments of countries in East and South-East Asia to remain vigilant with regard to increases in drug abuse among the general population.

## South Asia

### 1. Major developments

563. Trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants has increased in South Asia, as evidenced by the fact that States in the region continue to report seizures of those substances. Neighbouring South-East Asian countries have typically been a major source of amphetamine-type stimulants; however, the discovery of several clandestine methamphetamine laboratories in South Asia in the past two years indicates that countries in that region are increasingly being used as locations for the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

564. Courier and postal services have become a common means of smuggling drugs out of India. A broad range of substances under international control have been detected by law enforcement authorities in parcels transported by courier or post. In recent years, heroin and diazepam have been the drugs most frequently found in seized parcels, while morphine, cannabis herb, cannabis resin, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine have been seized occasionally. The majority of clandestine shipments of controlled substances detected in India were destined for Australia and countries in North America and Europe. The Board encourages the Government of India to increase its vigilance in detecting the misuse of courier and postal services to smuggle controlled substances out of that country.

### 2. Regional cooperation

565. In June 2008, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of India organized a workshop in New Delhi on modalities for the establishment of a permanent regional forum of non-governmental organizations of States members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on

drug abuse prevention. Recommendations arising from the workshop stressed the importance of strengthening networking among non-governmental organizations, information-sharing and advocacy for drug abuse prevention.

566. The ninth talks at the level of Home Secretary between Bangladesh and India were held in Dhaka in August 2008. The home secretaries of the two countries agreed that cooperation between their national drug control agencies needed to be strengthened. As follow-up to the talks, the heads of the national drug control agencies of Bangladesh and India met in New Delhi in March 2009 to discuss ways of enhancing cooperation in combating drug trafficking.

567. Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka were among the 16 countries represented at an Asian Symposium on recovering from drug abuse, the third in a series of such symposiums, held in Tagaytay, Philippines, in November 2008. The Symposium provided an opportunity for participants to present the progress achieved in treating drug addiction in South and South-East Asia and for drug abusers who had recovered from drug dependence to share their experiences.

568. Heads of State and Government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka participated in the second summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), held in New Delhi in November 2008. During the meeting, participants agreed on the final text of the BIMSTEC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking, one of the main objectives of which is to enhance cooperation among the law enforcement agencies of the BIMSTEC member States in combating trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors.

569. Representatives of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka attended the Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok in February 2009. Participants in the Meeting recommended that Governments should develop coordinated strategies to address the increase in heroin trafficking by West African criminal groups, to implement legislation to counter money-laundering and to assess national demand for and sources of amphetamine-type

stimulants in order to prevent the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in those substances more effectively.

570. During the thirty-first session of the SAARC Council of Ministers, held in Colombo in February 2009, ministers for foreign affairs of the SAARC member States discussed implementation of the declaration adopted at the fifteenth summit of SAARC in August 2008, entitled "Partnership for Growth for Our People", and adopted the SAARC Ministerial Declaration on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, in which the ministers agreed to consider the development of an integrated border management mechanism in order to improve customs control measures and prevent trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and other materials intended to support terrorism.

571. Participants from Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka were present at the Commonwealth Asia Regional Workshop on Drug and Substance Abuse held in Brunei Darussalam in March 2009. The workshop was organized by the Asia Centre of the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Brunei Darussalam, with the support of UNODC. During the workshop, youth leaders were involved in interactive lecture sessions, group work, role playing and field visits that helped them to develop a viable action plan for drug abuse prevention and treatment and care for drug abusers. The workshop also provided participants with a platform for sharing best practices in dealing with problems related to drug abuse.

572. In March 2009, a South Asia regional workshop on HIV related to drug use was held in Kathmandu. The workshop was a follow-up to the First Asian Consultation on the Prevention of HIV Related to Drug Use, which was held in January 2008, and was intended as a forum that would address the challenges identified during the Consultation in greater depth. The workshop focused on country-specific activities and regional cooperation in five main areas: the availability of community, civil society and government services to HIV patients; changes to law enforcement policies and practices regarding drug users; responses to the hepatitis C epidemic among drug users and to challenges in providing services to vulnerable populations affected by drug use, HIV and poverty; and support for parliamentarians in bringing about change in the areas discussed during the workshop.

### 3. National legislation, policy and action

573. In September 2008, the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency, in partnership with UNODC, conducted nationwide training on HIV and drug abuse prevention in prisons. The aim of the training was to raise awareness regarding drug abuse and HIV transmission among prison inmates in Bhutan. It was recognized that while the prevalence rate of drug abuse and that of HIV infection in prisons in Bhutan was still relatively low, measures should be taken to prevent their occurrence. Participants in the training included officials of the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency, prisons, the police and health departments and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

574. A week-long campaign to collect signatures against drug abuse, spearheaded by the Citizen's Initiative for Coronation and Centenary Celebrations, was conducted in Bhutan in November 2008. During the campaign, entitled "We, the children of Bhutan, pledge ...", more than 23,000 signatures were collected from children and their parents who pledged to live a life free of drugs. The collection of signatures was presented to the Prime Minister of Bhutan by secondary school students on behalf of the youth participating in the campaign.

575. In January 2009, the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency released three advocacy tools to prevent and reduce drug abuse in that country: a version of the Implementation Framework for the Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Substance Abuse Act of 2005 in Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan; a flip chart containing 10 key prevention messages on drug abuse and HIV; and a report on the drug abuse situation in Bhutan. The purpose of the tools is to raise public awareness of the risks associated with drug abuse, the role of drug abuse in the spread of HIV and avenues for seeking help in overcoming drug dependence. The flip chart will be distributed to all schools in Bhutan in order to promote drug abuse prevention among young people.

576. A revised version of the Scheme of Assistance for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse and for Social Defence Services of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of India became effective in October 2008. The Scheme is an ongoing programme that was last revised in 1999. It allows non-governmental organizations to obtain financial assistance from the Government for the

implementation of initiatives to reduce drug demand. Activities supported by the Scheme include drug abuse awareness and prevention programmes and treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. The revised Scheme provides, inter alia, for arrangements for meeting the increase in the cost of related services since 1999 and for the fostering of more comprehensive approaches to the rehabilitation of drug addicts so as to facilitate their reintegration into the community.

577. In November 2008, a programme to provide incarcerated drug abusers who abuse drugs by injection with substitution drugs that can be taken orally was initiated at the Tihar prison complex near New Delhi. Many incarcerated drug abusers start injecting drugs soon after entering prison, thus becoming exposed to a higher risk of contracting and transmitting HIV through unsafe practices such as sharing needles. The programme, implemented in collaboration with UNODC, is the first of its kind to be established in prisons in South Asia and may be used by UNODC as a model for the development of similar programmes elsewhere in the region.

578. In December 2008, India passed a law amending its Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1940. The revised act increases penalties for the manufacture of counterfeit drugs and is aimed at combating the growing problem of counterfeit and adulterated drugs in that country.

579. During 2008, the National AIDS Control Organisation of India carried out a technical review of all institutions providing drug abusers in India with drug substitution treatment, with a view to their possible accreditation. In order to assist institutions in participating in the accreditation exercise, the organization released a document entitled "Standard operating procedure for substitution treatment using buprenorphine", which outlines the standards to be followed by providers of substitution treatment and against which institutions providing such therapy would be evaluated in order to determine their eligibility for accreditation.

580. An international documentary film festival entitled "Drugs: exploring myths, discovering facts, reducing harm" was held in New Delhi on 21 and 22 February 2009. The festival, organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in partnership with the National AIDS Control Organisation and UNODC, was aimed at

increasing public understanding of the issues surrounding drug abuse.

581. In India, a series of educational modules designed to assist schoolteachers in raising awareness about drug abuse was officially released in June 2009. The modules were prepared by the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, in collaboration with UNODC, and are part of a programme to prevent drug abuse in Indian schools. The Board encourages the Government of India to continue to support drug abuse prevention activities targeting young people.

582. In India, the fortieth meeting of the Drugs Consultative Committee was held in New Delhi on 29 June 2009. The meeting was attended by high-level officials of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Narcotics Control Bureau and the Department of Revenue (of the Ministry of Finance) and by the State drug controllers of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization of India. During the meeting, attention was drawn to the importance of the country's furnishing to the Board accurate statistics on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Participants deliberated on mechanisms that could facilitate the collection of the requisite information at the State level and subsequent reporting to the Drugs Controller General of India. The Narcotics Control Bureau agreed to organize training workshops for the State drug controllers and to work towards developing a system for efficient data collection. The Board notes with satisfaction the efforts of the Government of India to meet its reporting obligations under the international drug control conventions.

583. In March 2009, the Government of Maldives announced two new initiatives as part of its ongoing efforts to combat the growing problem of drug abuse in that country. A comprehensive project to support the drug abuse prevention and treatment components of the Maldives Drug Control Master Plan was announced. In addition, a narcotics control council headed by the Vice-President of Maldives and comprising the Commissioner of Police and representatives of several ministries, was established to facilitate coordinated action in the area of drug control.

584. On 15 July 2009, a parliamentary bill was passed in Sri Lanka to establish a coast guard department. The new agency is tasked with strengthening security in the territorial waters of Sri Lanka and helping to combat the smuggling of drugs into that country.

#### 4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

##### *Narcotic drugs*

585. Trafficking in cannabis herb and cannabis resin remains widespread throughout South Asia, where climate conditions are highly suitable for cannabis plant cultivation. In 2008, special drug law enforcement units of Bangladesh seized 2.3 tons of cannabis herb in that country. In India in the same year, law enforcement authorities seized about 103 tons of cannabis herb and 4.1 tons of cannabis resin, and routine operations to eradicate illicitly cultivated cannabis plants resulted in the eradication of some 164 ha of those plants. Large areas under illicit cannabis plant cultivation were also eradicated in Nepal, where more than 7 tons of cannabis herb were reported to have been seized in 2008. In Sri Lanka, more than 37 tons of cannabis herb were seized in 2008.

586. The widespread abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing narcotic drugs such as codeine is an ongoing problem in Bangladesh. Such preparations are smuggled into that country from India. In 2008, drug law enforcement authorities in Bangladesh seized 53,239 bottles containing codeine-based syrup and 226 ampoules containing pethidine and morphine. A total of 554 tablets containing codeine were also seized in Bangladesh in 2008, a significant decrease compared with 2007, when 70,000 tablets were seized.

587. The drug law enforcement authorities of India regularly eradicate opium poppy illicitly cultivated in remote areas of the country's eastern provinces. Drug law enforcement authorities at both the federal and state levels have stepped up their efforts to gather intelligence on illicit opium poppy cultivation and improve vigilance with regard to areas under such cultivation. The authorities have also conducted regular campaigns among villagers in areas where opium poppy is illicitly cultivated to raise their awareness about the implications of such cultivation. Indian law enforcement agencies reported that the total eradicated area of land under illicit cultivation had decreased from 8,000 ha in 2007 to 631 ha in 2008.

588. In the past, the low-grade heroin base known as "brown sugar" that was found on the illicit market in India was suspected of having been derived from

opium poppy diverted from licit cultivation. However, Indian law enforcement authorities estimate that in recent years, an increasing proportion of the heroin seized in India has originated in Afghanistan. The heroin that enters India is abused locally or is smuggled out of the country by couriers. That is an indication that India is being used as a transit area for heroin consignments. Some 4,950 seizures of heroin were reported in India in 2008. In most cases, only a small amount of heroin was seized. A total of 1,063 kg of heroin was seized in 2008. A total of 73 kg of morphine, which is also commonly abused in India, and 2,033 kg of opium were reported to have been seized in 2008.

589. In India, pharmaceutical preparations containing dextropropoxyphene are commonly used by persons who abuse drugs by injection. Such preparations are often used as an alternative to heroin since they are cheaper and more easily available. In 2008, Indian law enforcement authorities seized a total of more than 80,000 tablets containing dextropropoxyphene.

590. Although India produces and exports large quantities of opium derived from licit cultivation, access to morphine for the treatment of pain remains limited in that country. There have been frequent reports of acute shortages of morphine in palliative care centres and hospitals. The Board notes that efforts have been made at the national and state levels to identify the regulatory and legislative measures that bar access to morphine and encourages the Government of India to take the steps necessary to remove those barriers while continuing to prevent the diversion of morphine.

591. The smuggling of heroin into Maldives is an ongoing problem that is contributing to an increase in drug abuse in that country. In 2008, Maldivian law enforcement authorities reported numerous seizures of heroin, totalling more than 8 kg. In the majority of those cases, the traffickers were arrested at Malé International Airport and had travelled to Maldives from either India or Sri Lanka.

592. Sri Lanka continued to report seizures of heroin in 2008; in the course of the year, drug law enforcement units in that country seized about 17 kg of heroin. India and Pakistan were most often identified as the source of the seized heroin. The bulk of the heroin had been smuggled into Sri Lanka by sea; about

20 per cent of it was seized from passengers arriving by air.

*Psychotropic substances*

593. Bangladesh continues to report large seizures of pharmaceutical preparations containing buprenorphine, which is widely abused by injection. In 2008, law enforcement authorities in that country seized a record 14,782 ampoules containing buprenorphine, that had originated in India and 5,763 methamphetamine tablets, known as “yaba”, that had originated in Myanmar. “Yaba” is reported to be popular among young people in high-income families. In the majority of those cases, the preparations were smuggled by persons entering Bangladesh by crossing the country’s porous land borders.

594. Pharmaceutical preparations containing benzodiazepines are among the drugs most widely abused in Bhutan. More than 1,060 tablets containing chlordiazepoxide and 240 strips of tablets containing nitrazepam were seized in 2007. Bhutan continued to report frequent seizures of those drugs in 2008. The suspected origin of the seized drugs was India.

595. Consistent with reports of the increasing availability of amphetamine-type stimulants in South Asia, several seizures of methamphetamine were made in India in 2008. Indian law enforcement agencies seized about 7,500 tablets of methamphetamine in March 2008 and 3,000 tablets in September of the same year. In addition, 11 kg of methamphetamine was seized in the course of the year.

596. Methaqualone continues to be manufactured illicitly in India, before being smuggled into countries such as South Africa. A total of 2,382 kg of methaqualone was seized in 2008, compared with 1 kg in 2007, 4,521 kg in 2006 and 472 kg in 2005.

597. India has become one of the main sources of drugs sold through illegally operating Internet pharmacies. Orders placed with such pharmacies are often dispatched to buyers in other countries using courier or postal services. Since 2002, Indian law enforcement agencies have detected and disbanded several groups that were operating illegal Internet pharmacies. In February 2007, Indian authorities identified a company that offered software solutions allowing illegal transactions involving pharmaceutical preparations to be made over the Internet. In 2008,

three Internet pharmacies that had been operating in India and illegally selling psychotropic substances to buyers in the United States were shut down. The Board urges the Government of India to adopt measures to prevent the use of the Internet to divert controlled substances.

598. The abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing psychotropic substances in Nepal is facilitated by the open border that that country shares with India. In a survey on drug abuse conducted in 2006, 13 per cent of respondents reported having obtained drugs from the border area between the two countries. Pharmaceutical preparations commonly smuggled out of India and into Nepal contain buprenorphine and nitrazepam. In 2007, about 11,500 vials containing buprenorphine and 92,500 vials containing benzodiazepines were seized in Nepal.

*Precursor chemicals*

599. Law enforcement agencies in India continue to report seizures of acetic anhydride. While an average total of 300 litres of that precursor was seized annually from 2005 to 2007, a total of about 2,800 litres was seized in 2008. The Board encourages the Government of India to remain vigilant with regard to the diversion of acetic anhydride.

600. As one of the world’s largest manufacturers of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, India represents one of the main sources of those precursor chemicals, which are used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants. In recent years, Indian law enforcement agencies have seized several large consignments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine intended for use in illicit drug manufacture in other countries. In February 2008, intelligence provided by Indian law enforcement agencies led to the seizure in New York of 100 kg of ephedrine originating in India. In September 2008, drug control agencies in India seized 37 tons of pseudoephedrine and 872 kg of ephedrine. Attempts to smuggle ephedrine and pseudoephedrine out of India using courier and postal services have also been reported: a package containing 100 kg of ephedrine was seized in December 2007, while a consignment of 95 kg of pseudoephedrine was seized in January 2009.

601. Several attempts to smuggle pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine out of India were also detected in

2008. In February of that year, a total of 280,000 tablets containing pseudoephedrine were seized in India. Also in 2008, in two separate incidents at Le Havre, France, authorities intercepted 11 million tablets containing pseudoephedrine in transit from India to Honduras and a further 90 kg of such tablets in transit from India to Guatemala. Authorities of the United Kingdom seized 1,650,000 tablets containing pseudoephedrine in a consignment originating in India.

602. Bangladesh, like India, constitutes a significant source in South Asia of preparations containing pseudoephedrine. In 2008, 7,132 tablets originating in Bangladesh and destined for Guatemala were seized while being transported through France.

603. A number of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories have been discovered in South Asia in recent years. In May 2008, a clandestine laboratory importing substances used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine was discovered in Kosgama, Sri Lanka. In India, a methamphetamine laboratory was dismantled by law enforcement agencies in the province of Gujarat in November 2008 and another was dismantled in the province of Punjab in June 2009.

#### *Substances not under international control*

604. India has reported an increasing number of seizures of ketamine. Few seizures of ketamine were reported until 2008, when law enforcement authorities seized a total of about 575 kg of that drug. Most of the consignments seized in India were about to be smuggled into countries in South-East Asia.

### **5. Abuse and treatment**

605. Most countries in South Asia lack recent and comprehensive data on the prevalence of drug abuse. Information on patterns of drug abuse in the region is often based on rapid situation assessments, the habits of the patient population in centres for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers and the habits of persons arrested on drug-related charges. The Board reminds the Governments of countries in the region that regular and comprehensive surveys of drug abuse patterns are essential in developing effective drug control policies and strategies to prevent drug abuse.

606. A rapid situation and response assessment conducted by UNODC in Bangladesh in 2005 among 1,073 drug abusers indicated lifetime prevalence rates

of 96 per cent for cannabis abuse, 13 per cent for opium abuse, 92 per cent for abuse of heroin by smoking, 4 per cent for abuse of heroin by injection, 28 per cent for buprenorphine abuse and less than 1 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse. In 2008, of 2,350 patients receiving treatment for drug addiction, 13 per cent were treated for cannabis abuse, 62 per cent for heroin abuse and 10 per cent for the abuse of buprenorphine. The use of mixtures of pharmaceutical preparations containing buprenorphine, diazepam and antihistamines is common among persons who abuse drugs by injection. The Government of Bangladesh operates several centres for the treatment of drug addiction in that country; those centres provided services to 3,869 patients in 2008.

607. In Bhutan, a rapid situation and response assessment conducted by UNODC in Thimphu in 2006 among 200 drug abusers revealed lifetime prevalence rates of drug abuse of 86 per cent for cannabis abuse, 19 per cent for heroin abuse by smoking, 2 per cent for heroin abuse by injection, 14 per cent for buprenorphine abuse and 16 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse. Of the total number of persons arrested by the police for drug abuse in 2006, almost 90 per cent were under 26 years of age, which underscores the prevalence of the problem among youth. In a survey of drug abuse among secondary school students in Phuentsholing, a town near the border between Bhutan and India, conducted in 2008 by the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency in collaboration with UNODC, 9 per cent of respondents reported having abused cannabis occasionally, while 8 per cent reported occasional abuse of pharmaceuticals. The Board notes with satisfaction that the first national baseline survey of drug abuse in Bhutan was conducted in 2009 and looks forward to the findings of that survey.

608. In Bhutan, there are currently no facilities specifically for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers. Patients seeking treatment for drug abuse receive care in the psychiatric wards of major hospitals. The Government of Bhutan is planning to open a treatment facility dedicated to providing care for the growing number of drug abusers in that country.

609. The most recent national household survey in India was conducted during 2000 and 2001. The survey indicated lifetime prevalence rates of 0.5 per cent for opium abuse, 0.2 per cent for heroin abuse, 0.1 per cent

for abuse of cough syrups containing narcotic drugs, 4.1 per cent for cannabis abuse and 0.1 per cent for abuse of sedatives and hypnotics. A rapid situation and response assessment conducted by UNODC in India in 2005 among 5,732 drug abusers indicated lifetime prevalence rates of 73 per cent for cannabis abuse, 27 per cent for opium abuse, 52 per cent for abuse of heroin by smoking, 28 per cent for abuse of heroin by injection, 30 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse and 26 per cent for buprenorphine abuse. In India, treatment and rehabilitation services for drug abusers are provided by centres operated by the Government and by non-governmental organizations. The Government of India currently operates 100 treatment centres and provides financial support to 361 voluntary organizations that operate 376 treatment rehabilitation centres and 68 counselling and awareness centres nationwide.

610. According to an estimate by the National Narcotics Control Bureau of Maldives, there were between 2,000 and 3,000 drug addicts in that country in 2006. A rapid situation assessment conducted in 2003 indicated that opioids were abused by 76 per cent of respondents and cannabinoids by 12 per cent. The increase in drug abuse in recent years has prompted the Government of Maldives to develop a comprehensive drug control master plan, which was launched in 2008. A centre for the rehabilitation of drug abusers on the island of Himmafushi, established by the Government of Maldives in 1997, can accommodate about 125 patients. There are reports of insufficient access to treatment and rehabilitation services in Maldives, notably for repeat offenders arrested on drug-related charges and drug abusers in prisons. The Board notes with satisfaction that in 2009 the Government of Maldives established a new detoxification centre to treat drug addicts.

611. According to a survey conducted by the Government of Nepal in 2006, there were some 46,000 drug abusers in that country. The survey revealed lifetime prevalence rates of 87 per cent for cannabis abuse, 86 per cent for abuse of pharmaceutical preparations, 61 per cent for abuse of low-grade heroin base ("brown sugar"), 14 per cent for heroin abuse and 7 per cent for opium abuse. Similarly, a rapid situation and response assessment carried out by UNODC among 1,322 drug abusers in 2005 revealed a lifetime prevalence rate of 92 per cent for cannabis abuse, 14 per cent for opium abuse, 88 per

cent for abuse of heroin by smoking, 46 per cent for abuse of heroin by injection, 11 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse and 77 per cent for buprenorphine abuse. In 2007, 617 people were reported to have been arrested on drug-related charges. In Nepal, treatment services are provided to drug addicts by non-governmental organizations rather than by the Government. The Board encourages the Government of Nepal to ensure that adequate resources are allocated for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

612. A rapid situation and response assessment conducted by UNODC among 1,016 drug abusers in Sri Lanka in 2005 revealed lifetime prevalence rates of 72 per cent for cannabis abuse, 11 per cent for opium abuse, 55 per cent for abuse of heroin by injection, 2 per cent for abuse of heroin by smoking, 4 per cent for dextropropoxyphene abuse and less than 1 per cent for buprenorphine abuse. The Government of Sri Lanka operates four treatment centres for drug addicts and special programmes in prisons to treat incarcerated drug abusers. Additional rehabilitation programmes are run by a number of non-governmental organizations nationwide. In 2007, 3,413 drug abusers were admitted for treatment at facilities operated by the Government.

613. The high prevalence of drug abuse by injection in several countries in South Asia and the common practice among persons who abuse drugs by injection of sharing needles are important factors contributing to the spread of HIV. In response to this problem, the Governments of several countries in the region have established opioid substitution programmes. In August 2008, the Government of Bangladesh approved a pilot study on the use of methadone in substitution treatment for drug abuse, to be conducted in Dhaka in collaboration with UNODC. In India, about 4,500 drug abusers receive substitution treatment using buprenorphine at 47 centres run by non-governmental organizations and accredited by the Government. In Nepal, methadone substitution treatment is provided to some 250 drug abusers in a programme implemented by the Government. In October 2008, the Government of Maldives, in collaboration with UNODC, initiated a pilot programme of opioid substitution treatment using methadone for 45 drug addicts.

## West Asia

### 1. Major developments

614. After peaking in 2007, the illicit cultivation of opium poppy and the illicit production of opium in Afghanistan decreased in 2008 and 2009. UNODC reports also indicate that in Afghanistan prices of opiates continued to fall in 2009, fewer people were involved in opium poppy cultivation and opium production and the proceeds of the illicit drug industry decreased. At the same time, the number of Afghan provinces free of opium poppy in Afghanistan and the total quantity of drugs seized continued to rise. In addition, farm-gate prices of opium poppy have fallen due to oversupply, and food prices have risen due to undersupply. Given those circumstances, now is an opportune moment for the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to give higher priority to improving governance and economic development and to provide sustainable support for legitimate alternative livelihoods for farming communities.

615. Many countries in West Asia reported positive developments in drug control in 2009 as a result of national and multilateral efforts by Governments and the allocation of increased resources to fight the scourge of Afghan opiates. In particular, the Board commends the Government of Afghanistan on its recent decision not to authorize any import of acetic anhydride into the country. At the same time, the Board stresses that Afghanistan remains by far the largest illicit producer of heroin and other opiates in the world and is becoming a major producer of illicitly cultivated cannabis. The magnitude of the drug problem is such that it poses a serious threat to the political, economic and social stability of not only Afghanistan but also other countries, both in West Asia and in other regions. Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan, the Russian Federation and countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus and on the Arabian Peninsula remain particularly vulnerable to drug trafficking and abuse.

616. The Middle East has become a market for illicit drugs such as cocaine that had not previously been known to be abused to any significant extent in the subregion and some countries in the region are confronted with new drug smuggling trends.

617. Trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants continue to increase in the countries of West

Asia, particularly in the eastern Mediterranean and on the Arabian Peninsula. In 2007, almost 30 per cent of global seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants were effected in West Asia. The most significant seizures were reported in Saudi Arabia (27 per cent of all amphetamine-type stimulants seized). In recent years, West Asia's share of global seizures of synthetic drugs, including Captagon, amphetamines and MDMA ("ecstasy"), has risen from 1 to 25 per cent.

618. Counterfeit Captagon tablets, often containing amphetamine, continue to be abused and seized in West Asia. In 2008, most of the seizures of such tablets were reported in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic. Many of the seized consignments had been sent from the Syrian Arab Republic. Several other countries in the region have reported dramatic increases in seizures of Captagon tablets. Bulgaria and, to a lesser degree, Turkey are believed to be the sources of the counterfeit Captagon, although there are several indications that undetected amphetamine manufacture may also be occurring elsewhere in the region, in particular in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, countries in which it is suspected that clandestine laboratories are manufacturing counterfeit Captagon tablets.

### 2. Regional cooperation

619. Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan are increasingly cooperating through the Triangular Initiative, an initiative brokered by UNODC to improve the sharing of intelligence with a view to combating the smuggling of opiates out of Afghanistan and to enhancing joint interdiction operations. Several high-level meetings on combating trafficking in drugs were held, including the third ministerial meeting, held in Vienna in October 2009, and related meetings held in Vienna in March 2009, Kabul in May 2009 and Tehran in July 2009. The three countries continued the deployment at their borders of border liaison officers to plan joint operations targeting the smuggling of opiates out of Afghanistan. The members of the Triangular Initiative also announced that they would strengthen efforts to counter the illicit trade in precursor chemicals used in processing opium in Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries.

620. A joint planning cell was established in Tehran in March 2009 to enhance cooperation among the three countries of the Triangular Initiative and launch joint

field operations against international drug trafficking networks in West Asia. In order to plan for full deployment of border liaison officers in common border areas, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted the International Conference of Drug Liaison Officers on 28 and 29 April 2009. The main purpose of the Conference was to reach agreement on a comprehensive cross-border communication plan and cooperation to stop precursor chemicals from entering Afghanistan. Some success has already been achieved by means of joint operations at Afghanistan's borders with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Central Asian States. The Board notes, however, that although one fourth of all narcotic drugs of Afghan origin is smuggled through Pakistan, no seizures of drugs of Afghan origin were reported in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan.

621. At key international summits, emphasis was placed on adopting a truly regional approach to combating Afghanistan's illicit drug industry. On 27 March 2009, the Special Conference on Afghanistan was convened in Moscow under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, with the participation of, among others, the United Nations (represented by the Secretary-General, the Board and UNODC), the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). The declaration adopted at the Special Conference, *inter alia*, stressed the importance of strengthening efforts to combat illicit drug production and promote the development of the licit economy of Afghanistan and underlined the importance of close regional cooperation, more active collaboration among neighbouring States to combat drug trafficking and efforts to prevent precursors from entering the country.

622. Representatives of 73 countries and 20 international organizations attended an international conference on Afghanistan that was held in The Hague on 31 March 2009. The conference presented a strategy for leveraging, in a regional context, international will and resources to address the remaining challenges in Afghanistan, including the illicit production of, trafficking in and abuse of narcotic drugs. The conference stressed the need for a well-coordinated and strategically integrated approach for Afghanistan, focusing on the priority goals of promoting good

governance and stronger institutions, generating economic growth, strengthening security and enhancing regional cooperation.

623. Governments of countries in Central Asia are increasing their bilateral and multilateral cooperation in areas such as reduction of illicit drug supply and demand, precursor control, border management, countering the spread of HIV/AIDS and combating organized crime and money-laundering. Those countries have also carried out various regional projects and international operations under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), CSTO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding on Subregional Drug Control Cooperation signed in Tashkent in 1996 as well as joint programmes supported by the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union, OSCE, the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL, the Paris Pact Policy Consultative Group, NATO–Russia Council, mini-Dublin groups and individual Governments.

624. The Board urges the Governments participating in the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) to actively include Afghanistan, as well as its neighbouring countries, in that initiative, in order to ensure greater cooperation in collecting, exchanging and analysing drug-related intelligence, organizing and coordinating joint international operations and carrying out other supply and demand reduction efforts and training in West Asia.

625. Joint measures taken by Governments of countries in the Middle East to combat drug trafficking have continued to yield good results. For example, Jordanian authorities reported that in 2007 and 2008, they conducted 22 operations in which they coordinated efforts with Saudi Arabian and Syrian authorities. Jordan remains committed to existing bilateral agreements providing for drug control cooperation, with Egypt, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey. Jordan also cooperates with UNODC and the European Commission in a number of projects funded by the European Union.

626. Close cooperation in particular in controlled deliveries and the sharing of information on drug trafficking, especially between Turkey and other

countries in West Asia, has proved effective, resulting in significant drug seizures in 2007 and 2008. The Board encourages the Governments of countries in West Asia to intensify their cooperation in order to achieve good results in joint efforts to combat drug trafficking in the region.

627. In January 2009, with technical assistance from UNODC, a number of drug law enforcement officers of the Dubai Police participated in a workshop held in Beirut on the design, drafting and marketing of projects related to drug control. Training covered the topics of surveillance and awareness of suspicious behaviour by individuals.

628. At a workshop on border control held in Košice, Slovakia, in April 2009, law enforcement officers from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Palestine, as well as from countries of South-Eastern Europe, discussed new methodologies and equipment used to control borders and combat drug smuggling.

629. At the eighth annual regional coordination meeting on HIV and AIDS in the Middle East, convened by UNAIDS in Beirut in March 2009, participants discussed, among other topics, the harmonization of regional approaches, universal access to HIV prevention, treatment and care services and resource mobilization. The Government of Lebanon is developing a national five-year strategy to begin in 2010. With the technical assistance of UNODC and in partnership with UNAIDS, authorities will develop an action plan on drug abuse and HIV; substitution therapy will also be included in the plan.

630. At its 29th session, held in Muscat in late December 2008, the Supreme Council of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf approved the establishment in Qatar of the Gulf Cooperation Council criminal information centre for combating drugs.

631. The Israeli Anti-Drug Authority participated in regional law enforcement workshops organized by the United Nations, participated in the joint meetings of Israeli and Palestinian law enforcement officers and began building channels of communication with Jordan by conducting research trips.

### 3. National legislation, policy and action

632. The Government of Afghanistan ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption<sup>50</sup> and established the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption in August 2008. However, the enactment of revised drug control legislation, the law on extradition and mutual legal assistance, the Criminal Procedure Code, and amendments to the Penal Code reflecting penal sanctions for corruption are still awaiting approval of the National Assembly and/or the President. Corruption continues to be a serious problem in Afghanistan, hampering efforts to eradicate illicit opium poppy cultivation and combat illicit drug trade in general. The Board urges the Government of Afghanistan to expedite adoption of the necessary legislative base that will enhance its ability to take strong measures to fight corruption, report the main drug traffickers to the Security Council and prosecute those, including government officials, involved in Afghanistan's illicit drug industry.

633. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, one of the countries most affected by the illicit trade in Afghan opiates, significantly increased its resources allocated for drug control in the year starting 20 March 2008 and, in particular, strengthened its capacity for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse. The Government has also continued to strengthen border control through the deployment of additional personnel and the construction of barriers and other border structures.

634. In May 2009, the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan ratified the framework agreement on the establishment of CARICC; and the parliament of the Russian Federation ratified the framework agreement in September 2009. With those ratifications, CARICC begins the transition from its pilot phase to full-fledged functionality as a regional focal point for communication, analysis and the real-time exchange of operational information in order to prevent and combat transborder drug trafficking and international organized criminal groups involved in drug trafficking. Among achievements to date, CARICC served as the regional focal point for the Targeted Anti-trafficking Regional Communication, Expertise and Training (TARCET) in the areas of precursors and controlled

<sup>50</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2349, No. 42146.

delivery operations. Efforts within the framework of CARICC to foster cooperation and share information among the participating countries resulted in the seizure of 200 kg of heroin and the dismantling of more than 10 drug trafficking groups. The Board notes that the CARICC strategic plan for the period 2010-2011, which was approved at the first meeting of the CARICC Council, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in February 2009, recognizes the openness of CARICC to developing partnerships with non-member States and organizations.

635. Over 20 partner countries and international and regional organizations participate in Operation TARCET, which is aimed at facilitating cross-border cooperation in interceptions and seizures of consignments of precursor chemicals smuggled into Afghanistan for use in the illicit manufacture of heroin. During 2008, in the framework of TARCET I, such joint activities resulted in the seizure of over 19 tons of acetic anhydride (14 tons in Pakistan, 5 tons in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 500 kg in Afghanistan), over 27 tons of other chemicals (6.8 tons of sulphuric acid in Kyrgyzstan, 1.6 tons of acetic acid in Uzbekistan, 16 tons of acetyl chloride in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 3 tons of diverse chemicals in Afghanistan). During the first month of the second phase of the operation (TARCET II), which started in July 2009 and is expected to last until early 2010, 5 tons of acetic anhydride were reported to have been seized in Quetta, Pakistan.

636. In May 2009, the Government of Kazakhstan adopted a new programme for combating drug abuse and drug trafficking for the period 2009-2011, focusing on implementation of the second stage of the national drug control strategy for the period 2006-2014. The main purpose of the programme is to dismantle illicit drug distribution networks in the country and reverse the increasing trends in the abuse of psychoactive substances and in drug dependence by enhancing coordination and regional drug control measures and promoting primary prevention activities and healthy lifestyles among the public. The programme entails a 15-fold increase in the financing of the national drug control authorities with the aim of increasing by 30-50 per cent the amount of opiates seized each year.

637. The Government of Armenia issued several decrees in January 2008, strengthening its national drug control mechanisms by approving licence formats

and licensing procedures for all processing activities related to the manufacture, distribution and medical and scientific use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and their precursors. In April and September 2008, the country's drug control legislation was amended with a view to strengthening controls over licit movement and stocks of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors.

638. The Board takes note of the achievements obtained through enhanced drug law enforcement and interdiction efforts in Israel. In 2008, the Israeli police established a new drug interdiction unit named "Magen" to patrol the Israeli-Jordanian border in the Dead Sea area, resulting in increased drug seizures. Israeli police reported that the number of drug trafficking and smuggling cases increased by 40 per cent from 2007 to 2008.

639. The Government of Jordan carries out initiatives, including seminars and lectures at schools and universities, to raise public awareness of the dangers of drug abuse. Governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, correction and rehabilitation centres, youth clubs and the media will all be involved in those initiatives which are aimed at making drug demand reduction efforts more successful.

#### **4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking**

##### *Narcotic drugs*

640. According to "Afghanistan Opium Survey 2009: Summary Findings", issued by UNODC in September 2009, opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan decreased from a peak of 193,000 ha in 2007 to 157,000 ha in 2008 (a decrease of 19 per cent) to 123,000 ha in 2009 (a decrease of 22 per cent). The most significant decrease was recorded in Helmand province, where such cultivation declined by a third, from 103,590 ha in 2008 to 69,833 ha in 2009. The number of provinces free from opium poppy cultivation has increased from 18 to 20. Kapisa, Baghlan and Faryab provinces became poppy-free, while Nangarhar province could not retain the poppy-free status that it had achieved in 2008. The Board urges the Government of Afghanistan, as well as the international community, to continue to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of measures to curb opium poppy cultivation and to ensure that farming

communities involved in illicit crop cultivation are provided with sustainable, legitimate livelihoods.

641. Despite the decrease of 22 per cent in the total cultivation area, because of the record opium poppy yield of 56 kg per hectare in 2009 — an increase of 15 per cent over 2008 — opium production fell by only 10 per cent, from 7,700 tons in 2008 to 6,900 tons in 2009. The prices of fresh and dry opium poppies have fallen by a third in the past year, causing the total farm-gate value of opium production in Afghanistan to fall by 40 per cent, from \$730 million in 2008 to \$438 million in 2009. The number of people involved in opium production also dropped significantly: from 2.4 million to 1.6 million.

642. Afghan opiates are smuggled predominantly through Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and countries of Central Asia. Those countries are faced with a wide range of problems related to large-scale drug trafficking such as organized crime, corruption and relatively high illicit demand for opiates. As a result, the Islamic Republic of Iran has the highest rate of abuse of opiates in the world. In the countries of Central Asia, the rate of abuse of opiates continues to increase, and HIV/AIDS transmission through the sharing of needles among persons who abuse drugs by injection continues to be a problem.

643. Significant drug seizures were made in Afghanistan, though those seizures were small in comparison with the scale of illicit drug production in the country. Of the estimated 7,700 tons of opium produced in 2008, 42.8 tons were seized, for a seizure ratio of 0.56 per cent, while the ratio of heroin seized to heroin produced is 0.43 per cent (2.8 tons of heroin seized of an estimated 658 tons of heroin produced). It has been reported that in the first half of 2009, drug law enforcement operations involving military units of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) of Afghanistan and NATO resulted in the seizure of 459 tons of poppy seeds, 50 tons of opium, 7 tons of morphine, 2 tons of heroin and 19 tons of cannabis resin. In addition, the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan reported the seizure of 36 tons of opium, 5 tons of heroin, 2 tons of morphine and 338 tons of cannabis resin.

644. The Islamic Republic of Iran, through whose territory more than half of illicit Afghan opiates is reported to be smuggled, continues to seize more opiates than any other country in the world. In the first

half of 2008, 180 tons of opiates were seized in the Islamic Republic of Iran (an increase of 37 per cent over the first half of 2007), mainly on the country's eastern border with Afghanistan. In the first three months of 2009, 146 tons of opium, 6.5 tons of heroin, over 3 tons of morphine and 21 tons of cannabis resin were seized by Iranian law enforcement authorities.

645. Pakistan continues to be used as a major transit area for Afghan opiates, but to a lesser extent than is the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to Pakistan officials, one third of illicit opiates of Afghan origin are smuggled through Pakistan. According to Government data, until 2006, increasing quantities of Afghan opiates were seized in Pakistan. The total amount of seized opiates increased from 25 tons of heroin equivalent in 2005 to 36.4 tons of heroin equivalent in 2006, an increase of 46 per cent. The latest officially reported data suggest that, while seizures of opium increased by 77 per cent (from 15.4 tons in 2007 to 27 tons in 2008), seizures of heroin and morphine during that period each fell by one third (seizures of heroin fell from 2.8 tons to 1.9 tons and seizures of morphine fell from 10.9 tons to 7.3 tons).

646. Turkey reported an increase in the amount of heroin seized: in 2008, the amount of heroin seized in Turkey exceeded 15 tons, an increase of 14 per cent over the 13.2 tons seized in 2007. However, the amount of opium seized, after peaking at 519 kg in 2007, fell to 202 kg in 2008, a decrease of 61 per cent. Cocaine seizures in Turkey followed an upward trend until 2008. The amount of cocaine seized totalled only 3 kg in 2003 but increased to 40 kg in 2005, 77 kg in 2006 and 114 kg in 2007. In 2008, cocaine seizures dropped to 105 kg.

647. According to UNODC estimates, approximately 121 tons of heroin and 293 tons of opium transited through Central Asian countries in 2008, as most opiates produced and trafficked in north-eastern Afghanistan are smuggled across the border into the countries of Central Asia, due to their proximity and strong ethnic links. Official data on opiates seizures in 2008 indicate that Central Asian countries seized 5.3 tons of heroin (almost 2 tons more than in 2007) and 4.5 tons of opium (1.7 tons less than in 2007). Some of those seizures were carried out through joint operations, such as Operation Channel 2008 of CSTO, which resulted in the detection of 12,782 cases of drug

trafficking and the seizure of over 25 tons of precursors and 30 tons of illicit drugs, including 3.4 tons of heroin, 983 kg of opium, 1.9 tons of cannabis, 11.7 tons of cannabis resin and 1.6 tons of cocaine.

648. Several large seizures of opiates (up to 500 kg each) have been reported by the law enforcement agencies of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Tajikistan continues to seize the largest quantities of opiates in Central Asia (53 per cent of seizures in the subregion in 2008) and remains the gateway for most opiate smuggling through the subregion. Heroin seizures effected in Central Asian States increased by 60 per cent, primarily due to the dramatic increase in seizures in Kazakhstan (1.6 tons of heroin seized, an increase of 214 per cent over 2007) and Uzbekistan (1.5 tons of heroin seized, a 207 per cent increase from 2007). Heroin seizures in Tajikistan increased by 6 per cent from 2007, reaching 1.6 tons in 2008. In contrast, opium seizures in Central Asia decreased by 28 per cent (4.5 tons seized). The largest portion of the opium seized in this subregion continued to be accounted for by Tajikistan (1.7 tons), followed by Turkmenistan (1.5 tons) and Uzbekistan (1 ton). Statistics released by the Government of Turkmenistan indicate that the total amount of drugs seized in 2008 exceeded 2 tons, including 245 kg of heroin, 261 kg of cocaine, 1.5 tons of opium and 135 kg of cannabis and cannabis resin.

649. Official data suggest that the quantities of heroin, opium and cocaine smuggled through the Southern Caucasus are increasing. In 2008, 650 kg of drugs were seized in Azerbaijan, including 55 kg of opium and 49 kg of heroin. The number of offences recorded for drug possession, abuse and trafficking exceeded 1,670. The opiates originating in Afghanistan are entering Azerbaijan mostly by land and rail from the Islamic Republic of Iran and countries in Central Asia en route to Georgia, the Russian Federation and countries in Western Europe.

650. The Middle East has become a market for illicit drugs such as cocaine that had not previously been known to be abused to any significant extent in the subregion. For example, Jordan is confronted with new drug smuggling trends. In the first four months of 2009, 25.4 kg of cocaine from South America were seized in the country, compared with a total of 6.3 kg in 2008. While in recent years only small quantities of cocaine and heroin reached Lebanon, mainly to meet

local demand, in 2008 Lebanese authorities intercepted 61 kg of cocaine and 14.5 kg of heroin, a significant increase over the corresponding figures for 2007.

651. The largest increase in cocaine seizures in 2007 was reported in the countries of the Arabian Peninsula (seizures of 141 kg in 2007 compared with 72 kg in 2006). The Syrian Arab Republic reported total seizures of 77 kg in 2007 compared with 2 kg in 2006.

652. Because it is situated between drug-producing countries to the north and east and drug-consuming countries to the south and west, Jordan continues to be primarily a transit area for illicit drugs. The Public Security Directorate of Jordan has noted that the amount of drugs smuggled through Jordan continues to grow. The drugs of choice among individuals arrested for drug possession in Jordan are cannabis and heroin, and the majority of individuals arrested for drug-related crimes are between the ages of 18 and 35 years.

653. According to UNODC estimates, the production of cannabis resin in Afghanistan has been increasing since 2003. In 2007, the total area under cannabis plant cultivation in Afghanistan (70,000 ha) equalled more than one third of the total area under opium poppy cultivation. The Board continues to be concerned that the vast oversupply of opiates and the widely reported decrease in opiate prices could prompt a shift to cannabis cultivation and smuggling. As an indication of that shift, it was reported that the total amount of cannabis resin seized in Pakistan increased by 23 per cent in the period 2005-2006 (from 93.5 to 115.4 tons) and by 33 per cent in the period 2007-2008 (from 101 to 135 tons).

654. Cannabis continues to be the drug most commonly seized in Central Asia. In addition to the fact that cannabis plants grow wild in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, more and more shipments of Afghan cannabis and cannabis resin are being discovered in Central Asia. The law enforcement agencies of Central Asian countries seized over 33 tons of cannabis and more than 1 ton of cannabis resin in 2008. Similarly, in Turkey, the amount of cannabis resin seized increased by 23 per cent, to 39.1 tons, in 2008. Authorities in Azerbaijan seized 555 kg of cannabis and cannabis resin.

655. Lebanon is not a major producer of illicit drugs. However, Lebanese authorities reported a small increase in cannabis cultivation in 2008 and growing

drug abuse particularly among young persons, due to the greater availability and reduced price of most illicit drugs. Israeli police have occasionally reported the arrest of farmers for clandestinely growing cannabis plants using hydroponic techniques.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

656. In Turkey, the amount of seized synthetic drugs, predominantly MDMA (“ecstasy”) and Captagon (containing mainly amphetamine), increased until 2005, when 1.7 million tablets were seized. After 2005, the amount of “ecstasy” seized in Turkey decreased by about 35 per cent, averaging 1 million tablets each year in the period 2005-2008. Half of the seized tablets were subsequently identified as fake “ecstasy”, containing meta-chlorophenylpiperazine instead of MDMA. The amount of Captagon tablets seized in Turkey also decreased by approximately 63 per cent in 2008, from 7.5 million tablets in 2007 to 2.7 million in 2008. The Government of Turkey has indicated that the decrease may be partly attributable to inadequate cooperation with law enforcement agencies in neighbouring countries.

657. Counterfeit Captagon tablets containing amphetamine continue to be seized mainly in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates. Trafficking in and abuse of counterfeit Captagon remain serious problems in the countries on the Arabian Peninsula, where Captagon appears to have become the drug of choice. In 2008, most of the amphetamine seized worldwide was seized in the Middle East (accounting for 73 per cent of the world total), followed by Western Europe (19 per cent of the world total). According to UNODC, in Saudi Arabia, the amount of seized amphetamine-type stimulants, mostly in the form of Captagon, increased from 0.3 tons in 2002 to 14 tons in 2007.<sup>51</sup> The Board is concerned about the marked increase in Captagon seizures effected in that country. The Board urges the authorities of Saudi Arabia to investigate the reasons behind that development and to take the appropriate monitoring and control measures.

658. Captagon tablets illicitly manufactured in laboratories in Eastern Europe are transported through Turkey from the Bulgarian border en route to West

Asia through the Syrian Arab Republic by land and sea. Drug law enforcement operations involving the close cooperation of Bulgaria, Saudi Arabia and Turkey resulted in the seizure of nearly 3 million Captagon tablets in 2008. In the same year, Saudi Arabia seized 52 million counterfeit Captagon tablets. Several other countries of the subregion have reported dramatic increases in seizures of counterfeit Captagon since 2004.

659. According to Iraqi health authorities, pharmaceutical preparations containing the controlled substance diazepam (Valium) is the drug most commonly abused among the Iraqi population. Diazepam is available in correctional and health institutions throughout Iraq. The Board calls upon the Iraqi authorities to take appropriate regulatory measures to ensure that the distribution of controlled substances, in particular diazepam, is always carried out under medical supervision and dispensed in accordance with legitimate medical prescriptions. In Jordan, benzodiazepines are reported to be abused. The Pharmaceutical Crime Unit of the Ministry of Health of Israel, which monitors the diversion of prescription drugs, is investigating the illicit trade in buprenorphine (Subutex) and the use of forged prescriptions to obtain methylphenidate.

#### *Precursors*

660. The destruction of clandestine drug laboratories in Afghanistan has continued: 69 facilities illicitly manufacturing heroin were destroyed in 2008. The seizure of 14,233 litres of acetic anhydride in 2008, although an increase over the quantity seized in 2007, constitutes less than 1 per cent of the quantity of that chemical estimated to be used for heroin manufacture in Afghanistan. As a result of the new emphasis on addressing the link between drugs and the insurgency, operations in the first half of 2009 involving military units of ISAF and NATO resulted in the destruction of 98 tons of precursor chemicals and 27 illicit drug laboratories in Afghanistan. In addition, the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan reported the seizure of 61 tons of precursor chemicals and destruction of 74 clandestine opium processing laboratories.

661. The amount of acetic anhydride reported to have been seized in Turkey increased by 250 per cent from 2006 to 2007, reaching 13.3 tons. That trend was

<sup>51</sup> *Amphetamine and Ecstasy: 2008 Global ATS Assessment* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XI.12).

reversed in 2008, when seizures of that precursor totalled less than 5 tons.

### 5. Abuse and treatment

662. The abuse of opiates continues to pose a major problem in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries. Nearly all those countries have high rates of drug abuse. For example, the Islamic Republic of Iran has the world's highest rate of abuse of opiates: more than 2 million people are reported to abuse opiates, resulting in an estimated prevalence rate of 2.8 per cent. Pakistan also has a high abuse rate for opiates: the estimated rate of drug abuse among the population aged 15-64 years in 2006 was 0.7 per cent. In 2008, the Government of Pakistan reported that there were an estimated 628,000 "severe/problem" opioid abusers in the country, 77 per cent of whom were heroin abusers. Many countries in Central Asia have similar levels of drug abuse, heroin having replaced cannabis and opium as the most commonly abused illicit drug. In Central Asia, the incidence of heroin dependence among registered drug abusers ranges from 50 to 80 per cent, with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan reporting the highest rates.

663. Drug abuse in the countries of Central Asia is reaching alarming proportions, due especially to the sharp increase in the use of opiates in recent years. In 2008, more than 94,000 drug abusers were registered in clinics of the countries in the subregion. As a result of the wide availability of cheap heroin, patterns of drug abuse have shifted from smoking opium and cannabis to abuse of heroin by injection and, to a lesser extent, the abuse of some opium concoctions. Heroin is the most commonly abused drug (70 per cent of registered drug users), followed by cannabis (15 per cent) and opium (11 per cent).

664. Drug abuse remains a serious concern in the Southern Caucasus. In Azerbaijan, the drugs of choice are opioids and cannabis, followed by non-prescribed sedatives and tranquillizers. In 2008, among drug users aged 15-64 years, 70 per cent abused opioids, 20 per cent abused cannabis and 10 per cent abused benzodiazepines; among adolescents, 10 per cent abused opioids, 30 per cent abused cannabis and 60 per cent abused benzodiazepines. At the end of 2008, 514 persons who abused drugs by injection were infected with hepatitis or HIV, while 26 of the 48 drug-related deaths in the country were caused by the abuse

of benzodiazepines. The Board urges the Government of Azerbaijan to closely monitor that worrying situation and increase the resources allocated for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, especially among youth.

665. While there are very little data on drug abuse in the Middle East, heroin abuse is reported to have increased in the subregion, and the age of initial abuse is decreasing and the demand for treatment is increasing. However, many countries in the Middle East lack the capacity to collect and analyse data on drug abuse. The Board encourages the Governments of those countries to conduct comprehensive surveys and rapid assessments of the drug abuse situation and to take effective measures in the area of demand reduction.

666. According to Lebanese authorities, the number of male drug abusers increased from 488 in 2001 to 1,381 in 2008, and the most prevalent drugs of abuse remained cannabis and cannabis resin ("hashish"), followed by heroin and, to a lesser extent, cocaine.

667. In Israel, an epidemiological survey on the prevalence of drug abuse among the general population is carried out every four years. The data for 2008 show that 60 per cent of the 20,000 problematic drug abusers in Israel abuse opioids by injection. The reported prevalence of HIV among persons who abuse drugs by injection is 2 per cent. The Israel Anti-Drug Authority administers treatment programmes targeting specific segments of the population, such as women, youth, new immigrants and the homeless, providing counselling, sanitary services and food.

668. According to official reports, 120 new HIV cases were reported in Afghanistan in 2008, bringing the national total to 556. The main cause of HIV transmission in the country is exposure to contaminated drug injecting equipment. The Board notes that the Afghanistan National Development Strategy aims to keep the country's HIV prevalence rate below 0.5 per cent of the population and reduce the rates of mortality and morbidity associated with HIV/AIDS by the end of 2010. To achieve that goal, the Government is taking guidance from the National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS for the period 2006-2010.

669. According to the Ministry of Health of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a total of 19,435 cases of

HIV/AIDS infection were identified from January 1986 to March 2009, up to 7 per cent of those individuals being female. Drug abuse by injection remains the most prevalent factor in HIV transmission in the Islamic Republic of Iran (78 per cent), although the role of sexual transmission is now increasing. Given that 60 per cent of the country's population of 71 million is under the age of 30, the Board is concerned of the danger of HIV infection spreading in the country.

670. In the Central Asian countries, HIV and other blood-borne infections are strongly associated with drug abuse by injection. According to UNODC estimates (for 2008), in Kazakhstan approximately 100,000 individuals aged 15-64 years abuse drugs by injection, compared with 80,000 in Uzbekistan, 25,000 in Kyrgyzstan and 15,000 in Tajikistan. In Central Asian countries, the lifetime prevalence of injecting drug abuse among problematic opiate users ranges from 68 per cent (in Uzbekistan) to 95 per cent (in Kyrgyzstan). Of that group, 90-99 per cent have injected opiates at least once in the past 12 months.

671. Official statistics provided by Governments of Central Asian countries showed 6,664 new HIV cases in 2008, for a cumulative total of 31,000 HIV cases. That represents an increase of 24 per cent in the total number of registered HIV cases in one year and a 19-fold increase since 2000. According to the most recent UNAIDS estimate, in 2005 approximately 52,000 people were living with HIV/AIDS in Central Asia, while UNODC estimates that more than 2,700 people died of HIV/AIDS during the period 2006-2008. The Board urges the Governments of Central Asian countries and the international community to take prompt action to stop this concentrated HIV/AIDS epidemic, focusing on persons who abuse drugs by injection.

## **D. Europe**

### **1. Major developments**

672. The Board notes that the Government of the United Kingdom reclassified cannabis in January 2009, which means that cases involving cannabis are subject to stricter law enforcement. The decision reflects the fact that highly potent forms of cannabis (such as "skunk") have become dominant on the illicit drug

market of the United Kingdom. In February 2009, the Government of the United Kingdom rejected the recommendation by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs that MDMA ("ecstasy") should be downgraded (see paragraph 695 below).

673. The abuse of certain drugs appears to be stable or declining in some countries in Europe. Information from recent national surveys suggests that cannabis use is stabilizing in many countries in the region. Similarly, the most recent data available support reports that the abuse of amphetamines and MDMA ("ecstasy") in Europe is stabilizing or even decreasing, after having increased in the 1990s. Data from some countries suggest that some drug abusers may be replacing amphetamines and "ecstasy" with cocaine. That may be the case in Denmark, Spain (to a limited extent) and the United Kingdom.

674. Europe has a large market for cannabis and is reportedly the only region into which cannabis herb from other regions is smuggled. Western Europe remains the largest market in the world for cannabis resin. The Western European country in which the largest amount of cannabis resin is seized is Spain, followed by Portugal and France. The main sources of the cannabis resin found in Western Europe are Morocco and countries in South-West Asia, notably Afghanistan.

675. In Western Europe, the number of cocaine seizures has decreased substantially, particularly in the main ports of entry. According to the World Customs Organization, most of the cocaine entering Western Europe has been smuggled out of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Central Africa and West Africa continue to be used by traffickers as storage and transit areas for cocaine, although a decline has been noted in both the total amount of cocaine seized and the number of cocaine seizures.

676. In 2008, cocaine arrived in Europe mainly by ship. Consignments of cocaine from Colombia and Ecuador were hidden in sea freight and sent to countries in Europe, mainly Croatia, followed by the Netherlands and Montenegro. The increasing number of shipments of cocaine from South America to countries in Eastern Europe reflects a fairly new development in cocaine trafficking: cocaine is frequently smuggled into Western Europe via the Balkan route, the route traditionally used for smuggling opiates.