

services. To date, a total of 70 national trainers from 13 sub-Saharan countries have been trained under the project. The training programme is to be implemented at the national level between September 2010 and October 2011, and participating countries will be provided with technical support for policy development and service provision.

337. Capacity-building initiatives have been launched in Algeria, Egypt, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Morocco to provide a comprehensive response to drug abuse and HIV/AIDS, including community outreach services for drug abusers, drug abuse prevention services and treatment services for drug abusers, including prison inmates.

338. In Morocco, the programme for opioid substitution therapy launched by the Government in 2009 became operational in June 2010 as part of a comprehensive package of services for the treatment of heroin dependence. Morocco is the first country in North Africa (and in the Arab world) to adopt legislation allowing the use of methadone in the treatment of drug dependence.

## B. Americas

### Central America and the Caribbean

#### 1. Major developments

339. Because of its geographical location, at the crossroads of the main producing countries and the consumer markets, the Central American and Caribbean region continues to be used as a transit area for the large-scale smuggling of illicit drugs. The region's long coastlines, porous borders and limited law enforcement and institutional capacity have facilitated trafficking activities, further compounding the impact of drug-related crime.

340. Despite the considerable efforts made by Governments in the region, the drug problem facing Central America and the Caribbean has been exacerbated by endemic corruption, widespread poverty and high unemployment. It is estimated that the street value of all drugs transiting through the Caribbean alone exceeds that of the legal economy. Proceeds of drug trafficking have been used to bribe public officials, increasing corruption within government, law enforcement agencies and the

judiciary and further undermining already weak institutions.

341. In some instances, the resources amassed by drug trafficking syndicates through illicit activities have enabled them to challenge the Government for effective control of parts of the national territory, jeopardizing the State's security and political stability. The Board notes with concern the negative effect that corruption has had on drug control efforts in Central America and the Caribbean and urges the Governments of all countries in the region to take urgent measures to combat corruption in all its manifestations.

342. In Central America, drug-related violence has continued to plague El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, the countries of the so-called "Northern Triangle", as national gangs are forming alliances with international criminal syndicates. According to the *World Drug Report 2010*,<sup>29</sup> the "Northern Triangle" currently has the world's highest murder rate and high rates of other forms of crime. It is reported that in Honduras alone about 60 per cent of all crimes are drug-related. In Panama, the murder rate more than doubled between 2006 and 2009, and the authorities attributed the increase to drug-related violence. In an effort to destabilize the Governments of countries in the area, drug syndicates have also targeted senior governmental officials; in Honduras, for example, the chief of the counter-narcotics police was murdered in December 2009.

343. In the Caribbean, Jamaica has also been affected by significant drug-related violence. In the summer of 2010, a police operation aimed at arresting the alleged head of a drug trafficking ring led to a stand-off between heavily armed gang members and police. The gravity of the ensuing violence, which caused over 70 deaths, prompted the Government of Jamaica to declare a state of emergency in Kingston and mobilize the largest contingent of armed forces in the history of the country. The suspect was eventually arrested by police and extradited to the United States to face drug trafficking charges.

344. The Board notes that natural disasters have also posed new challenges to the drug prevention efforts in Central America and the Caribbean. In January 2010, an earthquake of a magnitude of 7.0 struck Haiti, killing upwards of 200,000 people and causing

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 239.

widespread devastation to the country's fledgling infrastructure. Before the quake, Haiti was already known to be used as a major transit area for illicit drug shipments bound for North America owing to its long and poorly patrolled coastline, as well as the presence of several clandestine airstrips on its territory. The magnitude of the destruction that occurred and the resulting loss of capacity of the Haitian State have given rise to fears that the country may be increasingly used as a trans-shipment area for illicit drugs.

345. The adoption of strengthened drug law enforcement measures in many countries has had a displacement effect on trafficking routes, with drug traffickers seeking out the path of least resistance. The displacement effect, as manifested by the adoption of new trafficking routes, has led to a rise in demand for illicit drugs throughout the region and an increase in drug-related crime owing in particular to the growing prevalence of "payments in kind", that is, the commission of crime in exchange for drugs or the exchange of drugs for different drugs.

346. Although the total amount of cocaine smuggled into North America has declined due to decreased demand, the proportion of that amount that is smuggled through Central America, particularly Guatemala and Honduras, has increased. Illicit drug shipments from South America are also reportedly passing through the Caribbean to West Africa on their way to Europe.

347. The primary means of drug trafficking remain maritime vessels, including go-fast boats, land transport and light aircraft landing on clandestine landing strips. Drug law enforcement agencies in Central America have also reported the renewed use by traffickers of submersible and semi-submersible vessels, which are rapidly increasing in capacity and technological sophistication. There have also been reports suggesting a resurgence in the use of drug couriers (sometimes referred to as "mules"). In addition, the exploitation of commercial aviation for smuggling is being facilitated by corrupt airport staff, including baggage handlers and customs and security agents.

## 2. Regional cooperation

348. As mentioned in the report of the Board for 2009,<sup>30</sup> two ministerial conferences on drug

trafficking, transnational organized crime and terrorism as challenges for security and development were held in Central America and the Caribbean in 2009: one in Santo Domingo in February and the other in Managua in June. The political declarations and action plans adopted by the States participating in those conferences was evidence of the strong consensus that concerted action was required to address shared security threats and laid the groundwork for further cooperation at the regional and interregional levels.

349. In March 2010, UNODC launched phase I of the Santo Domingo Pact and Managua Mechanism, an interregional programme scheduled to run until February 2013. The project is aimed at promoting the establishment of information-gathering and policy-sharing initiatives and providing an integrated regional framework for the coordination of technical assistance activities aimed at combating drug trafficking and associated forms of transnational organized crime. The Santo Domingo Pact and Managua Mechanism also provide for the establishment of expertise and training focal points throughout the entire region. In its resolution 53/14, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs requested UNODC to assist the States of Central America and the Caribbean in obtaining the resources necessary for the effective implementation of the Santo Domingo Pact and Managua Mechanism. In order to facilitate the implementation of its related activities, UNODC has strengthened cooperation with States in the region through the establishment of the Regional Programme Office in Panama in 2009. The Board acknowledges the continuing role played by UNODC in assisting States in Central America and the Caribbean in the development and effective implementation of national and regional drug control strategies.

350. At the Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held on Isla Margarita, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, from 28 September to 2 October 2009, participants discussed new and emerging challenges and effective means of addressing them, including the need for sustainable alternative development initiatives as an incentive for crop growers to abandon the cultivation of illicit crops, as well as various issues concerning drug trafficking trends and techniques. In particular, participants noted

<sup>30</sup> *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board*

*for 2009 ...*, paras. 349 and 354.

a resurgence in the use of drug couriers, particularly couriers who concealed controlled drugs by ingesting them, and the increased use of light aircraft to smuggle drugs into the United States and countries in Europe. Participants also identified measures to enhance concerted action against drug trafficking and other forms of transnational crime, including the development of more efficient methods of data collection and structures for sharing information, an increase in capacity-building activities and cross-border cooperation and the wider and more effective use of civil asset forfeiture actions.

351. The Board welcomes the adoption of the Hemispheric Drug Strategy by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) at its forty-seventh regular session, in May 2010. The strategy is aimed at the grave threats posed by trafficking in and abuse of drugs to sustainable development, political and economic stability, good governance and the rule of law. It involves a multifaceted approach with five components: institutional strengthening; demand reduction; supply reduction; control measures, and international cooperation.

352. The Central American Integration System (SICA) continues to be one of the primary multilateral engines for regional integration, including for the development of coordinated responses to shared security threats posed by drug trafficking. In April 2010, SICA announced the investment of \$953 million in a joint project with Mexico aimed at combating drug trafficking, organized crime and gangs in the region. The project is intended to assist States in counteracting the smuggling of drugs through Central America as well as the growing influence of drug gangs in the “Northern Triangle”.

353. The Thirty-fifth Regular Meeting of Heads of State and Government of SICA member States was held in Panama City on 29 and 30 June 2010. The meeting culminated in the adoption of the Panama Declaration, in which participants reiterated their commitment to taking meaningful steps to deal effectively with drug trafficking, gangs, illicit firearms, the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings. Participants also pledged to make use of all resources at their disposal to prevent trafficking in and abuse of drugs in the region.

354. An extraordinary summit of Heads of State and Government of SICA member States was held in San Salvador on 20 July 2010. The meeting led to the adoption of an action plan calling for the continued implementation of the security strategy for Central America and Mexico adopted in 2007. In addition, the action plan calls for a review of the role of national police chiefs as set forth in the regional plan against organized crime of SICA member States, Mexico and States of the Caribbean. The Board welcomes this initiative and recognizes the importance of interregional cooperation in dealing decisively with the shared threats posed by illicit crop cultivation and illicit drug production and trafficking.

355. Under the auspices of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a four-day workshop was held in March 2010 to assist some CARICOM member States (Bahamas, Belize and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) in the elaboration of their respective national drug control strategies. The subregional workshop was part of a technical assistance programme launched by the CARICOM Secretariat with the financial support of the European Union with the goal of building a critical mass of trained persons and developing good practices in addressing drug-related problems.

356. Building upon a pilot project previously implemented in South America, CICAD announced the expansion of the Seized and Forfeited Asset Management project (BIDAL) to Central America in 2010. The project aims to establish and strengthen national systems for the investigation, seizure, forfeiture, administration and disposal of assets derived from drug trafficking. The project further aims to provide a framework to fund national drug control programmes using confiscated assets derived from drug trafficking.

357. At a meeting held in Lima from 10 to 12 August 2009, the CICAD Group of Experts on Chemical Substances issued a series of recommendations to CICAD which included the following: to confer a mandate on the Group of Experts to review and improve the CICAD Model Regulations to Control Chemical Precursors and Chemical Substances, Machines and Materials; to enhance the use of electronic means of gathering and exchanging information; and to expand the array of CICAD training activities relative to the illicit manufacture of

synthetic drugs through the elaboration of specific activities for prosecutors and judges. Several Governments expressed the need for simple and reliable methods of testing for ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. Others, including the Government of Costa Rica, reported having already made use of such tests in efforts to curb the diversion of precursor chemicals.

358. El Salvador and Guatemala have continued to pursue integrated bilateral responses to shared security threats, acting primarily through the binational commission established in 2000. In April 2010, the Minister of the Interior of Guatemala and the Minister of Justice and Public Security of El Salvador held a meeting with a view to establishing joint mechanisms for the exchange of operational information and the elaboration of shared strategies to address common threats. Building upon the consensus reached at that meeting, the ministers of foreign affairs of the two countries signed an agreement for the establishment of a binational police force, which would undertake joint border patrols to combat drug trafficking and organized crime.

### 3. National legislation, policy and action

359. In 2009, Belize adopted legislation prohibiting the importation of pseudoephedrine and restricting the importation of ephedrine. In 2010, El Salvador adopted two regulations for the control of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine: the first regulation prohibits pseudoephedrine and pseudoephedrine preparations, while the second prohibits ephedrine and ephedrine preparations, with the notable exception of ephedrine in its injectable pharmaceutical form.

360. In 2008, Honduras reported a sharp increase in the amount of precursor chemicals seized, which was attributed to the displacement effect, as stricter precursor controls had been adopted in other countries in Central America and the Caribbean. In response to that growing problem, early in 2009, the Government of Honduras adopted a ministerial regulation prohibiting the importation, exportation, use and distribution of ephedrine, pseudoephedrine and their salts. Since then, seizures of those precursor chemicals have declined sharply.

361. In El Salvador, the National Anti-drug Commission, composed of representatives of the ministries of public security, health, education and

defence, announced the elaboration, in consultation with CICAD, of the national drug control strategy for the period 2010-2014. The strategy is aimed at reducing the supply of and demand for illicit drugs in the country by means of five central components: legislation; capacity-building; improved management; investigations; and the more efficient flow of information. In April 2010, the Government of El Salvador unveiled its National Drug and Crime Integrated Programme, developed with UNODC, envisaging investments of up to \$15 million.

362. In 2009, Costa Rica adopted several new laws strengthening the national legal regime against organized crime and money-laundering. In 2009, over 64,000 drug-related arrests were made, an increase of more than 40 per cent over 2008. The Government also signed an agreement with UNODC on the establishment of a container intelligence programme. In September 2009, a Costa Rican delegation headed by the president of the Supreme Court signed at UNODC headquarters a plan of action addressing the needs of the country in the areas of drug control, fighting transnational organized crime and preventing terrorism. In July 2010, the Congress of Costa Rica authorized the entry of several United States warships and submarines into the territorial waters of Costa Rica between 1 July and 31 December 2010, in order to assist in drug control operations and humanitarian missions.

363. In March 2010, the President of Guatemala launched a three-year national integrated programme at a cost of \$16 million, to strengthen Guatemala's capacity in the areas of drug control, justice, police reform, firearms control, prison reform and countering trafficking in human beings. The programme is also aimed at combating corruption, which is recognized as being one of the greatest problems facing Guatemala.

364. The widespread corruption, impunity and recurring violence associated with drug trafficking in Central America have continued to adversely affect efforts in Guatemala to combat drug-related problems. According to the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), established in cooperation with the United Nations in 2006 to support the Guatemalan justice system, about 97 per cent of the cases involving serious crime in the country, the perpetrators remain unpunished. In June 2010, CICIG expressed dissatisfaction with the measures taken by

Guatemala to reform its justice system and to curb corruption.

365. In order to bolster its ability to deal effectively with the threats posed by large-scale drug trafficking, the Government of the Bahamas has adopted a capacity-building strategy focused on maximizing the participation of its law enforcement officials in national, regional and international training activities.

366. The Government of Panama announced the creation of a joint task force with the goal of implementing measures to increase the country's control over its territorial waters in order to deter drug trafficking in its territory. The main component of the strategy is the establishment of monitoring stations on both coasts. Building upon its participation in the Container Control Programme, the Government of Panama and the UNODC Regional Programme Office in Panama have created an investigative and intelligence unit to monitor container shipping.

367. In April 2010, the Government of Honduras inaugurated a new naval base, built with the financial and logistic support of the United States Government, in the remote La Mosquitia region to facilitate the interception of light aircraft ("*narcoavionetas*") smuggling cocaine from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela through Honduras.

368. The Government of the Dominican Republic, in response to a marked increase in trafficking in the country, has taken decisive steps to increase its operational capacity to fight drug trafficking through the acquisition of new equipment such as aircraft, boats and radar systems. In June 2010, the Government of the Dominican Republic and UNODC finalized an agreement for the establishment of a regional centre of excellence on drug demand reduction and prison management. The centre is expected to become operational in early 2011.

369. The Board notes with concern that many States in Central America and the Caribbean have not yet enacted effective legislation to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals subject to international control. In countries in which such legislation has been adopted, poor enforcement of the legislation owing to limited resources and/or a lack of political will has hindered its effectiveness. The Board urges all States to adopt comprehensive legislation on precursor chemicals as expeditiously as possible and to provide their

respective law enforcement authorities with the resources needed to ensure its systematic implementation. The Board also encourages Governments to disseminate and work towards implementing its *Guidelines for a Voluntary Code of Practice for the Chemical Industry*.<sup>31</sup>

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

##### *Narcotic drugs*

370. Jamaica remains the largest illicit producer and exporter of cannabis in Central America and the Caribbean, accounting for approximately one third of cannabis produced in the Caribbean. An increased production of the drug has been noted in other countries, in particular Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica. Jamaica has also become a hub for the trafficking of cocaine, as trafficking routes have been displaced as a result of the strengthening of drug trafficking countermeasures in Latin America. Compounding the problem is the fact that Jamaican criminal groups are exploiting the elaborate networks originally established for trafficking cannabis to facilitate their attempts to traffic cocaine.

371. The Government of the Bahamas has reported that cannabis herb smuggled out of Jamaica and Haiti using go-fast boats and light aircraft continues to pose challenges to the country's drug control efforts. Further compounding the problem is the fact that drug trafficking groups in the Bahamas have formed strategic alliances with established drug syndicates in producer and consumer countries.

372. The amount of cannabis seized in the Dominican Republic increased from 885 kg in 2008 to 1,400 kg in 2009, with almost 30 per cent of the seized cannabis originating in Haiti. The Dominican authorities also reported that in 2009 the amount of cocaine seized increased sharply to 3,400 kg, 64 per cent of which was accounted for by five large seizures. Although no official seizure data were provided for 2008, cannabis seizures in the Dominican Republic also rose significantly in 2009, to over 1,400 kg (compared with 884 kg in 2007). The Dominican authorities also

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<sup>31</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.XI.17; accessible to competent national authorities through the secure portal of the Board ([www.incb.org/incb/cna.html](http://www.incb.org/incb/cna.html)).

reported having seized about 24,000 cannabis plants, covering an estimated area of 3 ha.

373. In Costa Rica, law enforcement agencies have pursued a systematic cannabis crop eradication programme that has yielded significant results. In 2009, the Government reported the eradication of nearly 1.7 million cannabis plants. The total area used for illicit cannabis plant cultivation, which had nearly tripled from 2005 to 2007, when it reached 9.21 ha, decreased to 5.25 ha in 2008 as a result of increased land and aerial reconnaissance efforts. Cannabis seizures in Costa Rica also sharply declined, with seizures of 2,064 kg reported in 2009, compared with 4,809 kg in 2008. After a significant decline from 2007 to 2008, cocaine seizures in Costa Rica once again increased, totalling 18,590 kg in 2009. Costa Rica also reported seizures of “crack” cocaine totalling over 200,000 “doses” (“*pedras*”).

374. The quantity of cocaine seized in El Salvador sharply declined for the second consecutive year, from 4,074 kg in 2007 to 394 kg in 2009. According to official figures provided by the Salvadoran authorities, approximately 85 per cent of the cocaine seized was being smuggled by sea. Most of the seized drug had been bound for the United States, and a small proportion had been intended for illicit markets in El Salvador and countries in Europe. At approximately 440 kg, cannabis seizures in El Salvador remained stable in 2009 compared with the amount reported for 2008. The proportion of cannabis seized in the region that had originated in Guatemala was reported to be increasing significantly.

375. After having reported a marked decrease in cannabis seizures from 2007 to 2008, Cuba reported a significant increase in such seizures in 2009. The total amount of cannabis seized in 2009 was 3,139 kg, an increase of 83 per cent over 2008.

376. Large fluctuations in the quantity of cannabis seized were recorded in some Caribbean countries. Saint Lucia reported cannabis seizures in 2009 totalling 94,841 kg, a quantity approximately 145 times greater than the 655 kg seized in 2008. In contrast, cannabis seizures in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines dropped sharply from 47,596 kg in 2008 to 9,882 kg in 2009 despite reports suggesting that the illicit production of cannabis in the country was increasing.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

377. The spread of clandestine drug laboratories to Central America is thought to be linked to the increased control over precursor chemicals in Mexico and the United States, which has led to increased illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants in countries in Central America and the Caribbean. In 2008, for the first time, a clandestine laboratory manufacturing amphetamine-type stimulants was discovered in Guatemala.

378. In 2009, over 10,000 units of methamphetamine were seized in the Dominican Republic, while Guatemala reported seizures totalling more than 10,600 kg. Fewer than 500 tablets of methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA, commonly known as “ecstasy”) were reported to have been seized in each of the following countries; Bahamas, Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago.

#### *Precursors*

379. The Dominican Republic reported having seized over 1,332,000 tablets of pseudoephedrine in 2009. In the same year, Guatemala reported having seized more than 10,600 tablets of pseudoephedrine.

380. Costa Rica reported the seizure of 30 kg of norephedrine that had entered the country through Panama. The Costa Rican authorities were unable to ascertain the country of origin of the seized drug.

381. Following the adoption of legislation regulating ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in particular in Central America, the number of reported attempts to divert chemicals subject to international control has declined. At the same time, there is evidence suggesting that attempts to divert such chemicals have continued. The Central American subregion has also reportedly witnessed an increase in imports of chemicals that are not yet subject to international control but are suspected of being used in the illicit manufacture of drugs.

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

382. The development and successful implementation of initiatives for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse in Central America and the Caribbean are largely restricted by the limited resources and institutional capacity of countries in the region. Given those constraints, Governments have had to strike a balance

between competing developmental priorities and the need to adopt drug abuse prevention and treatment measures.

383. The Board recognizes that a central problem in the design of effective prevention and treatment programmes is that throughout Central America and the Caribbean there is a lack of capacity for the collection of drug-related data and a lack of centralized agencies mandated to assess that information. Although the amount and the quality of information regarding drug abuse patterns in the region have greatly improved, more research on consumption patterns and trends is needed to tailor treatment initiatives to meet local needs. The Board reiterates the importance of States in the region taking tangible steps to improve frameworks for the collection and analysis of drug-related data and encourages greater international cooperation to that end.

384. Several States in the region have adopted policies to develop and streamline national efforts to prevent and treat drug abuse. The Government of Saint Lucia has established the Substance Abuse Advisory Council Secretariat, a central authority coordinating national drug control policy. The Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has established an advisory council on drug abuse prevention and is working with the Organization of American States to design and implement a demand reduction programme.

385. While drug abuse by injection has not accounted for a high proportion of new HIV infections in most countries in Central America and the Caribbean, Puerto Rico remains a notable exception. According to research data released in 2009, in Puerto Rico, drug injection accounted for 40 per cent of HIV infection cases among men and 27 per cent of cases among women.

386. Guatemala and Trinidad and Tobago noted a decrease in the age of first-time cannabis users. Guatemala also noted an increase in the overall availability of cocaine, including “crack” cocaine.

387. The Board welcomes the expansion of the global project “Partnership for action on comprehensive treatment: treating drug dependence and its health consequences” into Latin America and the Caribbean in 2009. The programme, funded by the Fund for International Development of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, in cooperation with the

Governments of Spain, Sweden and the United States, is aimed at fostering the development of policies for the effective treatment of drug addiction and for the minimization of associated social and health-care costs. Components of the strategy include advancing scientific understanding of drug addiction, increasing the effectiveness of treatment services by providing greater access and increasing staff training and developing strategies for countering discrimination against persons with drug addiction.

388. In cooperation with UNODC, CARICOM finalized its draft action plan for social development and crime prevention. The plan includes several measures aimed at preventing substance abuse among the general population and in schools, increasing the accessibility and quality of treatment, including in prison settings, addressing drug-related risk factors and facilitating the exchange of experiences and good practices in the Caribbean.

## North America

### 1. Major developments

389. North America continues to play a major role in illicit drug supply and demand. Large-scale drug trafficking within the region is carried out by organized criminal groups, meeting the continuing high illicit demand for drugs. The Governments of the countries in North America are addressing the situation by combining policies to reduce illicit drug supply with policies to reduce illicit drug demand. Since 2009, law enforcement components, as well as drug abuse prevention and treatment components, in national strategies and programmes have been strengthened in order to address drug-related problems in an effective and comprehensive manner. Regional and bilateral cooperation targeting cross-border drug trafficking has intensified. The Board recognizes the efforts of the Governments of the countries in North America to develop more effective policies against drug trafficking and abuse.

390. The United States continues to be the main country of destination for illicit drug shipments. In the United States, in the case of all controlled drugs except cannabis and methamphetamine, most of the drugs have been illicitly manufactured outside of the country and then smuggled into the country. Drug trafficking

organizations based in Mexico dominate the illicit supply of cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine at the wholesale level in the United States, in addition to playing a significant role in the illicit supply of cannabis. The number of drug-related deaths increased sharply in the United States. The Board is deeply concerned about the fact that the United States recorded for 2009 an increase in the abuse of all drugs except cocaine. From 2006 to 2009, the abuse of cocaine declined in the United States. One matter of particular concern to the Board is the increasing abuse of cannabis and prescription drugs containing controlled substances among that country's youth. The Board welcomes the steps that have been taken by the Government of the United States to address the abuse of prescription drugs.

391. Mexico continues to be faced with significant challenges from drug trafficking organizations, which use it as a major transit and source country for illicit drugs. Vigorous law enforcement measures taken by the Government in 2009 and 2010 led to further disruptions of drug trafficking operations, the relocation of criminal activities and increased competition for shares in the illicit market. Once again, drug trafficking organizations responded by unleashing unprecedented violence, murdering a large number of persons, including law enforcement officials. Since 2006, more than 28,000 people have been killed in drug-related incidents in Mexico. The Government intends to strengthen capabilities to combat drug trafficking by introducing comprehensive institutional reforms and anti-corruption measures. The abuse of certain illicit drugs in Mexico has increased sharply.

392. Canada remains one of the world's primary source countries for illicitly manufactured synthetic drugs, particularly MDMA ("ecstasy") and methamphetamine, and a significant supplier of high-potency cannabis. The Board notes the decline in drug abuse in Canada, in particular among youth, reported by the Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring Survey.

393. The involvement of organized criminal groups in drug trafficking in North America expanded further. Mexico-based drug trafficking organizations strengthened their position as the main wholesale suppliers of illicit drugs in the United States, in particular in the eastern part of the country, where the influence of Colombia-based drug trafficking

organizations was diminishing. The Mexico-based organizations also increased their cooperation with criminal gangs based in the United States. In 2009, the mid-level and retail-level distribution of illicit drugs in the United States was largely controlled by about 20,000 street gangs. Alliances with the Mexico-based organizations enabled the street gangs to expand their illicit drug distribution operations at the expense of local independent drug dealers and small local criminal groups and to extend those operations into more rural and suburban areas. In Canada, some street gangs also started becoming involved in drug-related crime such as drug smuggling or illicit drug manufacturing, thereby enabling their activities to cover a larger geographical area.

394. The Board notes the result of the referendum in California, which rejected the "legalization" of cannabis use in that state. That result represents a recognition of the danger of cannabis abuse and an affirmation of the international drug control conventions. The Board also notes the statement of the Government of the United States, confirming the Board's position that federal law supersedes state law with regard to the obligations contained in the international drug control conventions. The Board notes that the Government of the United States will continue to enforce federal law in that regard. The cultivation of cannabis plants and the use of cannabis for purposes other than scientific purposes are illegal according to the federal law in the United States. The Board welcomes the statement of the Government of the United States that it firmly opposes the legalization of cannabis.

395. The Board is deeply concerned about "medical" cannabis schemes, which so far have been introduced in 14 states in the United States. The control measures applied in those states to the cultivation of cannabis plants and the production, distribution and use of cannabis fall short of the control requirements of the 1961 Convention.

## 2. Regional cooperation

396. The Merida Initiative, a multi-year law enforcement and security cooperation programme involving Mexico, the United States and countries in Central America that was initiated in 2007, continues to be the focal point of cooperation at the regional level to counter drug trafficking and related forms of



organized crime. The Government of the United States provided about US\$ 1.3 billion in funding for 2008 and 2009 and proposed to allocate an additional US\$ 450 million for Mexico (and US\$ 100 million for Central America) for 2010. Notwithstanding the fact that only a small part of the initiative has been implemented so far, cooperation between Mexico and the United States has intensified within this framework. The emphasis of cooperation is shifting from the provision of equipment to improve law enforcement operations towards longer-term capacity-building and institutional development in support of the systemic reforms that are under way in Mexico. Activities carried out under the Merida Initiative have included the provision of helicopters and inspection equipment, the expansion of police and customs canine teams, and the participation of over 5,500 federal and state officials from Mexican law enforcement and judicial agencies in training programmes. In addition, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police provided instructors for training Mexican investigators. The goals and commitments of the initiative were reaffirmed by the Governments of Mexico and the United States at the meeting of the Merida Initiative High-level Consultative Group on Bilateral Cooperation against Transnational Organized Crime held in Mexico City in March 2010.

397. At its forty-seventh regular session, held in Washington D.C., in May 2010, CICAD adopted a new Hemispheric Drug Strategy, in which CICAD member States agreed to strengthen national drug control institutions and to apply comprehensive and evidence-based national drug control policies. According to the new strategy, CICAD member States will endeavour to reduce illicit drug demand through prevention, early intervention, treatment, rehabilitation and recovery services. In order to reduce the supply of illicit drugs, CICAD member States intend to improve the gathering and analysis of information on illicit drug supply, adopt law enforcement and alternative development measures and identify and monitor emerging trends. The new strategy also involves the provision of guidance on precursor control, the prevention of diversion of pharmaceutical preparations and the dismantling of drug trafficking organizations. In the new strategy, CICAD member States recognize the need for international cooperation, including compliance with the international drug control conventions. In addition to adopting the new strategy,

CICAD member States discussed their progress in the implementation of drug control policies within the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism, strategies in the areas of treatment, prevention and recovery, trends with respect to selected illicit drugs and issues related to interdiction, forensic analysis and alternative development.

398. At the eighth Binational Drug Demand Reduction Policy Meeting, held in Washington D.C., in February 2010, Government officials and experts from Mexico and the United States discussed measures to reduce illicit drug demand and to intensify the prevention and treatment of drug abuse. The participants adopted the Declaration of Drug Demand Reduction Cooperation, expressing their Governments' commitment to strengthening both national and bilateral efforts to enhance the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, to advance effective reintegration practices and community development and to continue sharing information and good practices.

399. In 2009, the law enforcement agencies of Mexico and the United States implemented new operating and communication procedures, which streamlined maritime patrol operations and the boarding and searching of vessels suspected of being involved in trafficking. Those procedures improved the coordination and effectiveness of such operations, contributed to a number of seizures of drugs and vessels and, in some cases, resulted in land routes being used instead of sea routes for drug trafficking operations.

400. In 2009, cooperation between Canada and the United States continued to take place in different forms, including joint law enforcement operations, information-sharing and bilateral collaboration using the Cross-Border Crime Forum, which brings together senior law enforcement and justice officials from Canada and the United States, and similar forums. Joint law enforcement activities resulted in significant seizures of drugs, including cannabis, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and MDMA ("ecstasy"). In 2009, the Governments of Canada and the United States signed the Framework Agreement on Integrated Cross-Border Maritime Law Enforcement Operations, which, after the passing of legislation for its implementation, will enable joint law enforcement teams to operate along the Canada-United States

maritime border, thus facilitating maritime law enforcement operations.

### 3. National legislation, policy and action

401. Mexico continued to devote considerable effort to combating drug trafficking and organized crime. The main approaches followed were law enforcement and longer-term institutional reforms. Law enforcement action resulted in the arrest of a number of leaders of cartels in 2009 and 2010. Drug-related arrests, as well as extraditions to the United States, reached a record-high number in 2009 and continued at a similar pace in 2010. At the institutional level, Mexico made progress in implementing comprehensive judicial and public security reforms. A major goal of the judicial reform in Mexico is to make the transition from a system of written trials to an adversarial system with oral trials by 2016, making trials more expeditious and transparent. Although the process has slowed down in the country as a whole, several Mexican states have made progress towards the implementation of the adversarial system. In 2009, a number of leading universities incorporated those concepts into their curricula. Training programmes in trial advocacy were started for judges and prosecutors. Another element is the introduction of methods for alternative case resolution, such as mediation. Judicial reforms have been supported by the development of a national prosecutorial case management system. As part of the reform of the security sector, the new federal police was established, its investigative powers were strengthened and vetting and hiring standards increased. In 2009, the Government of Mexico enhanced the capacity of the customs service by recruiting additional staff and providing specialized training. Forensic laboratories have been modernized to make better use of scientific evidence in the prosecution of crimes. Advances have been made in intelligence-gathering, such as through the ongoing implementation of the information exchange platform Plataforma Mexico, which links law enforcement agencies, states and municipalities.

402. Corruption continues to impede efforts to counter drug trafficking in Mexico. Police and other law enforcement units at the state and municipal levels are exposed to threats and offered bribes from drug trafficking organizations. The Government of Mexico continued to combat corruption among law enforcement and government officials, including by

screening and performing background checks on such officials and, when necessary, arranging for their dismissal or arrest.

403. The Government of the United States adopted the 2010 National Drug Control Strategy. The strategy, released in May 2010, was prepared after a broad consultation process involving stakeholders; it emphasizes a comprehensive evidence-based approach to addressing drug-related problems. The main elements of the strategy are community-based drug abuse prevention, early intervention, the integration of treatment for drug abuse into the mainstream health-care system, innovations in criminal justice, the strengthening of law enforcement, international cooperation and improving information systems. With regard to drug abuse prevention, the strategy focuses on developing a community-based prevention system mainly for young people, information campaigns and increased collaboration involving different government levels and agencies. The strategy also establishes five-year goals to reduce drug abuse. Those goals include: reducing by 15 per cent, drug abuse among youth, the number of chronic drug users and drug-induced deaths; and reducing by 10 per cent the number of cases involving driving under the influence of drugs. The Board appreciates the efforts made by the Government aimed at ensuring that evidence-based measures are taken to address drug-related problems and at strengthening treatment and early intervention initiatives.

404. In the United States, disparities in the amounts of cocaine and “crack” required for the imposition of minimum sentences were reduced significantly by the Fair Sentencing Act, signed in August 2010. The Act also eliminated the minimum prison term for simple possession of “crack” and significantly increased monetary penalties for major drug trafficking.

405. The Government of the United States continued to implement the National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy, adopted in 2009. The strategy requires law enforcement agencies of the United States to enhance operational capabilities and coordination to address cross-border drug trafficking. The United States intensified its law enforcement and intelligence operations in the areas near its border with Mexico, including by creating an inter-agency border law enforcement task force to identify, disrupt and dismantle criminal organizations engaged in drug

trafficking and related crime, such as arms trafficking and bulk cash smuggling.

406. In the United States, a number of measures are being taken to deal with the problem of the abuse of prescription drugs containing controlled substances. The Government stated that reducing the abuse of prescription drugs was one of the areas of focus of the national drug control policy in 2010. Steps to address the problem include programmes for promoting the return and disposal of prescription drugs, informing the public of the risks of prescription drug abuse, educating physicians about prescribing opiate analgesics, addressing the practice of obtaining prescriptions for controlled substances from multiple physicians (“doctor shopping”), taking action against establishments for pain management that have inappropriate prescription practices and expanding prescription drug monitoring programmes. In 2010, 40 states had in place programmes for monitoring prescription drugs or had passed legislation to implement such programmes.

407. To tackle the problem of prescription drugs being sold through illegal Internet pharmacies the Government of the United States has introduced stronger control, law enforcement and legislative measures. One of those measures, the Ryan Haight Online Pharmacy Consumer Protection Act of 2008, prohibits Internet pharmacies from, inter alia, providing prescription drugs to individuals who have not had at least one face-to-face evaluation by a prescribing medical practitioner. The Food and Drug Administration issued in November 2009 warning letters to 22 operators of websites identified as having illegally sold unapproved or misbranded drugs to persons in the United States. These above-mentioned measures have contributed to reducing the number of illegal Internet pharmacies and will be further implemented by the Government.

408. In addition to the existing federal regulations in the United States, restrictions on the retail sale of pseudoephedrine products had been adopted in 45 states by the end of 2009, making pseudoephedrine a controlled drug at the state level, imposing point-of-sale restrictions or introducing laws for tracking pseudoephedrine shipments. In Oregon, which in 2006 became the first state to introduce a law that reclassified pseudoephedrine as a prescription drug,

pseudoephedrine “smurfing”<sup>32</sup> has been virtually eliminated and a sharp drop in the number of seized methamphetamine laboratories has been observed. In the light of that experience, Mississippi enacted a similar law in 2010 and other states are also considering such legislative measures.

409. The Government of Canada continued to implement its National Anti-Drug Strategy, aimed at preventing and reducing drug abuse, enhancing the treatment of drug abusers and strengthening drug law enforcement. A 2010 report evaluating the strategy found that it had been implemented largely as intended, though some components related to the prevention and treatment of drug abuse had experienced delays. As Canada is a major source of illicitly manufactured synthetic drugs, the Government has decided to make countering the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in such drugs a national priority. In 2009, the Synthetic Drug Initiative, the first Canadian drug control strategy to focus on a single class of drugs, was launched as a component of the National Anti-Drug Strategy. The initiative utilizes a combination of law enforcement, deterrence and prevention measures targeting the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs. The initiative is also aimed at preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals from licit distribution channels in Canada.

410. In May 2010, the Government of Canada introduced in the Senate the Penalties for Organized Drug Crime Act. The bill provides a mandatory sentence of a minimum of one or two years in jail for a number of serious drug-related offences, including illicit drug production, trafficking, possession for the purposes of trafficking, importing and exporting, and possession for the purposes of exporting. The bill also provides for additional penalties when such offences are committed for the purposes of organized crime or when they involve selling drugs to young people.

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<sup>32</sup> “Smurfing” is a method used by some traffickers to acquire large quantities of a precursor chemical such as pseudoephedrine. Individuals purchase the chemical from multiple retail locations in quantities at or below the legal limit. Traffickers often use several associates in “smurfing” operations to increase the speed with which the chemical can be acquired.

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

##### *Narcotic drugs*

411. In the United States, cannabis continues to be illicitly produced on a large scale for the illicit market in that country. While there are no reliable estimates of the amount of illicitly produced cannabis, law enforcement data indicate a continuing high level of illicit cultivation of cannabis plants and illicit production of cannabis. In 2009, more than 2,000 tons of cannabis were seized in the United States, exceeding by more than one third the total amount seized in 2008. The number of eradicated cannabis plants increased by 30 per cent to almost 10.4 million, largely as a result of the increased eradication of cannabis plants grown outdoors. Drug trafficking organizations from outside the United States continue to establish and expand sites for the illicit cultivation of cannabis plants within the United States borders, in order to reduce the risks and costs of smuggling cannabis. Criminal groups, in particular drug trafficking organizations based in Mexico, obtain significant quantities of cannabis from sites used for the illicit cultivation of cannabis plants on public land. Such growing sites on public land pose significant public safety and environmental hazards. The illicit cultivation of cannabis plants indoors by individuals and criminal groups is expanding partly in reaction to intensified efforts to eradicate cannabis plants illicitly cultivated outdoors. Those criminal groups include Canada-based drug trafficking organizations with indoor growing sites mainly in the north-western part of the United States. Indoor cultivation sites usually offer increased control over growing conditions and yield cannabis of a higher potency, which could be sold at a higher price.

412. The Board is concerned that the “medical” cannabis programmes in some states of the United States and the insufficient control measures applied in those programmes have contributed to illicit cultivation of cannabis plants and trafficking in cannabis.

413. The Government of Mexico estimates that the illicit production of cannabis declined slightly in 2009, to about 19,900 tons, most of which was destined for the United States. More than 2,100 tons of cannabis herb were seized in Mexico in 2009, an increase of about 27 per cent. North America continued to be the region in which the most cannabis herb is seized. The total area of illicitly cultivated cannabis

plants eradicated continued to decline in 2009, to 16,547 ha (a decrease of 11 per cent), partly owing to law enforcement units being increasingly involved with public security tasks. According to reports from the United States, the amount of cannabis seized along that country’s border with Mexico increased by 19 per cent in 2009, indicating a sustained high flow of cannabis from Mexico.

414. Cannabis remains the main illicit drug produced in Canada. In 2009, Canadian law enforcement officers seized more than 34 tons of cannabis herb, a slight decrease over the figure for 2008. The majority of the illicitly produced cannabis in Canada has been cultivated indoors, which means that its potency is high. In 2008, the average THC level of cannabis seized in Canada was 11 per cent. Organized criminal groups continue to dominate illicit cannabis production in Canada. The Canadian market for cannabis is supplied almost entirely by cannabis illicitly-produced in Canada. A significant amount of the cannabis illicitly produced in Canada continues to be destined for the illicit market in the United States. Some organized criminal groups smuggle Canadian cannabis into the United States in exchange for cocaine and other contraband, such as firearms and tobacco. The amount of cannabis seized along the border between Canada and the United States increased slightly to about 3.4 tons in 2009.

415. Cocaine trafficking in North America continued to decline as a result of various factors, including less cocaine abuse, decreased illicit cocaine manufacture in Colombia and sustained pressure on drug trafficking organizations in Mexico. Consequently, less cocaine was seized in Mexico (21.6 tons) and the United States (108.3 tons) (including at its border with Mexico (20.5 tons)) in 2009 than in previous years. Cocaine shortages persisted in many areas of the United States in 2009, as evidenced by higher prices and lower purity levels. Criminal groups are smuggling cocaine into Canada, mainly through Mexico and the United States, to be sold on the illicit market in Canada or shipped overseas. Thus, Canada is increasingly being used as a transit country for cocaine. Disruptions in cocaine trafficking in the region resulted in the decreased availability and increased prices of cocaine in major urban centres across Canada.

416. Most of the heroin in the United States originates in Colombia or Mexico. Law enforcement reports

indicate that Mexican drug trafficking organizations have gained a more significant share of the heroin market in the United States at the expense of South American criminal groups. In addition to South American heroin being trafficked and distributed in greater quantities, there are some indications that “white heroin” (heroin with a higher purity level) is being illicitly manufactured in Mexico and that a mixture of both Mexican and South American heroin is being distributed. Mexico is the world’s third largest source of illicitly produced opium. The total area of illicitly cultivated opium poppy eradicated in Mexico increased from 13,095 ha in 2008 to 14,753 ha in 2009. The Government of Mexico also reported an increase in the illicit production of opium. Increased illicit heroin manufacture in Mexico and the increased involvement of Mexican criminal groups in trafficking in drugs from South America resulted in an increased amount of heroin being seized along the south-west border of the United States. Heroin continues to be widely available in the United States. In some areas of the United States, the availability of heroin is increasing, as evidenced by high purity levels and low prices.

417. The heroin on the illicit market in Canada continues to be predominately from South-West Asia. Law enforcement agencies in Canada seized a total of 213 kg of heroin in 2009. Most of the seized heroin had been smuggled into the country by post or by air or sea.

418. In the United States, the illegal distribution of prescription drugs containing internationally controlled substances continues to increase. The prescription drugs involved are primarily opioid pain relievers containing codeine, fentanyl, hydromorphone, morphine, oxycodone, dextropropoxyphene, methadone or hydrocodone. From 2007 to 2009, the percentage of state and local law enforcement agencies reporting that problems related to prescription drugs posed the greatest drug-related threat to their areas more than doubled. Establishments involved in pain management have become a major source of the controlled prescription drugs used by drug abusers. According to the Government of the United States, so-called “pain clinics” are in some states operating outside the scope of acceptable medical practices and dispensing or prescribing large quantities of prescription opioids to persons with no legitimate need for such drugs. Those establishments have been identified as a significant

source of the prescription opioids distributed in numerous states that have programmes for monitoring the distribution of prescription drugs. Obtaining prescription drugs by “doctor shopping” has decreased in states that have implemented such monitoring programmes but has continued in states without such programmes.

#### *Psychotropic substances*

419. In spite of regulatory measures taken by Governments, the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine has increased in North American countries. In Mexico, the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine was disrupted in 2007 and 2008 as a result of the ban on precursors of methamphetamine that had been introduced by the Government. Then, however, drug trafficking organizations adapted to the new regulations. As a result, the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in Mexico, the main supplier of the methamphetamine abused in the United States, resurged in 2009. That development was reflected in the sharp increase in the total amount of methamphetamine seized in Mexico (from about 300 kg in 2008 to more than 6 tons in 2009) and in the number of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories uncovered in the country (21 laboratories in 2008 compared with 191 in 2009).

420. The increasing manufacture of methamphetamine in Mexico resulted in a greater flow of methamphetamine to the United States, as reflected in an increase in the total amount of methamphetamine seized along the south-west border of the United States (from 2.2 tons in 2008 to about 3.5 tons in 2009). In the United States sustained illicit manufacture of methamphetamine also contributed to the increased availability of the substance on the illicit market. In 2009, the total amount of methamphetamine seized in the United States increased slightly to about 6.6 tons, while the number of clandestine laboratories uncovered increased to 4,571 (compared with 3,931 in 2008). The increase in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in the United States was primarily accounted for by laboratories manufacturing the substance on a small scale in several states.

421. Methamphetamine illicitly manufactured in Canada accounts for a significant share of the methamphetamine found on illicit markets in other countries. The illicit manufacture of methamphetamine

in Canada has risen to meet the illicit demand for the substance. In Canada, methamphetamine is illicitly manufactured mainly by organized criminal groups on a large scale in clandestine laboratories. The number of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories uncovered in Canada rose to 23 in 2009, more than doubling the figure for 2008. Almost all of the methamphetamine found on the illicit market in Canada has been illicitly manufactured in that country. While the smuggling of methamphetamine from Canada into the United States remained limited, a significant amount of methamphetamine was smuggled into countries in East and South-East Asia, especially Japan, and in Oceania, especially Australia. In recent years, methamphetamine has increasingly been found in tablets sold as MDMA (“ecstasy”) on the illicit market in Canada.

422. Canada continues to be a major source of MDMA (“ecstasy”) found on the illicit markets of countries in North America and other regions. Organized criminal groups in Canada are illicitly manufacturing and distributing methamphetamine on a large scale. MDMA has continued to be widely available in Canada. Large quantities of MDMA illicitly manufactured in Canada were smuggled mainly into the United States and countries in East and South-East Asia and in Oceania. In the United States, as the illicit supply of MDMA increased, MDMA accounted for a larger share of the illicit drugs sold by street gangs. In “ecstasy” tablets originating in Canada the percentage of MDMA has decreased and the percentage of chemicals used as adulterants has increased. That development may have significant health implications for “ecstasy” abusers.

#### *Precursors*

423. In Mexico, after a ban was placed on pseudoephedrine and ephedrine, prohibiting their import and use, drug trafficking organizations developed various ways to circumvent the ban. They used new smuggling routes such as through Central America and South America, they smuggled precursors in tablet form rather than in bulk, they shifted their illicit manufacturing operations to other countries and they used alternative manufacturing methods that required chemicals for which controls were less strict or non-existent. One of those methods for manufacturing methamphetamine without using ephedrine is the P-2-P method, which has become significantly more important. Phenylacetic acid, a

chemical used to produce P-2-P, was found in clandestine methamphetamine laboratories in Mexico. Operation PILA, which was initiated in 2009, and coordinated by the Board, focused on monitoring trade in ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, including pharmaceutical preparations containing one of those chemicals. Analysis of the relevant data and seizures revealed that Mexico was the destination of many suspect ephedrine and pseudoephedrine shipments.<sup>33</sup>

424. In the United States, the increase in illicit methamphetamine manufacture in 2008 and 2009 was fuelled primarily by individuals and criminal groups that organized “smurfing” operations to acquire large amounts of the precursor chemical pseudoephedrine.

425. Canada continues to be used by traffickers as both a country of destination and a transit country for chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, particularly methamphetamine and MDMA (“ecstasy”).

#### *Substances not under international control*

426. Khat continues to be smuggled into Canada, primarily by courier and air cargo. The abuse of khat is most common among East African communities in Canada. Most of the khat found in Canada comes from Ethiopia or Kenya. In 2009, the total amount of khat seized by law enforcement agencies throughout Canada decreased compared with the previous year, to about 19 tons.

427. According to Canadian law enforcement reports, there has been an increase in the demand for unregulated chemicals such as methylamine.

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

428. In the United States, an estimated 38 million persons (or 15.1 per cent of the population aged 12 or older) had used illicit drugs in 2009. That represents an increase of 2.5 million persons (or 0.9 per cent of the population aged 12 or older) over the figure for 2008 and a reversal of the declining trend in illicit drug use in the preceding years. About 21.8 million persons (or 8.7 per cent of the population aged 12 or older) were

<sup>33</sup> *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2010 ...*

“current users” (persons who reported having used illicit drugs in the past month).

429. In the United States, one matter of concern is the increasing abuse among youth of cannabis and prescription drugs containing narcotic drugs. According to the 2009 survey “Monitoring the Future 2009”, an annual survey on drug abuse among students aged 13-18 in the United States, annual prevalence of cannabis abuse increased for the first time after declining for seven consecutive years: from 21.5 per cent in 2008 to 22.9 per cent in 2009. That turnaround was accompanied by a decline in students’ perceptions of the risks of cannabis abuse. The abuse of OxyContin (annual prevalence: 3.9 per cent), a product containing oxycodone, and Vicodin (annual prevalence: 6.5 per cent),<sup>34</sup> a product containing hydrocodone, reached or remained at record-high levels in 2009. The abuse of other illicit drugs either declined (as in the case of cocaine, inhalants and hallucinogens) or remained fairly stable (as in the case of heroin, amphetamines and tranquillizers).

430. In the United States, the number of drug-related deaths<sup>35</sup> doubled from 1999 to 2007. According to the latest statistics available, there were a total of 38,371 drug-related deaths in 2007. In a number of states, the number of drug-related deaths has surpassed the number of deaths resulting from motor vehicle accidents.

431. In the United States, cannabis remains the most commonly abused drug. In 2009, 28.5 million persons (or 11.3 per cent of the population aged 12 or above) abused cannabis. That represents an increase of 2.7 million persons (or 1 per cent of the population aged 12 or above) compared with the figure for 2008.

432. In 2009, 4.8 million persons abused some form of cocaine in the United States (compared with 5.3 million in 2008). Past-year prevalence of the abuse of cocaine (including “crack”) among the United States population aged 12 and older was 1.9 per cent.

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<sup>34</sup> The prevalence data for those preparations are queried in the “Monitoring the Future” questionnaire; therefore, trade names are used in this particular case.

<sup>35</sup> Drug-related deaths include deaths resulting from drug-induced diseases, accidental poisoning and intentional self-poisoning (suicide) but exclude accidents, homicides and other causes indirectly related to drug use.

433. The increased availability of heroin in the United States has led to increased heroin abuse and, consequently, an increase in the number of heroin-related overdoses and deaths resulting from overdose. In 2009, the number of heroin abusers increased by about one third, to over 600,000 (or 0.2 per cent of the population aged 12 and older). Abusers of prescription opioids reportedly switch to heroin because they build tolerance to prescription opioids and because heroin is cheaper and more easily available than prescription opioids.

434. The abuse of methamphetamine increased in the United States: in 2009, 0.5 per cent of the population aged 12 and older were past-year abusers, compared with 0.3 per cent in 2008.

435. According to the assessment of the Government of the United States, the abuse of prescription drugs is the fastest-growing drug problem in the country. In 2009, the abuse of prescription drugs — measured as non-medical use of pain relievers, tranquillizers, stimulants or sedatives — was reported by 16 million persons (or 6.4 per cent of the population aged 12 and above), compared with 15.2 million (or 6.1 per cent of the population) in 2008. About 7 million persons were “current users”. Pain relievers were the most commonly abused prescription drugs: 12.4 million persons reported having abused pain relievers in 2009 (compared with 11.9 million in 2008). More and more opiate-related overdoses are attributable to prescription analgesics. The number of unintentional deaths by overdose resulting from the abuse of prescription opioids has increased sharply. The number of drug-related emergency room visits involving narcotic analgesics more than doubled from 2004 to 2008, mainly as a result of incidents involving the abuse of hydrocodone, methadone and oxycodone. Prescription drugs continued to be one of the most abused categories of drugs — second only to cannabis.

436. According to the latest Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring Survey, the abuse of most drugs among members of the population aged 15 and older declined in 2009, which is an encouraging development. The prevalence of past-year cannabis abuse continued to decrease, reaching 10.6 per cent in 2009. Annual prevalence of abuse of cocaine (1.2 per cent), methamphetamine (0.4 per cent) and MDMA (“ecstasy”) (0.9 per cent) also decreased compared with 2008. The rate of drug abuse among

males was almost double the rate among females. The abuse of prescription drugs (opioid pain relievers, stimulants, and sedatives and tranquillizers) in 2009 remained at the level reported in 2008: 0.6 per cent of respondents indicated that they had used prescription drugs in the past year “to get high”.

437. In Canada, drug abuse among youth (persons 15-24 years old) declined in 2009. The Canadian Alcohol and Drug Use Monitoring Survey showed declining past-year abuse of cannabis (from 32.7 per cent in 2008 to 26.3 per cent in 2009), cocaine (from 5.9 per cent in 2008 to 3 per cent in 2009), hallucinogens (from 10.2 per cent in 2008 to 4.4 per cent in 2009), MDMA (“ecstasy”) (from 6.5 per cent in 2008 to 3.6 per cent in 2009) and prescription drugs (from 2.1 per cent in 2008 to 1.7 per cent in 2009). Cannabis abuse declined by almost 30 per cent during the five-year period 2004-2009. The abuse of one type of prescription drugs, pain relievers, increased. Despite the overall positive development, the rate of drug abuse among youth remained 4-5 times higher than the rate among adults (persons aged 25 and older).

438. In Mexico, a national survey showed that from 2002 to 2008 there was a significant increase in the abuse of drugs, in particular cocaine. According to Government estimates, the abuse of cocaine, particularly “crack”, continued to increase sharply in 2009. Most drug-related deaths were attributed to the abuse of cocaine (449 deaths in 2009, an increase of 90 per cent over 2008). There was also a sharp increase in the abuse of heroin, methamphetamine, hallucinogens, solvents and inhalants. The most commonly abused drug continued to be cannabis, followed by cocaine. One reason for the increased abuse of drugs is that drug trafficking has resulted in drugs being more widely available in the country.

439. In the United States, about 1.2 million persons were admitted for treatment of drug abuse in 2008, 9 per cent more than in 2007. For most of those persons the primary drug of abuse was cannabis (346,000 persons in 2008, an increase of 20 per cent), followed by heroin (281,000), cocaine (230,000), amphetamines (127,000) and other opiates (121,000). The growing problem of abuse of prescription drugs is also reflected in data on persons admitted to treatment for drug abuse. Among the persons admitted for treatment and for whom medication-assisted opioid

therapy was planned, the number of persons treated for the abuse of pain relievers more than tripled from 1998 to 2008, reaching 26.5 per cent. According to the Government, 1,132 treatment facilities in the United States offered opioid treatment programmes in 2008, mostly maintenance programmes using methadone and/or buprenorphine. It is estimated that there is a significant treatment gap in the United States: in other words, the vast majority of drug addicts do not receive special treatment. According to the Government, that is partly attributable to the fact that there is no integration of treatment for drug addiction with the rest of the health-care system. As part of its drug control strategy, the Government therefore intends to better integrate treatment into health care, making treatment services more accessible and improving their quality. The Government also aims to support recovery from drug addiction through services involving, for example, transitional housing, mutual help groups, counselling and employment restoration.

440. In the United States, the number of drug treatment courts has continued to increase. At the end of 2009, 2,459 drug treatment courts were operating throughout the country. More than half of them were for adults. In addition, there was a significant number of specialized drug treatment courts, including juvenile, family, tribal, campus or veterans’ drug treatment courts. Evaluations conducted by the Government, as well as by researchers, have shown that, compared with traditional courts that lead to traditional forms of punishment such as incarceration, drug treatment courts are more successful in reducing recidivism among drug-abusing offenders and more cost-effective in the long run.

441. The Government of Canada is enhancing the national system for the treatment of drug abuse within the framework of the National Anti-Drug Strategy. The Drug Treatment Funding Program was launched to support provinces and territories in strengthening their systems for the treatment of drug abuse. Targeted treatment for imprisoned drug abusers is offered in the correctional system, significantly reducing recidivism.

442. The action programme for the prevention and treatment of addictions was launched by the Government of Mexico to strengthen the infrastructure for providing treatment services for drug addicts. The community-based network of centres offering basic treatment and prevention services for drug abusers was



expanded further. In 2009, most persons received treatment for abuse of cannabis, followed by cocaine and inhalants. In 2009, about 39,000 persons began receiving treatment for drug abuse in specialized centres; that represented only a small proportion of the drug addicts in the country. A project to train and accredit providers of treatment for drug abuse was started in 2009, with a view to improving the functioning and running of treatment facilities.

## South America

### 1. Major developments

443. Trends related to the illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of drugs have changed in South America over the past decade. Criminal organizations that have traditionally been involved in drug trafficking at the international level have also started to engage in drug trafficking and other forms of drug-related crime at the national level. The availability of a greater variety of illicit drugs and the increase in the abuse of those drugs, in particular among youth, indicate that the illicit drug market continues to change. CICAD has warned of the growing influence of cartels in politics and of the threat that those cartels pose to security and development in the Americas.

444. In 2009, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in South America decreased for a second consecutive year, as a result of a significant reduction of that area in such cultivation in Colombia. The total area under coca bush cultivation in the region in 2009 was 158,800 ha, 8,800 ha less than in 2008 (a decrease of 5 per cent). The Board is pleased to note that in 2009, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in Colombia decreased by 16 per cent, to 68,000 ha. In contrast with the situation in Colombia, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation increased to 30,900 ha in the Plurinational State of Bolivia (an increase of 1 per cent) and to 59,900 ha in Peru (an increase of 7 per cent), in 2009, the fourth consecutive year in which such cultivation increased in those two countries.

445. In South America, over the years, there has been a tendency for illicit drug crop cultivation to move to new areas in response to local eradication campaigns. Thus, the decrease in illicit coca bush cultivation in

Colombia in the past decade has been partly compensated for by an increase in such cultivation on Bolivian and Peruvian territory. The Board is concerned that if the current trend continues, in the period 2010-2011, Peru will replace Colombia as the world's largest grower of illicit coca bush, a position last held by Peru in 1996.

446. For a number of years, UNODC has estimated the potential manufacture of cocaine for the main coca leaf producing countries with a view to providing information on the global supply of cocaine. That estimation of potential manufacture takes into account several factors, including data on coca leaf production and efficiency in the transformation of coca leaf to cocaine. The Board notes that because of the ongoing review of conversion factors used for estimation in Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Peru, no single estimated figure was provided for those two countries for 2009; instead, UNODC calculated an estimate of global potential manufacture of cocaine as a range (842-1,111 tons). In Colombia, potential illicit manufacture of cocaine in 2009 was estimated at 410 tons, 40 tons less than in 2008.

447. In some South American countries, financial resources in support of efforts to address drug-related problems continue to be insufficient. The Board calls upon the international community to enhance assistance, including expertise and financial resources, provided to countries in South America to overcome the problems of illicit drug crop cultivation and cocaine manufacture. The Board urges the Governments of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Peru to take the measures necessary to reduce the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation on their territory and to counter illicit cocaine manufacture and trafficking, in cooperation with the Governments of other countries and international organizations, including United Nations entities.

448. The abuse of cocaine appears to be rising in several countries in the Southern Cone, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. According to CICAD experts on demand reduction, although some progress has been made in the Americas in improving treatment for drug abuse over the past 20 years, the demand for such treatment is not being met. The Board encourages Governments of countries in South America to continue to give high priority to treatment for drug abuse when developing national

drug control policies and to include such treatment in their national health-care systems.

## 2. Regional cooperation

449. The Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, was held on Isla Margarita, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, from 28 September to 2 October 2009. Pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 52/10, representatives of 10 West African States also participated in the Meeting, and a round-table discussion was held on strengthening cooperation among bodies involved in tackling the smuggling of drugs from Latin America and the Caribbean into West Africa. The Meeting made recommendations on, inter alia, the need to pay attention to the collection and exchange of intelligence, training, joint operations, the placement of liaison officers, the provision of equipment, and technical support. It also recommended that bilateral or multilateral cooperation agreements be established and that confidence-building measures be developed. The participants agreed that the implementation of those recommendations should be supported by UNODC, ECOWAS and INTERPOL.

450. In December 2009, the European Commission approved the Cooperation Programme between Latin America and the European Union on Anti-Drugs Policies. In the framework of the Cooperation Programme, efforts will be made to consolidate drug control coordination and cooperation mechanisms between the European Union and Latin America through policy support and dialogue, the consolidation of national observatories on drugs and capacity-building in reducing illicit drug supply and demand.

451. Under an interregional programme of the European Union and UNODC, a high-level meeting of heads of drug law enforcement agencies in West Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Bogota from 25 to 27 January 2010 to promote agreements on joint investigations. Twenty-four bilateral agreements were signed by six West African States (Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Togo) and four Latin American and Caribbean States (Colombia, Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Peru).

452. To exchange experiences with regard to the control of precursors and the negative environmental

impact of disposing of residues from the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, experts from Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador and Peru held a meeting in Lima on 16 February 2010 in the framework of a project funded by the European Commission entitled "Support for the Andean Community in the area of synthetic drugs" (DROSICAN). At the meeting, the experts stressed the importance of cooperating with the academic community, in particular universities, in efforts to address the problem.

453. In 2009, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) established the Consejo Sudamericano de Lucha Contra el Narcotráfico (South American council for the fight against drug trafficking). In April 2010, ministers of the countries concerned ratified the council's statute, which provides a legal framework for a concerted approach to fighting drug-related problems and for UNASUR drug control activities in that area.

454. Participants in the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Salvador, Brazil, from 12 to 19 April 2010, adopted the Salvador Declaration on Comprehensive Strategies for Global Challenges: Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Systems and Their Development in a Changing World,<sup>36</sup> in which concern was expressed about the negative impact of organized crime on human rights, the rule of law, security and development. A workshop on the links between drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime was organized in the framework of the Congress with a view to strengthening the role of the United Nations, promoting good practices, training and capacity-building and facilitating the efforts of Member States to prevent and control such trafficking.

455. In April 2010, the Madrid Declaration was adopted at the twelfth high-level meeting of the Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Declaration stresses, among other things, the importance of cooperation on alternative development in regions where crops are cultivated for use in the illicit manufacture of drugs.

456. According to a CICAD study entitled *Establishing Drug Treatment Courts: Strategies, Experiences and Preliminary Outcomes*, published in

<sup>36</sup> A/CONF.213/18, chap. I, resolution 1.

April 2010, drug treatment courts contribute significantly to reducing recidivism among drug-dependent offenders and help to reduce crime at the local level. The study was developed in the framework of the EU-LAC Drug Treatment City Partnerships initiative and is based on a survey of drug treatment courts in 12 countries in Europe and the Americas, including Brazil, Chile and Suriname.

457. On 19 and 20 May 2010, the Brazilian Federal Police, in partnership with UNODC, organized an international seminar on the interception of telephone and long-distance computerized communications. Experts from eight countries (Brazil, Canada, Colombia, France, New Zealand, Portugal, the United States and the United Kingdom) participated in the seminar, which was held in Brasilia, Brazil. The discussion focused on investigative techniques, legislative frameworks and changes to such frameworks, and cross-border cooperation to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement and the judiciary.

458. In June 2010, the Government of Peru, in cooperation with the European Commission and UNODC, hosted in Lima an international precursor control symposium organized in the framework of a regional programme entitled "Prevention of the diversion of drug precursors in the Latin American and Caribbean region". At the symposium, representatives from 15 countries in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean agreed to strengthen controls over precursor chemicals in order to prevent them from being diverted and used in illicit drug manufacture. The topics discussed by national experts included cooperation with the private sector in the area of precursor control.

459. Experts from 11 countries and several international organizations participated in the joint meeting of the task forces of Project Prism and Project Cohesion held in Bogota in June 2010. The meeting was organized to evaluate the projects' earlier activities (Operation PILA and the second phase of Operation Dice), which had focused on monitoring the trade in and exchanging information on precursors used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants and heroin, respectively. The experts proposed future operational activities under Project Prism and Project Cohesion and strategies to prevent the diversion of precursors.

460. In July 2010, the Government of Colombia, in cooperation with UNODC, hosted a seminar on drugs and HIV in Colombia that was attended by national and international experts from Canada, Colombia, France, Spain, the United States and Uruguay. Attention was drawn to the relationship between drug abuse, especially the abuse of drugs by injection, and practices that increase the risk of HIV infection.

461. Although cocaine continued to be smuggled by air out of a number of countries in South America, according to the World Customs Organization, airport authorities in South America, Africa and Europe had only recently begun to exchange operational information. The Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP), jointly developed by UNODC, the World Customs Organization and INTERPOL, will focus on strengthening border controls and management and on sharing intelligence among participating international airports in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Board encourages the Governments concerned to further strengthen such interregional cooperation within the framework of shared responsibility.

462. UNODC, the Inter-American Observatory on Drugs of CICAD and the national drug control commissions of Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay jointly published in 2010 the second comparative analysis of drug use among students in secondary schools. In addition, under project DROSICAN, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador and Peru conducted, from January to November 2009, an epidemiological study on the use of synthetic drugs among the university population in the Andean subregion.<sup>37</sup>

463. Brazil, Colombia, Haiti, Nicaragua and Peru are participating in a global project entitled "Partnership for action on comprehensive treatment: treating drug dependence and its health consequences". The project activities, which are supported by UNODC, include promoting a sound understanding of drug dependence and its treatment.

464. Several countries in South America have signed bilateral agreements for enhancing cooperation in the area of drug control. In 2010, the National Anti-Drug

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<sup>37</sup> Available from [www.comunidadandina.org/public/Estudio\\_drogas.pdf](http://www.comunidadandina.org/public/Estudio_drogas.pdf).

Secretariat (SENAD) of Paraguay and the National Commission for Development and a Drug-Free Lifestyle (DEVIDA) of Peru signed an agreement to enhance the cooperation of institutions in initiatives for preventing drug abuse and trafficking. Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) concluded a cooperation agreement to foster cooperation in the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, the rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug abusers and alternative development. Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Brazil concluded a partnership agreement to enhance cooperation between police authorities involved in combating drug trafficking and transnational organized crime.

### 3. National legislation, policy and action

465. In December 2009, the Argentine authorities published a national study on the use of psychoactive substances and the connection between the use of such substances and the commission of crime among the prison population. The study, the first of its kind in Argentina, concludes that alcohol and drug use and criminal behaviour are related to social, cultural and economic changes that have occurred in that country in recent decades. The study also found that illicit drug use was significantly higher among the prison population than among the general population.

466. The Bolivian national council for the fight against drug trafficking (CONALTID), with the support of UNODC through its project on strengthening the fight against drug trafficking and related crimes in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, has assessed the country's national strategy to fight drug trafficking and re-evaluate the coca leaf (covering the period 2007-2010). With the participation of public and private institutions, and international and civil society organizations, CONALTID is formulating a national plan for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse and the social reintegration of drug addicts, as well as a new national policy to fight drug trafficking (covering the period 2011-2015).

467. In September 2010, the Supreme Court of Brazil ruled that failure to consider non-custodial sentences for individuals found guilty of small-scale drug-dealing offences would violate the Constitution. The Government of Brazil has made significant investments in technology to support the monitoring of illicit drug

crops in the country and in activities of the Federal Police to counter drug trafficking.

468. In December 2009, the Colombian Congress amended the Constitution to prohibit the possession and use of drugs for purposes other than medical purposes, thereby reversing the Constitutional Court ruling that the punishment for possession of illicit drugs for personal use was unconstitutional.<sup>38</sup> In April 2010, the Government of Colombia launched a new campaign entitled "Colombia, a drug-free territory", sponsored by the National Narcotics Directorate (DNE), the Ministry of the Interior and Justice and UNODC.

469. In 2009, the Government of Chile approved the national drug control strategy for the period 2009-2018. In the strategy, the role of the family in preventing drug abuse and alcohol consumption among children and youth is acknowledged. The Government also approved measures and activities, contained in its action plan for the period 2009-2013 and designed to achieve the goals of the strategy.

470. In April 2010, DEVIDA published a catalogue of best practices in the prevention and treatment of drug abuse with the aim of sharing information among professionals on relevant programmes and projects carried out in Peru. In addition, DEVIDA has promoted an initiative aimed at preventing drug traffickers from gaining political influence in the country. As a result of the initiative, a number of political parties in Peru have committed themselves to transparency and the establishment of rigorous procedures for the selection of candidates for elections to be held in 2011.

471. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela continued to implement its national drug control plan covering the period 2009-2013 and the national plan for drug abuse prevention entitled "Sowing values for life". Measures to counter drug trafficking that have been implemented in the country include the installation of a radar network for defending the country's airspace from drug traffickers, the installation of body scanners at the country's international airports and the building of facilities for incinerating illicit drugs.

<sup>38</sup> Article 49 of the Constitution states that the possession and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are prohibited, with the exception of medical prescriptions.

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

##### *Narcotic drugs*

472. Although cannabis plants are illicitly cultivated in most countries in South America, information on the areas under illicit crop cultivation is too scattered and scarce for a comprehensive analysis of trends in such cultivation to be carried out. Paraguay continues to be the main South American country used for illicit cannabis production. According to figures for 2008, illicitly cultivated cannabis plants covered about 6,000 ha in Paraguay, in an area close to the Brazilian border (potential yield: 16,500 tons of cannabis herb). In 2009, the Paraguayan law enforcement authorities, in cooperation with their Brazilian counterparts, eradicated over 2,000 ha of cannabis plants. In the same year, the total amount of cannabis herb seized in Paraguay decreased by more than one half, to 85.4 tons (compared with 173.4 tons in 2008). UNODC estimates that about 80 per cent of the cannabis found in Brazil originates in Paraguay.

473. In 2009, the Colombian drug observatory estimated that illicitly cultivated cannabis plants covered about 210 ha of the country's territory. In 2009, about 170 ha of illicitly cultivated cannabis plants were eradicated in the country. The Venezuelan authorities did not identify any illicit cultivation of cannabis plants in their country. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the amount of seized Colombian cannabis increased from 20.7 tons in 2008 to 32.6 tons in 2009. Cannabis is the only drug illicitly produced in Chile. The amount of cannabis herb seized in Chile increased gradually from 5 tons in 2005 to nearly 14 tons in 2009.

474. The extent of the indoor cultivation of cannabis plants in South America is not known. According to UNODC, Argentina is the only country in the region that reported the illicit cultivation of cannabis plants indoors.

475. In Colombia, the authorities seized 209 tons of cannabis herb in 2009; from 2006 to 2009, Colombian authorities seized on average 189 tons of cannabis herb per year. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, seizures of cannabis plants and cannabis herb rose from 424 tons in 2007 to 1,964 tons in 2009. From 2008 to 2009, the amount of cannabis plants seized in

Peru increased from 61 to 137.5 tons, the largest amount seized since 2000.

476. In 2009, the total area under illicit coca bush cultivation in South America decreased by 5 per cent, to 158,800 ha (compared with 167,600 ha in 2008). Colombia accounted for 43 per cent of that total (68,000 ha); it was followed by Peru (59,900 ha or 38 per cent) and the Plurinational State of Bolivia (30,900 ha or 19 per cent). Illicit coca bush cultivation on sites covering less than 25 ha was reported in Ecuador.

477. In South America, illicitly cultivated coca bush is eradicated manually or by aerial spraying.

478. In Colombia, 60,500 ha of illicit coca bush cultivation were eradicated manually and an additional 104,800 ha were subject to cumulative aerial spraying in 2009 (a total of 165,300 ha). In 2009, the Peruvian authorities eradicated 10,025 ha of illicit coca bush cultivation, the smallest area eradicated in the country since 2003. In 2009, Bolivian authorities eradicated 6,300 ha of illicit coca bush cultivation (16 per cent more than in 2008), mostly in the Tropics of Cochabamba region.

479. According to UNODC, between 2005 and 2008 the global cocaine interception rate exceeded the annual benchmark of 40 per cent. In 2008, 123 countries reported having seized a total of 360 tons of cocaine (amount adjusted for purity), thus contributing to a reduction in the potential availability of that drug (from 865 to about 500 tons).

480. From 2008 to 2009, the total amount of seized cocaine increased in Paraguay (to 0.6 tons, an increase of 114 per cent) and Ecuador (from 15.7 to 53.4 tons, an increase of more than 300 per cent). The total amount of seized cocaine decreased in Bolivia (Plurinational State of) (to 4.9 tons, a decrease of 32 per cent), Chile (to 2.7 tons, a decrease of 10 per cent), Peru (to 10.7 tons, a decrease of 36 per cent) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (to 27.7 tons, a decrease of 17 per cent). In Brazil, a total of 20 tons of cocaine were seized in 2009, an amount not significantly different from the amount seized in 2008. In Colombia, seizures of cocaine hydrochloride remained stable in 2009, amounting to 200 tons.

481. The three main illicit markets for cocaine are in North America, Europe and the Southern Cone, which

in 2008, accounted for about 41, 29 and 10-20 per cent, respectively, of global cocaine consumption. While the market for cocaine has decreased in North America, it continues to increase in Europe.

482. Despite the efforts of authorities in countries in Central America and the Caribbean to combat the drug trafficking, the region continues to be part of a major trafficking route for illicit shipments of controlled drugs originating in South America and destined for North America and Europe. Most of the cocaine abused in Canada and the United States is smuggled out of Colombia through Mexico or countries in Central America.

483. Although Colombia remains the primary source of the cocaine found in Europe, Peru is becoming an increasingly important country of origin. The European Police Office (Europol) has identified the three main sea routes used to smuggle cocaine into Europe: the “northern route”, leading from the Caribbean via the Azores to the coasts of Portugal and Spain; the “central route”, leading from South America via Cape Verde or Madeira and the Canary Islands to Europe; and the “African route”, leading from South America to West Africa and then mainly to Spain and Portugal. The trans-shipment of cocaine has become a significant threat to the security and political stability of the countries in Central America and the Caribbean.

484. The World Customs Organization has identified the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as one of the principal countries of origin of cocaine shipments seized in Western Europe and has warned of the increasing role played by Brazil, Ecuador and Suriname as countries of departure of cocaine shipments. In 2009, the Venezuelan authorities seized more than 30 aircraft that had been used to transport drugs and destroyed 48 unauthorized airstrips in the country. Some of the seized aircraft had been modified to increase their flying range. The Board is concerned about the continued smuggling of drugs through the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

485. Approximately five years ago, West Africa emerged as a hub for the smuggling of cocaine from Latin America into Europe. Most of the cocaine shipped to West Africa was being smuggled by boat or light aircraft. More recently, there have been indications that in order to smuggle drugs further inland, traffickers are taking advantage of the absence

of a radar control network in the region by using aircraft designed to carry heavy cargo.

486. In past years, the use of semi-submersibles for smuggling drugs has strongly increased. According to the Colombian authorities, 19 semi-submersibles were seized worldwide from 1993 to 2007. In 2008 and 2009 alone, the law enforcement authorities seized 34 semi-submersibles. The level of technological advancement and the transport capacity of such vessels have developed over the years, as evidenced by the seizure of a submarine capable of carrying 14 tons of drugs. The submarine was seized during a law enforcement operation carried out in Ecuador, near that country’s border with Colombia, in July 2010.

487. Over the past four years, the size of coca-processing laboratories in South America has decreased while their number has increased. Over 99 per cent of the approximately 10,000 coca-processing laboratories destroyed worldwide in 2008 were located in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia or Peru. In 2008, cocaine laboratories were dismantled in Argentina (20), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (10), Chile (4) and Ecuador (3).

488. According to DNE of Colombia, about 90 per cent of the 2,959 clandestine drug laboratories destroyed in the country in 2009 had been illicitly processing coca paste or cocaine base; the remainder had been illicitly manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride. The number of clandestine drug laboratories dismantled in Colombia in 2009 decreased by 14.3 per cent compared with the number of such laboratories dismantled in 2008 (3,451). In Colombia, clandestine drug laboratories are becoming smaller and easier to set up and disassemble, which makes them more difficult for law enforcement authorities to detect.

489. The capacity of traffickers from Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Peru to manufacture cocaine has grown in the past few years. In 2009, authorities in Peru dismantled approximately 1,200 laboratories for processing coca paste and 25 used for manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride. The Bolivian authorities destroyed about 6,700 maceration pits and about 4,900 laboratories for processing coca paste and coca base.

490. Ecuadorian law enforcement authorities destroyed several large-scale drug laboratories in 2009 and 2010. In October 2009, they dismantled one of the

largest cocaine manufacturing laboratories in the country; it was estimated that the laboratory could manufacture 20 tons of cocaine per month. Another clandestine laboratory, capable of converting each month approximately 1 ton of coca paste into cocaine hydrochloride, was dismantled in April 2010. The Board is concerned about the increasing cocaine manufacturing capacity in Ecuador. Although the Venezuelan authorities did not detect any illicit cultivation of coca bush in their country, in 2009 they detected and destroyed 26 illicit drug manufacturing laboratories.

491. The total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in South America accounts for less than 1 per cent of the total area under such cultivation worldwide. In Colombia, the country in which most of the illicit opium poppy cultivation in South America takes place, such cultivation is limited to mountainous areas and has gradually declined from 6,500 ha in 2000 to 356 ha in 2009 (potential heroin manufacture: 1 ton). In 2009, Colombian authorities eradicated illicitly cultivated opium poppy covering a total area of 546 ha. The heroin manufactured in Colombia is sold on the illicit market in that country or smuggled into other countries in the Americas, in particular the United States.

492. In Peru, in 2009 the authorities eradicated 31.5 ha of opium poppy and seized 75 kg of opium latex. In 2008, Peru reported the destruction of one clandestine laboratory for processing opiates.

493. In 2009, the South American country reporting the largest total amount of heroin seized was Colombia (over 735 kg), followed by Ecuador (178 kg) and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (80 kg).

#### *Psychotropic substances*

494. According to the World Customs Organization, the total amount of MDMA (“ecstasy”) seized by customs authorities worldwide decreased from 5,929 kg in 2007 to only 218 kg in 2009, and such a sharp decline in the amount of “ecstasy” seized worldwide could be attributed to an increase in the manufacture of that substance in countries in which it is sold on illicit markets and a decrease in the smuggling of that substance across national borders. Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Colombia reported seizures of “ecstasy” by either customs or police authorities in 2009. In the period 2008-2009, the

manufacture of “ecstasy” was reported in Argentina and Brazil.

495. The Colombian authorities warned about attempts to barter cocaine from South America for MDMA (“ecstasy”) tablets from Europe. In addition, those authorities conducted a survey whose findings confirmed that many of the tablets sold as “ecstasy” on illicit markets in that country actually contained a mixture of psychoactive substances, including analgesics, benzodiazepines, cocaine, heroin and methaqualone. The unpredictable composition of those tablets and the unknown quantity of active ingredients they contained made them especially harmful to “ecstasy” abusers. In July 2010, the Peruvian authorities reported that 251,000 “ecstasy” tablets and over 100 kg of cocaine had been seized in Lima.

496. In 2009, the Chilean authorities reported the seizure of a small-scale laboratory for illicitly manufacturing mescaline, a psychotropic substance in Table I of the 1971 Convention. It was the first time that such a clandestine laboratory had been identified in Chile.

#### *Precursors*

497. Potassium permanganate remains the key oxidizing agent used to manufacture cocaine. According to DNE of Colombia, the availability of potassium permanganate for use in the illicit manufacture of cocaine has increased in recent years despite the seizure of large amounts of the substance and the implementation of the necessary control measures in the country. In 2009, 22.8 tons of potassium permanganate were seized in Colombia. Although that was the smallest total quantity of potassium permanganate seized in the country in the period 2000-2009, it was the largest total quantity of the substance seized in a single country in 2009 accounting for 90 per cent of the total amount of potassium permanganate seized worldwide. In 2009, the seizure of potassium permanganate in quantities larger than 100 kg was also reported in Peru (1,770 kg) and Ecuador (480 kg).

498. A portion of the potassium permanganate seized in Colombia had been illicitly manufactured in clandestine laboratories. From 2004 to 2008, 58 clandestine laboratories manufacturing potassium permanganate were seized in the country. Although traffickers’ capacity to manufacture their own

potassium permanganate still remains difficult to assess, the Colombian authorities indicate that potassium permanganate may be illicitly manufactured in sufficient quantities to cover most of the traffickers' needs for the substance. In 2009, two laboratories illicitly manufacturing potassium permanganate were destroyed in the country.

499. In the past three years, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Peru have strengthened controls over the licit trade in ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, including in the form of pharmaceutical preparations. The measures taken included restricting or banning the import and use of those substances. Nonetheless, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine have continued to be smuggled. In 2009, a total of over 1.5 tons of raw ephedrine were seized by Chilean, Colombian and Venezuelan authorities. In addition, Argentina, Brazil and Colombia reported seizures of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in the form of pharmaceutical preparations. In July 2010, the Colombian law enforcement authorities seized 2 million tablets containing pseudoephedrine in a shipment bound for Honduras. The Board encourages Governments to use the "Guidelines for a voluntary code of practice for the chemical industry", developed by the Board, to further strengthen control over the precursor chemical trade in their countries, in cooperation with the private sector.

#### *Substances not under international control*

500. The Governments of countries in South America continue to pay attention to the use of psychoactive substances that are not currently under international control. In January 2010, the National Anti-Drugs Council (CONAD) of Brazil adopted a resolution on the use of ayahuasca for religious purposes. In March 2010, the Government of Argentina approved decree 299/2010, pursuant to which ketamine was included on the list of substances subject to national control.

501. The health and drug regulatory authorities of several countries in the Americas have recently focused on herbal mixtures marketed under the brand name Spice. As small amounts of synthetic cannabinoids have been identified in such mixtures, there is concern that the use of Spice products may have negative effects on health. The CICAD group of experts on chemical substances has recently prepared for all

CICAD member States factsheets on scopolamine (hyoscine) and Spice products.

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

502. The latest estimates on drug abuse indicate that cannabis continues to be the most abused drug in South America, where about 7.5 million persons aged 15-64 used that drug during the past year, three times the number of persons who used cocaine during the past year.

503. The Board notes that recently, a number of countries in South America have used common methodologies in conducting surveys on drug abuse in the region. For example, Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay conducted the second comparative analysis of drug use among students in secondary schools. According to the results of the analysis, cannabis herb is the drug most commonly abused among students aged 13-17. On average, almost 11 per cent of the students in those six countries had used the substance at least once in their lifetime; the percentages in the individual countries ranged from 4 per cent in Peru to almost 23 per cent in Chile. The Board wishes to encourage the Governments of the countries in South America to periodically carry out, in cooperation with CICAD and UNODC, standardized drug abuse surveys to enable the magnitude of the drug abuse problem to be assessed and compared in countries throughout the region.

504. The results of the first national survey on the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs among university students in 27 Brazilian state capitals, announced by the Government of Brazil in June 2010, indicate that 8 per cent of the university students in the survey were at risk of becoming dependent on cannabis. The Brazilian study also revealed that almost half of the surveyed students had used a psychoactive substance at least once in their lifetime and that there had been an increase in the abuse of synthetic drugs (amphetamines and MDMA ("ecstasy")). The drug most often abused among university students was cannabis (13.8 per cent), followed by amphetamines (10.5 per cent).

505. Past-year prevalence of cocaine abuse among the general population in South America (0.9-1.0 per cent) is far lower than in North America (2.0 per cent) but higher than in Central America (0.5-0.6 per cent). According to UNODC, in South America cases



involving treatment for cocaine abuse accounted for 65 per cent of all cases involving treatment for substance abuse in 1998, and that figure decreased, in relative terms, to 49 per cent in 2008. For the past 10 years, cocaine has been the primary drug of abuse among persons treated for drug problems in the region.

506. Demand for “crack” cocaine appears to be emerging in some countries in South America. In 2008, seizures of “crack” cocaine were reported in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, lifetime prevalence of the abuse of “crack” cocaine among the population aged 15-70 is 11.9 per cent. In that country, about a quarter of the persons who received treatment for drug addiction were addicted to “crack” cocaine. In 2010, the Government of Brazil launched its integrated plan to combat “crack” cocaine and other drugs.

507. In South America, the countries with the highest prevalence of abuse of prescription opioids among persons aged 15-64 are Brazil and Chile (0.5 per cent in 2008). In both countries, the abuse of prescription opioids is the main problem, while the abuse of heroin is still low. In Chile, the estimate of 0.5 per cent for 2008 represents an increase compared with the figure for 2006 (0.3 per cent). In other countries in the region, the prevalence of abuse of opiates is low, ranging from 0.1 per cent in Ecuador to 0.3 per cent in the Plurinational State of Bolivia. In most countries in South America, the abuse of synthetic opioids is more common than the abuse of heroin.

508. According to an epidemiological study of the consumption of synthetic drugs among the university population in the Andean subregion, the highest lifetime prevalence of the abuse of MDMA (“ecstasy”) among students was in Colombia (about 3.5 per cent), followed by Ecuador, Peru and the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

509. According to the second comparative analysis of drug consumption among students in secondary schools in the region, the countries with the highest past-year prevalence of cocaine abuse among persons aged 15-16 were Uruguay (3.7 per cent), Chile (3.21 per cent), Argentina (3.16 per cent), the Plurinational State of Bolivia (2.12 per cent), Ecuador (1.52 per cent) and Peru (0.95 per cent).

510. According to the *2009 AIDS Epidemic Update*, published by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and WHO, an estimated 29 per cent of the more than 2 million Latin Americans who abuse drugs by injection are infected with HIV. HIV epidemics among such drug abusers in the region tend to be concentrated in the Southern Cone. It is estimated that in Argentina alone, almost half of the persons who abuse drugs by injection are infected with HIV.

## C. Asia

### East and South-East Asia

#### 1. Major developments

511. In East and South-East Asia, progress in reducing opium production is under threat, owing to an upswing in opium poppy cultivation during the 2009 growing season. Successes in reducing opium poppy cultivation in the region have been built on decades of successful alternative development work in rural communities; however, the information available for the last three years has been less encouraging. Several factors have contributed to the increase in illicit opium poppy cultivation in the area known as the Golden Triangle. It should be noted that despite some increases in illicit opium poppy cultivation since 2008 in South-East Asia, that subregion accounts for less than 5 per cent of global opium poppy production. Myanmar remains the main opium-producing country in the subregion, accounting for approximately 95 per cent of total opium production in South-East Asia; it is followed by the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Thailand. A significant increase in the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation has been reported in Myanmar; the total area under such cultivation in that country in 2009 was 31,700 ha, an increase of 11 per cent over the figure for 2008 (28,500 ha). Opium poppy cultivation and potential opium production increased in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic in 2009; the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation, in that country amounted to 1,900 ha in 2009, an increase of 19 per cent over 2008. According to UNODC, potential production of opium in Thailand was negligible in 2009 — about 3 tons.

512. An issue of paramount concern to East and South-East Asia has been the increasing trafficking in, illicit manufacture of and abuse of synthetic drugs in