

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

recent years, in particular amphetamine-type stimulants, which, because of their low costs of manufacture, ease of availability and considerable addictive potential, represent a major challenge to national health authorities. Since 2008, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and the Philippines have reported the dismantling of several laboratories that were illicitly manufacturing amphetamine-type stimulants. The number of seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants, including methamphetamine tablets and crystalline methamphetamine, has been increasing in the region. China reported large seizures of methamphetamine in 2009. Methamphetamine trafficking was reported to have increased in Japan in 2009; methamphetamine was being smuggled into that country out of Latin America, West Asia and Africa. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, increased seizures of tablets containing different types of amphetamine-type stimulants, mostly methamphetamine, were also reported.

513. Amphetamine-type stimulants (primarily methamphetamine) and opioids and cannabis continue to be widely abused in East and South-East Asia. Cases involving opioids and methamphetamine make up the bulk of treatment episodes for drug abuse. Persons who abuse drugs by injection account for an alarmingly high percentage of the drug abusers in the region: it is estimated that approximately 25 per cent of all injecting drug abusers in the world live in East and South-East Asia. The risk of an HIV epidemic among the drug-injecting population in the region is therefore high.

2. Regional cooperation

514. The Thirty-fourth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, was held in Bangkok from 30 November to 3 December 2010. The main goal of the meeting was to promote and coordinate capacity-building for law enforcement in the region. The issues discussed included major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures, including international cooperation, specific law enforcement measures, such as controlled delivery, and approaches to strengthen regional cooperation with regard to the dismantling of clandestine drug laboratories.

515. In 2009, border liaison offices assisted the Governments of Cambodia, China, the Lao People's

Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam in conducting numerous joint operations that led to several seizures of drugs and precursors and to the dismantling of clandestine laboratories. A cross-border cooperation meeting between Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic was held in Preah Vihear, Cambodia, and Ban Meuang Sene, Lao People's Democratic Republic, from 19 to 23 July 2010 to bring together law enforcement officers from the border liaison offices of both countries and build a network for information-sharing.

516. Ministers for foreign affairs of member States of the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as the Secretary-General of ASEAN, at the eighteenth ASEAN-European Union Ministerial Meeting, on the theme "Partners in regional integration", held in Madrid on 26 May 2010, reaffirmed their commitment to promoting cooperation to combat drug trafficking. The foreign ministers also reaffirmed the unique character of the partnership between ASEAN and the European Union, underlining the potential strategic importance of the partnership, bearing in mind that there were approximately 1.25 billion people living in the member States of ASEAN and the European Union.

517. A Senior Officials Committee meeting among the signatories to the 1993 memorandum of understanding on drugs in the Greater Mekong subregion was hosted by the Government of Viet Nam in Da Nang from 11 to 14 May 2010 to review and assess the implementation of the memorandum's subregional action plan and related projects.

518. The twenty-third ASEAN-Australia Forum was held in Singapore on 19 March 2010, with the participation of representatives from Australia, ASEAN member States and the ASEAN secretariat, to tackle, among other issues, cooperative mechanisms for combating transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking.

519. The first ASEAN-United States Leaders' Meeting, on the theme "Enhanced partnership for enduring peace and prosperity", was held in Singapore on 15 November 2009. Leaders from around the world, including Heads of State or Government of the member States of ASEAN and the United States, gathered to enhance regional partnership and issued a joint statement on strengthening efforts to prevent and

combat transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking.

520. The fifteenth Asia-Pacific Operational Drug Enforcement Conference was held in Tokyo in February 2010. The meeting promoted information exchange and cooperation in investigations and the sharing of knowledge and experiences acquired in international drug control.

3. National legislation, policy and action

521. The Board notes that the Governments of Japan and Thailand have taken proactive measures to prevent drug abuse through successful cooperation among related ministries and agencies, such as the Drug Abuse Prevention Center of Japan, as well as their private sectors. In Thailand, the “To be number one” campaign, a joint initiative of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, has been launched with the theme “You can only be the best you can be by not using drugs”. Actions under the campaign included the promotion of nationwide drug abuse awareness and prevention in schools and communities.

522. Several countries in East and South-East Asia have adopted or enacted new laws or regulations for drug control. Indonesia reported enacting its law on narcotics in 2009, which brings internationally controlled substances, including precursors, under national control and defines the competencies of authorities at the national and provincial levels. In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, a new drug law was promulgated in January 2009. Also in 2009, the Prime Minister’s decree on the implementation of the law on drugs was enacted. In Mongolia, a new law was implemented in 2009, providing for the monitoring of narcotic drugs and envisaging psychological assistance for addicts. Following the adoption of a new customs law in 2008, the Mongolian Customs General Administration began to reform its risk-assessment techniques related to drug control.

523. In Myanmar, safrole oil was recently listed as a controlled precursor chemical. It is now subject to the same control measures as substances in Table I of the 1988 Convention. In April 2009 the Philippines enacted the regulation on controlled precursors and essential chemicals and in November 2009 the regulation on psychotropic substances, which included *N*-benzylpiperazine in the list of dangerous drugs. In July 2009 the Republic of Korea enacted the

enforcement decree of the act on the control of narcotics, through which additional substances and precursor chemicals were placed under national control. In addition, in October 2009 the Republic of Korea enacted the enforcement rule of the act on the control of narcotics, which stipulated the provisions for travellers entering the country carrying controlled substances.

524. Singapore introduced, with effect from July 2009, a new law for the control of the export of cough preparations containing codeine. Viet Nam adopted an amendment and supplement to the drug control law, which came into effect in January 2009, redefining the responsibilities of national authorities in preventing drug abuse and controlling the licit drug supply, including the roles of law enforcement agencies such as the police, maritime police, border protection forces and customs service. In addition, the amendment and supplement to the penal code adopted in June 2009 came into effect in January 2010. According to the new law, the abuse of narcotic drugs is no longer a criminal offence in Viet Nam.

525. Thailand has enacted new ministerial regulations on rules and procedures for issuing licences to manufacture, import, sell or possess with intent to sell drugs in Schedule II or preparations in Schedule III of the 1961 Convention. The regulations came into effect in September 2009, redefining the responsibilities of national authorities in controlling the illicit drug supply and availability.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

526. Illicit cultivation of cannabis plant continues to be a problem in East and South-East Asia. In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, illicit cannabis plant cultivation has taken place mainly in the central provinces for export to neighbouring countries, particularly in areas near the Mekong. Some 2,800 kg of cannabis were seized in April 2010 in Khamouan Province, on the Lao-Thai border. In Japan, cannabis plants were illicitly cultivated indoors for domestic use, and arrests and seizures relating to such cultivation increased in 2009. In Mongolia, illicit cannabis production, trafficking and abuse were on the rise, although still considered small in scale. The level of cultivation was estimated to be low in that country,

as the most common local source of cannabis was naturally growing cannabis plants in the northern provinces.

527. Significant amounts of cannabis continue to be seized in East and South-East Asia. In 2009, Chinese authorities seized a total of 8.7 tons of cannabis — the largest total amount of seized cannabis ever reported by China. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, where cannabis seizures totalled 978 kg in 2009, almost 3 tons of cannabis were seized in the first half of 2010. Viet Nam also reported significant problems with cannabis trafficking: 1.6 tons of cannabis were seized in 2009. Indonesia and Thailand reported having seized large amounts of cannabis over the past two years.

528. Illicit opium poppy cultivation increased in East and South-East Asia from 2008 to 2009. In 2009, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation was 33,811 ha, representing an increase of 11 per cent over the figure for 2008 (30,388 ha). In Myanmar, illicit opium poppy cultivation increased from 27,700 ha in 2007 to 28,500 ha in 2008 and reached a total of 31,700 ha in 2009. Opium poppy cultivation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic increased in 2009 to an estimated 1,900 ha, up from 1,600 ha in 2008 and 1,500 ha in 2007. Small-scale opium poppy cultivation continued in Thailand, where approximately 211 ha of opium poppy were cultivated in scattered areas. The Government of Myanmar continued its efforts to eliminate illicit opium poppy cultivation, dispatching eradication teams to opium poppy fields in remote and mountainous areas of the country. As a result, Myanmar reported the eradication in 2009 of illicitly cultivated opium poppy covering 4,087 ha. In Viet Nam, the total area under opium poppy cultivation continued to decrease, amounting to 31 ha in the growing period 2009/10.

529. In South-East Asia, there has been a significant reduction in illicit opium production over the past two decades as a result of a combination of law enforcement and alternative development initiatives. Because of lower yield per hectare, illicit production of raw opium in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand totalled 345 tons in 2009, a decrease over the figure for 2008 (424 tons). In Myanmar, potential production of opium declined from 410 tons in 2008 to 330 tons in 2009, a decrease of 20 per cent. Nevertheless, Myanmar has remained the

main opium-producing country in the region, accounting for approximately 95 per cent of total opium production in South-East Asia. Potential opium production in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in 2009 was estimated at 11.4 tons, increasing from 9.6 tons in 2008. There was a risk of opium poppy cultivation increasing in the country because of the high price for opium and the absence of alternative development initiatives.

530. Seizures of opium continued to be reported. China reported seizures of opium totalling 1.3 tons in 2009. Increasing seizures of opium were reported by the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In contrast, there was a significant decline in the amount of opium seized in Viet Nam.

531. According to INTERPOL, illicit heroin manufacture in South-East Asia has declined substantially in the past five years, as a result of several years of unfavourable growing conditions and new Government policies of forced eradication. However, preliminary figures for 2009 indicate an increased number of seizures of opiates (mainly heroin). In some countries in the region, heroin has been trafficked by international drug trafficking organizations, including some originating in Africa. The drug trafficking organizations, operating in Cambodia, China (including Hong Kong), Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, have close ties with their supply sources in West Asia. Furthermore, cases involving non-Chinese drug traffickers have increased significantly in China. The increasing involvement of Iranian nationals and organized criminal organizations in drug trafficking was reported as a new development in the region in 2009 and 2010.

532. China reported seizures of heroin totalling 5.8 tons in 2009, compared with 4.3 tons in 2008. China, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam accounted for the majority of the heroin seizures in East and South-East Asia. In Hong Kong, China, 59 kg of heroin was seized in 2009, compared with 46 kg in 2008. In Viet Nam, where 213 kg of heroin was seized in 2009, trafficking in opiates continued, as the country is used by drug traffickers as a major transit area for shipments to China and Australia. In Viet Nam, more than 11 kg of heroin was seized in May 2010 through the cooperation of Lao and Vietnamese forces, culminating in the arrest of West and Southern African and

Vietnamese drug traffickers. The amount of heroin trafficked into Viet Nam increased by 27 per cent from 2008 to 2009. Trafficking in opiates continued to be a serious problem in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, which reported increasing seizures of heroin.

533. Seizures of cocaine in East and South-East Asia appear to be declining, although Hong Kong, China, and the Philippines reported increasing cocaine seizures in 2009. China was not only a country of destination, but also a transit country for cocaine shipments originating in South America. The amount of cocaine seized in China decreased from 558 kg in 2008 to only 41 kg in 2009. The Lao People's Democratic Republic also reported declining cocaine seizures.

Psychotropic substances

534. Illicit manufacture of and trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants have remained a serious concern in East and South-East Asia. The illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants has taken place virtually wherever there is easy access to the required precursor chemicals. The number of clandestine laboratories dismantled in China increased from 244 in 2008 to 391 in 2009. Although illicit manufacture of methamphetamine on a large scale did not take place in Hong Kong, China, several small-scale "kitchen labs" were dismantled in 2009. Over the past two years, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and the Philippines reported the dismantling of several clandestine laboratories manufacturing amphetamine-type stimulants.

535. The smuggling of amphetamine-type stimulants from the so-called Golden Triangle into China continued to increase in 2009, the most common substance smuggled being methamphetamine. In 2009, 6.6 tons of methamphetamine was seized in China. The quantity of amphetamine-type stimulants seized surpassed that of heroin in 22 Chinese provinces in 2009. According to INTERPOL, significant quantities of methamphetamine were smuggled out of the Islamic Republic of Iran via neighbouring countries into East and South-East Asia. In Indonesia, thousands of kilograms of methamphetamine were seized in 2009. In Hong Kong, China, a number of successful operations resulting in the interception of methamphetamine consignments in 2009 were reported; the consignments had been destined for illicit markets in Australia and

Japan. In recent years, methamphetamine has been smuggled into Japan not only from neighbouring countries but also from Latin America, West Asia and Africa. In 2009, the number of cases of methamphetamine trafficking in Japan more than doubled the number recorded in the previous years.

536. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has been used as a transit country for amphetamine-type stimulants since the late 1990s. The use of the Lao People's Democratic Republic as a transit area for shipments of methamphetamine originating in Myanmar and destined for Thailand increased after Thai law enforcement efforts were strengthened along the northern Thai-Myanmar border. The number of seizures of tablets containing various types of amphetamine-type stimulants in the Lao People's Democratic Republic almost doubled between 2008 and 2009; more than 80 per cent of those seizures involved methamphetamine tablets. More than 2,330,000 methamphetamine tablets were seized in the country in 2009. A shipment of some 21.8 million tablets containing amphetamine-type stimulants, weighing 2.18 tons, was seized in February 2010. Drug-related crime and violence were also reported to have increased in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Viet Nam reported having seized over 500,000 methamphetamine tablets in 2009.

537. In 2009, nearly 1.1 million MDMA ("ecstasy") tablets were seized in China. In Indonesia, seizures of "ecstasy" were more common than seizures of methamphetamine; millions of "ecstasy" tablets were seized in 2009. In Japan, where "ecstasy" from Canada and Western European countries, in particular Belgium, has been trafficked, the number of seized "ecstasy" tablets decreased substantially, from 217,172 in 2008 to 61,280 in 2009. In Hong Kong, China, in 2009 and 2010, there was a continuing trend in which "ecstasy" tablets were increasingly containing substances other than MDMA, such as a mixture of methamphetamine and ketamine. The "ecstasy" seized nowadays in Hong Kong, China, has been reported to originate in Asia, not Europe. While Europe is still cited as a source of MDMA, the importance of that region as a source has decreased as more countries outside of Europe have reported the manufacture of the substance on their territory. For example, the sources of MDMA seized in Indonesia were reported to be illicit manufacture of the substance in that country, as well as China and the Netherlands.

538. One notable development in recent years is the growing presence of nimetazepam, a benzodiazepine in Schedule IV of the 1971 Convention, on the illicit markets of some East and South-East Asian countries. Large seizures of the substance have been made in Indonesia and Malaysia in recent years, and a rise in the abuse of nimetazepam was reported in Brunei Darussalam, Hong Kong, China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

539. In China, GHB was reported to be mixed with MDMA (“ecstasy”) and ketamine in drugs of abuse.

540. In Singapore, where diversion and abuse of buprenorphine had been a problem, a significant decline in such illicit activities became evident in 2009, owing to new legislation enforced in 2009 and stricter penalties imposed by the Government for illicit activities involving that substance.

Precursors

541. Most diversions of precursors take place because of the ability of criminal groups to exploit gaps in national regulatory frameworks for monitoring trade in precursors and identifying suspicious transactions. International and regional efforts have been undertaken to prevent the diversion in East and South-East Asia of precursors.

542. Despite efforts made by the Government of China in precursor control, a number of countries reported seizures of precursors originating in China that had been intended for use in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine.

543. Myanmar has exchanged information on a regular basis with the neighbouring countries of China, India, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Thailand in order to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals.

544. There have been indications that transnational organized criminal groups are increasingly smuggling precursor chemicals through the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. In 2009, there were several instances of extraction of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine from pharmaceutical products in East and South-East Asia, which reflects a global trend.

Substances not under international control

545. Ketamine continued to be seized in several countries in East and South-East Asia. In 2008, figures

for ketamine seizures were higher than those for annual heroin seizures in the region: 6.3 tons of ketamine was seized, compared with 5.2 tons of heroin. The countries reporting seizures or abuse of ketamine included Brunei Darussalam, China (including Hong Kong), Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. Forensic data suggest that many of the so-called “ecstasy” tablets seized in the region actually contain substances other than MDMA, such as ketamine.

546. In China, ketamine was ranked fifth among all drugs of abuse. Prevalence of the abuse of ketamine has increased. The abuse of ketamine accounts for more than a third of all drug abuse cases registered as involving “new-type drugs”. China reported having seized over 5,323 kg of ketamine in 2009. Recent reports pointed out that rather than diverting ketamine licitly manufactured as an anaesthetic, drug trafficking organizations have recently been attempting to procure the precursor hydroxylamine hydrochloride and use it to illicitly manufacture ketamine in clandestine laboratories.

5. Abuse and treatment

547. Cannabis continues to be the primary drug of abuse in Indonesia. Thailand has indicated that cannabis is the second most common drug of abuse in the country. In Japan, cannabis abuse accounted for the second-largest number of drug-related arrests. Other countries in East and South-East Asia reporting cannabis abuse included Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

548. Heroin continued to be the primary drug of abuse in China, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Viet Nam. Most countries in East and South-East Asia reported stable or decreasing trends in heroin abuse; the exceptions were the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. In Viet Nam, heroin abusers accounted for 83.1 per cent of the total drug-abusing population. In Singapore, similar to the situation in 2008, heroin abusers accounted for 58 per cent of the drug abusers arrested in 2009. In China, which has the largest illicit market for opioids in the region, opioid abuse is estimated to involve between 1.8 million and 2.9 million persons and heroin abuse is the primary reason for seeking

treatment for drug abuse. In 2009, 97,000 new heroin abusers were registered in China, bringing the total to 978,226.

549. As in some other countries in East and South-East Asia, drug abuse by injection has been widespread in Viet Nam and remains a major means of HIV transmission. It is estimated that in Viet Nam persons who abuse drugs by injection account for over 80 per cent of the drug-abusing population. In Malaysia, the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS for 2006-2010 included needle and syringe exchange programmes to reduce HIV transmission. In 2009, the design and implementation of the HIV/AIDS Asia Regional Programme, funded by the Australian Agency for International Development, continued to be carried out in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar with the goal of reducing over a period of five years the prevalence of HIV infection transmitted through drug abuse by injection.

550. In Myanmar, two new programmes for methadone maintenance therapy were launched in early 2010, one at the general hospital in Muse, where persons who abuse drugs by injection were offered treatment with the assistance of a psychiatrist, and the other at the general hospital of Tachilek, where a physician was assigned to handle methadone treatment authorized by the Department of Health. The Board notes that other countries in East and South-East Asia, in particular China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam, have recently initiated or scaled up methadone maintenance programmes or expanded the coverage of such programmes to include additional segments of the population.

551. The Lao authorities estimated that there were between 12,000 and 15,000 opium addicts, mostly in the northern provinces, although more precise data on the number of drug addicts in the country were not available. In Mongolia, many patients hospitalized for trauma or other painful conditions became addicted to morphine when excessive doses of the narcotic analgesic were prescribed.

552. The abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants, especially among young people, was on the rise in many countries. All countries in East and South-East Asia reported the abuse of methamphetamine, with nine countries reporting it as the most common or second most common drug of abuse, depending on its form. Increasing abuse of methamphetamine has been

reported in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. According to UNODC, methamphetamine was the main drug of abuse in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand and the second most commonly abused drug in Cambodia and China. Crystalline methamphetamine was reported to be the primary drug of abuse in Brunei Darussalam, Japan and the Republic of Korea. In Brunei Darussalam in 2009, methamphetamine was the drug of choice for 97 per cent of drug abusers. In China, the number of registered abusers of amphetamine-type stimulants reached 360,000, of whom 97,000 were newly registered. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the number of people addicted to amphetamine-type stimulants was estimated at 35,000-40,000. Malaysia is at risk of becoming a major illicit market for amphetamine-type stimulants, as large amounts of those stimulants have been smuggled into the country.

553. MDMA ("ecstasy") was not reported as the most common drug of abuse in any country in East and South-East Asia; however, it was the second most common drug of abuse in Indonesia and the third most common in many countries in the region, including China, where it ranked after heroin and methamphetamine. In Viet Nam, "ecstasy" has been identified as a new drug of abuse.

554. Recent surveys in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand have drawn attention to the widespread abuse of volatile substances such as glue, primarily by children and teenagers. The abuse of inhalants is also a problem in other countries in East and South-East Asia, such as Mongolia.

555. In accordance with the international drug control conventions, physical and mental health problems related to drug abuse should be evaluated and treated, and support for social integration and employment provided to those in need. Research has indicated that effective treatment for drug dependence responds to individual needs and reaches those who are not motivated to attend treatment facilities. Unfortunately, those principles often were not or could not be followed by Governments in East and South-East Asia. The practice of making treatment at centres compulsory for drug abusers seems to be increasing in the region.

556. The Board wishes to highlight the importance of providing assistance in response to drug abuse and HIV prevention, treatment, support and care among persons who abuse drugs by injection and among prison inmates in East and South-East Asia. In 2009, capacity-building for the treatment of drug dependence was carried out in Cambodia, Myanmar and Viet Nam, and counselling clinics and community counselling teams for drug abusers were established.

South Asia

1. Major developments

557. South Asia has become one of the main regions used by drug traffickers to obtain ephedrine and pseudoephedrine for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. Indian law enforcement authorities continue to report significant seizures of these precursor chemicals. In addition to being diverted from the licit manufacturing industry in India, those precursor chemicals are manufactured illicitly, as indicated by the discovery of a clandestine ephedrine laboratory in 2009. To circumvent measures in place in India to control domestic and international trade in bulk ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, criminal networks have resorted to smuggling pharmaceutical preparations containing those chemicals. In addition, drug traffickers have begun using Bangladesh to obtain large quantities of such preparations.

558. Law enforcement agencies in India continue to uncover clandestine facilities where methamphetamine is illicitly manufactured. This indicates that India is being used by criminal networks for the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants. There are reports that most of the methamphetamine manufactured in clandestine laboratories in India is destined for illicit markets in other countries. The prevalence of abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants in India is not known.

559. The diversion into illicit channels of pharmaceutical preparations containing substances under international control, as well as the smuggling of such preparations, continues to pose problems in South Asia. Law enforcement agencies of Bhutan, India and Nepal often seize pharmaceutical preparations containing codeine. Seizures of pharmaceutical preparations containing buprenorphine

have increased in recent years in Bangladesh. Furthermore, many drug abusers in South Asia inject pharmaceutical preparations containing dextropropoxyphene or buprenorphine. Concerted efforts at the national and regional levels are needed to deal with that situation.

560. High rates of HIV infection are reported among people who abuse drugs by injection in some cities, such as Dhaka, and in the north-eastern states of India. One response to this problem has been the introduction and expansion of opioid substitution treatment programmes in several countries in the region in recent years. Pilot studies on the use of methadone in such programmes have been initiated in Bangladesh and Maldives and officially approved in India. The opening of additional facilities that provide opioid substitution treatment using methadone is planned in Nepal. In India, measures are being implemented to harmonize the quality and improve the efficacy of opioid substitution treatment programmes that use buprenorphine.

561. Ketamine, a substance not under international control that is increasingly being abused in East and South-East Asia, was previously reported to originate in China and other countries in that region. In recent years, however, ketamine of Indian origin has been smuggled into countries in East and South-East Asia. In India, the number of large seizures of ketamine has increased. In addition, there has been an increasing number of shipments of ketamine originating in India and illegally imported into other countries.

2. Regional cooperation

562. The tenth in a series of talks at the level of Home Secretary between Bangladesh and India was held in New Delhi in November 2009. Draft bilateral agreements on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and on combating international terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking were finalized during those talks.

563. In December 2009, the ministers for foreign affairs of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka participated in the twelfth ministerial meeting among States involved in the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). The ministers signed the BIMSTEC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug

Trafficking, aimed at strengthening mutual assistance in investigating and suppressing transnational organized crime and prosecuting offenders in cases involving such crime.

564. Also in December 2009, Bhutan and India signed a memorandum of understanding on drug demand reduction and the prevention of trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals and related matters. The first meeting of a coordination committee composed of drug control officials from the two countries was held in Thimphu in June 2010 to discuss the implementation of the memorandum.

565. In January 2010, the prime ministers of Bangladesh and India signed the Agreement on Combating International Terrorism, Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking. Pursuant to the agreement, a coordination committee composed of representatives of law enforcement and intelligence agencies of the two countries was established to extend cooperation in the prevention and investigation and trial of criminal offences such as drug smuggling.

566. The secretaries of the interior of India and Myanmar held a meeting in Nay Pyi Taw in January 2010 and a meeting in Tawang, India, in June 2010, focusing on cooperation to prevent transnational organized crime and on measures to prevent the smuggling of narcotic drugs and arms across the border between India and Myanmar.

567. At the third meeting of ministers of the interior of States members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), held in Islamabad in June 2010, participants discussed possible measures to strengthen regional cooperation to combat terrorism, trafficking in persons and drug smuggling, including the formation of a regional police agency. Also in June, and in preparation for the SAARC meeting, the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk held a meeting at which participants emphasized the need for a border control management system in the region to be used to counter the smuggling of narcotic drugs and weapons.

3. National legislation, policy and action

568. National seminars on the abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled substances were organized by UNODC in each of the six South Asian

countries between May and December 2009. The seminars, which brought together medical practitioners and representatives from drug law enforcement agencies and the pharmaceutical industry, provided a forum for participants to discuss aspects of the legal, regulatory and law enforcement systems that should be strengthened in order to stem the widespread abuse of pharmaceutical preparations in the region. The Board encourages States in the region to implement the measures necessary to curb the abuse of and trafficking in pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled substances.

569. The National Consultative Committee on De-addiction and Rehabilitation Services of India is formulating a national policy for the prevention of alcoholism and substance abuse and the rehabilitation of victims of such abuse. The National Consultative Committee, which operates under the chairmanship of the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, was constituted in 2008 to advise the Government of India on matters related to the reduction of the illicit demand for drugs.

570. In August 2009, the drug control regulations of the State of Andhra Pradesh, India, were amended to facilitate access to morphine for medical purposes. The elaborate system of licensing in place in many states of India can make it difficult for health facilities to obtain morphine for medical purposes. In 1998, the Government of India issued simplified regulations for the provision of morphine and requested states to adopt them. Of the 28 states of India, Andhra Pradesh is the fourteenth to have complied with that request. The Board encourages the Government of India to continue to promote the adoption and implementation by states of the simplified regulations so as to improve the availability of morphine in the country.

571. In March 2010, new administrative arrangements were established for allocating quotas for the manufacture of narcotic drugs in India with the aim of promoting the submission of accurate statistics and estimates to the Board. Previously, quotas were allocated to states by the central drug controller and were then distributed to individual manufacturers by the state drug controllers. The decentralized system made it cumbersome to collect from manufacturers data on narcotic drugs that must be submitted to the International Narcotics Control Board. Under the new arrangements, the authority to allocate quotas to

manufacturers and to collect the requisite data has been transferred to the Narcotics Commissioner of India.

572. In June 2010, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of India launched a new module on drug abuse prevention for out-of-school children aimed at providing guidance to non-governmental organizations working in that area. The module was prepared by the Ministry in collaboration with UNODC as part of a project to develop national programmes for preventing and raising awareness about drug abuse.

573. To devise a comprehensive action plan for combating the drug-related problems, the Government of Maldives organized a conference entitled “Maldives: Towards a Future without Drugs”. The conference, which was held in Male from 15 to 17 August 2009, brought together stakeholders from all segments of society, including legal experts, service providers, law enforcement officers, policymakers, recovering drug abusers and representatives from the private sector and international organizations.

574. In January 2010, the Government of Maldives signed a memorandum of understanding with UNODC on technical cooperation to implement a programme on strengthening the national response to combat drug abuse. The programme, supported financially by the European Union and UNODC, aims to enhance capacity for drug abuse prevention and treatment in Maldives. The Board notes with satisfaction the continued efforts of the Government of Maldives to address the growing problem of drug abuse.

575. In April 2010, a workshop on the development of comprehensive drug abuse prevention programmes in schools was organized in Male in the framework of the Drug Advisory Programme of the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific. Teachers attending the workshop received training on integrating drug abuse prevention and life-skills education into school curricula.

576. Act 1 of 2008 of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of Sri Lanka came into force in June 2009. The act translates into national law the provisions of the 1988 Convention, to which Sri Lanka became a party in 1991.

577. In June 2010, a campaign to raise young people’s awareness about the dangers of drug abuse was organized in Colombo by the National Dangerous

Drugs Control Board of Sri Lanka in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Colombo Plan. The campaign included a ceremony during which each of the participants pledged to live a life free of drug abuse.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

578. Cannabis plants are illicitly cultivated on a large scale throughout South Asia, contributing to the trafficking in cannabis herb and cannabis resin. In 2009, law enforcement authorities in Bangladesh seized 2.1 tons of cannabis herb. In June 2009, the Government of Bhutan organized an eradication campaign that resulted in the destruction of about 2.5 ha of illicitly cultivated cannabis plants. In the same year, law enforcement authorities of India eradicated 4,883 ha of illicitly cultivated cannabis plants, about three times more than in 2008. In addition, 171 tons of cannabis herb and 3.5 tons of cannabis resin were seized in that country in 2009. In Nepal, the authorities eradicated at least 62 ha of illicitly cultivated cannabis plants and seized 16 tons of cannabis in 2009. The Government of Sri Lanka reported that in 2009 the total area under illicit cannabis plant cultivation was about 500 ha and that about 8.6 tons of cannabis had been seized in the country.

579. Opium poppy is illicitly cultivated in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. Opium poppy eradication campaigns are frequently carried out by the drug law enforcement authorities of those countries. In 2009, such campaigns resulted in the eradication of 2,448 ha of illicitly cultivated opium poppy in India and 35 ha in Nepal. In addition, the seizure of about 1.45 million opium poppy plants was reported by Bangladesh.

580. Trafficking in heroin, morphine and opium continues to pose problems in India, where, in 2009, a total of 1,045 kg of heroin, 42 kg of morphine and 1,732 kg of opium were seized. Furthermore, drug law enforcement authorities reported seizures of more than 4.5 tons of poppy straw. Locally produced low-grade heroin base known as “brown sugar” is abused in India and is also smuggled into other countries in South Asia; higher-grade heroin is smuggled through the region from Afghanistan and Myanmar. Courier and postal services continue to be widely used to smuggle

heroin from India. In 2009, about 21 kg of heroin were seized in Bangladesh, more than 14 kg were seized in Nepal and 34 kg were seized in Sri Lanka.

581. Pharmaceutical preparations containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are widely abused in South Asian countries. India, a country with a large pharmaceutical industry, is the main manufacturer of such preparations, which are smuggled through the porous borders that India shares with neighbouring countries. In Bhutan, authorities continue to make frequent seizures of pharmaceutical preparations containing dextropropoxyphene and codeine originating in India. In 2009, law enforcement authorities in Bangladesh seized 58,875 bottles containing 174 litres of codeine-based syrup, 92 ampoules containing pethidine and morphine and 1,617 tablets containing codeine. In Nepal, seizures of tablets containing codeine have increased in recent years. Factors contributing to the diversion of and trafficking in pharmaceutical preparations in the region include inadequate regulation of manufacturers, lax prescription and dispensing practices, an insufficient number of trained pharmacists, the presence of an unregulated market in some countries and weak border controls.

Psychotropic substances

582. Seizures of pharmaceutical preparations containing buprenorphine have increased significantly in recent years in Bangladesh. In 2009, law enforcement authorities reported the seizure of 18,600 ampoules containing buprenorphine, equivalent to more than 10 times the total quantity seized in 2006 and about 4 times the quantity seized in 2007. The seizure of 4,051 tablets known as “yaba”, containing caffeine and methamphetamine, was also reported in 2009.

583. India is one of the main sources of psychotropic substances sold through illegally operating Internet pharmacies. In 2009, the drug law enforcement authorities of India reported having seized more than 1 kg of alprazolam and about 31,000 tablets of diazepam, phentermine and zolpidem. The tablets were found inside a parcel that was about to be dispatched through courier services. In addition, 5 kg of diazepam destined for London were seized in March 2010 and 2 kg of alprazolam were seized in May 2010.

584. In recent years, law enforcement agencies in India have uncovered several laboratories illicitly manufacturing methamphetamine. In June 2009, the seizure of 28 kg of methamphetamine led to the discovery of facilities used for the illicit manufacture of that substance in the State of Punjab. In January 2010, a methamphetamine laboratory was dismantled in the State of Himachal Pradesh and 18 kg of methamphetamine were seized on the premises. In August 2010, law enforcement agencies discovered two clandestine methamphetamine laboratories in Mumbai, India, and seized large quantities of methamphetamine and its precursors ephedrine and pseudoephedrine on the premises.

585. The total amount of amphetamine seized by law enforcement authorities in India more than doubled between 2008 and 2009, reaching 41 kg in 2009.

Precursor chemicals

586. Seizures of acetic anhydride continue to be made in India. In 2009, about 1,038 litres of that chemical were seized, representing about one third of the amount seized in the previous year.

587. In India, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, which are used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants, are either diverted from the licit manufacturing industry or produced illicitly. In November 2009, Indian law enforcement agencies dismantled a laboratory where ephedrine had been illicitly manufactured, seizing 82.5 kg of ephedrine on the premises. In the course of 2009, a total of 1.2 tons of ephedrine were seized in India. In 2009, there were reports of large shipments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine tablets originating in India that were seized while being smuggled through countries in Central America and South America and that had been destined for Mexico, where methamphetamine is illicitly manufactured on a large scale.

588. Criminal networks are increasingly targeting Bangladesh as a source of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine. Pseudoephedrine from India is formed into tablets in Bangladesh before being sent to countries in Central America and the Caribbean. Examples of large seizures of pseudoephedrine tablets originating in Bangladesh in 2009 include the seizure of more than 2 million tablets in Honduras and the seizure of about 400,000 tablets in the Dominican Republic.

Substances not under international control

589. India has become one of the main sources of ketamine that is smuggled into East and South-East Asia, where there is high demand for the substance among drug abusers. In 2009, more than 1 ton of ketamine was seized in India. Ketamine shipments have been uncovered at several major airports in India, in sea containers and in parcels sent through courier or postal services. The number and size of the ketamine seizures made in India and of the seized shipments of ketamine originating in India have increased significantly in recent years. Two large seizures of ketamine, weighing 300 and 440 kg, were made in India during the last two months of 2009. In December 2009, 147 kg of ketamine were seized at Port Klang, Malaysia, in a sea container originating in India. In January 2010, a shipment of 254 kg of ketamine destined for Taiwan Province of China was seized in Bangalore, India. The Board urges the Government of India to strengthen measures to prevent the smuggling of ketamine from its territory.

5. Abuse and treatment

590. In Bangladesh, treatment services for drug abusers are provided by the Government in four treatment centres and at three institutions operating within the prison system. Buprenorphine, cannabis and heroin are the substances most commonly reported as the main drug of abuse among patients registered in governmental treatment facilities. In 2009, 3,793 patients, only four of whom were women, were treated for drug abuse by the Government.

591. The first national baseline survey of drug abuse in Bhutan was conducted in 2009 by the Bhutan Narcotic Control Agency in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and UNODC. The survey was based on interviews with 991 drug abusers from 14 districts and on questionnaires completed by 20,757 students in 60 schools throughout the country. Among the drug abusers interviewed outside the school setting, the lifetime prevalence rates were 96 per cent for cannabis abuse and 14 per cent for heroin abuse. The lifetime prevalence rates for the abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing codeine, nitrazepam and dextropropoxyphene were 47 per cent, 34 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively. Of the drug abusers, 11 per cent reported having abused by injection either heroin or heroin in combination with buprenorphine

and dextropropoxyphene. Among students, lifetime prevalence of abuse of cannabis was 9.7 per cent, whereas the prevalence rates for daily abuse of cannabis and pharmaceutical preparations were 0.6 per cent and 0.3 per cent, respectively.

592. In Bhutan, drug abusers can receive detoxification treatment in the psychiatric ward of a major hospital in Thimphu. The Government also operates four drop-in centres for drug and alcohol abusers that provide information about drug abuse, as well as peer-led counselling and referrals to medical facilities. In August 2009, the Government opened a treatment and rehabilitation centre for drug and alcohol dependents in Thimphu, the first of its kind in the country. In addition, guidelines on the operation of treatment and rehabilitation centres and drop-in centres were published by the Government. The Board notes with satisfaction the progress made in providing treatment services for drug abusers in Bhutan.

593. The latest national household survey in India was conducted during 2000 and 2001; more recent information on national prevalence of drug abuse is not available. In 2008, the National Sample Survey Office of India was tasked with undertaking a national survey on drug abuse. The office produced a report on methodology for the national survey in 2009 and initiated pilot surveys in selected states at the beginning of 2010. The Board notes with satisfaction the steps taken by the Government of India towards obtaining up-to-date information about the national prevalence of drug abuse.

594. In India, treatment and rehabilitation services for drug abuse are mainly provided by non-governmental organizations, which operate 376 treatment and rehabilitation centres and 68 counselling and awareness-raising centres nationwide. In 2008 and 2009, about US\$ 5 million were allocated by the Government to support those organizations under the Scheme of Assistance for Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse and for Social Defence Services. In 2009, the Government also published a manual of minimum standards for programmes to provide guidance to organizations funded through the Scheme.

595. In Sri Lanka, cannabis, heroin and opium are the most frequently abused drugs. In 2009, 2,975 patients were admitted for drug abuse treatment: 80 per cent of the patients received treatment at one of four treatment

centres operated by the Government of Sri Lanka, 18 per cent were admitted to treatment programmes operating within the prison system and 2 per cent received treatment through rehabilitation programmes operated by a number of non-governmental organizations.

596. In India, opioid substitution treatment using buprenorphine is currently available to 4,800 drug abusers in 52 centres operated by non-governmental organizations. To increase and harmonize the quality of services provided to drug abusers, the Government has developed guidelines on standard operating procedures for substitution treatment using buprenorphine and an accreditation procedure for facilities providing such treatment to drug abusers. A curriculum for training health professionals in opioid substitution treatment is being developed in cooperation with UNODC.

597. Several countries in South Asia are planning to initiate or expand programmes to provide opioid substitution treatment using methadone. In Bangladesh, a one-year pilot study with 300 patients, conducted in collaboration with UNODC, was initiated in July 2010. In 2009, the Government of India approved a pilot programme to study the efficacy of substitution treatment using methadone that will be implemented in five health facilities across the country in collaboration with UNODC. In Nepal, substitution treatment using methadone is provided by the Government to about 250 drug abusers, and two new centres serving 300 new patients will open in 2010.

West Asia

1. Major developments

598. In West Asia, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation, after decreasing in 2008 and 2009, remained stable in 2010 at 123,000 ha, but illicit opium production declined to almost half the quantity reported for 2009. That sharp decline was due to lower yields per hectare, a consequence of a fungus affecting opium poppy plants, frost and drought. The number of Afghan provinces free of opium poppy remained unchanged in 2010. However, as opium prices are rising sharply, there is a risk that Afghan farmers may choose to grow more opium poppy in 2011.

599. In 2010, the Government of Afghanistan, with the support of UNODC, completed a survey of drug use in

Afghanistan and a survey on cannabis production. The 2009 Afghanistan drug use survey found that illicit drug use has increased across the country, with dramatic increases in the abuse of opium, heroin and other opiates. There are nearly 1 million drug abusers among the population of Afghanistan aged 15-64. Compared with the findings of a survey conducted in 2005, opium use increased by 53 per cent, while heroin use increased by 140 per cent. According to the first-ever survey of cannabis in Afghanistan,³⁹ conducted by UNODC in 2009, Afghanistan could be the world's largest producer of cannabis resin ("hashish"). Up to 630,000 adults in Afghanistan, mostly men, use cannabis on a regular basis.

600. The southern Caucasus is increasingly being used as a transit area for consignments of opiates from Afghanistan, and as a result, drug abuse is on the rise in the subregion. Given the long borders that countries of that subregion share with Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation and Turkey and their access to the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, the Board remains concerned that the situation with regard to drug trafficking and abuse in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia may continue to deteriorate unless increased attention is given to information-sharing, more efficient border control, drug demand reduction and regional and national coordination of drug control activities.

601. Various sources indicate that cannabis plants continue to be illicitly cultivated in Iraq and the Bekaa valley of Lebanon, although recent eradication efforts, coupled with campaigns to discourage new cultivation of cannabis plants, have led to positive results in Lebanon. Various reports show an increase in drug abuse and drug-related cases and arrests, mainly involving cannabis, heroin and so-called Captagon tablets, in countries in that area.

602. Although information on trends is limited owing to a lack of appropriate systems for monitoring drug abuse, the drug abuse situation in the Middle East is undoubtedly worsening, and abuse of all kinds of drugs has become a growing problem, as shown by indirect indicators such as HIV and hepatitis C infection rates, which are increasing in the region, particularly among

³⁹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Afghanistan Cannabis Survey 2009* (April 2010).

persons who abuse drugs by injection and the prison population.

603. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the illicit traffic in methamphetamine appears to have reversed direction. In the period 2007-2008, methamphetamine was smuggled into the Islamic Republic of Iran from China and Malaysia; in 2008, methamphetamine was smuggled out of the country to countries such as Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Thailand.

604. Non-medical use of prescription drugs, in particular tranquillizers and sleeping tablets, is increasing in some countries in the Middle East. Substances often reported to have been obtained without the required medical prescription include preparations containing methylphenidate, pseudoephedrine, tramadol and benzodiazepines such as diazepam.

605. According to the World Custom Organization, large seizures of khat have been reported in the subregion, in particular in Qatar, where the biggest seizure, amounting to 3 tons, was detected in a road freight consignment arriving from Kuwait.

2. Regional cooperation

606. The main outcome of the London Conference on Afghanistan, held on 28 January 2010, with the participation of more than 70 countries and international organizations, was the call for Afghan ownership and leadership in implementing the strategy in the areas of security, economic development, governance and counter-narcotics. Participants in the conference emphasized, among other things, the links existing between trafficking in narcotic drugs, the insurgency and other criminal activities, including corruption and trafficking in persons. In that connection, participants welcomed the updating of the National Drug Control Strategy by the Government of Afghanistan, the continuation of the "Paris-Moscow" process in countering the illicit production and consumption of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and the elimination of opium poppy crops and illicit drug laboratories and storage facilities, and welcomed the "whole-of-government" approach taken by the Government of Afghanistan in fighting corruption.

607. The special conference on Afghanistan held in Moscow on 27 March 2010, under the auspices of the

Shanghai Cooperation Organization, focused on the impact that the situation in Afghanistan has on neighbouring countries and on identifying ways to jointly confront regional threats such as terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime. Conference participants included ministers of the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and representatives of States members of the Group of Eight, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Turkey and Turkmenistan, the United Nations, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Participants in the conference recognized that, as a direct result of the inability of the Government of Afghanistan to control its borders, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and countries of Central Asia, through which Afghan opiates are predominantly smuggled, face a wide range of problems related to large-scale drug trafficking, such as organized crime, corruption and the highest rates of abuse of opiates in the world.

608. An international forum entitled "Drug Production in Afghanistan: A Challenge to the International Community" was held in Moscow on 9 and 10 June 2010. The President of the Russian Federation opened the forum, which was attended by heads of national drug control and law enforcement agencies, national experts and representatives from international organizations, CSTO, NATO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The forum focused on stepping up the fight against trafficking in drugs from Afghanistan. The President of the Board and the Executive Director of UNODC addressed the forum.

609. The international Kabul Conference held on 20 July 2010 brought together representatives of more than 60 States, including 40 ministers for foreign affairs, and 11 regional and international organizations to discuss Afghanistan's development, governance and stability, deliberate and endorse 15 national priority programmes for socio-economic development and increasingly transfer greater responsibility for the management of funds to the Afghan Administration. The Kabul Conference was the first international meeting on Afghanistan held in the country. Subsequent to the Conference, the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics of Afghanistan is updating the National Drug Control Strategy. The Board supports this Afghanistan-led process, which is aimed at accelerating Afghan

leadership and ownership, strengthening international partnerships and regional cooperation, improving governance in Afghanistan.

610. The Governments of Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan are intensifying their regional cooperation through the Triangular Initiative, aimed at joint implementation of the strategic policy outline, developed by UNODC, through projects for joint border cooperation. On 4 August 2010, representatives of the competent authorities of Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan met in Tehran for the fourth meeting of senior officials. The topics of discussion included joint and simultaneous operations of the Joint Planning Cell, establishment of border liaison offices and lessons learned from the pilot border liaison offices in Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan. Meeting participants examined the current status of cross-border communications, including the results of the fourth cross-border communications expert meeting, held in Tehran on 25 and 26 May 2010.

611. At a meeting in Doha in February 2010, the heads of the drug law enforcement agencies of Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Qatar emphasized the expansion of mutual cooperation in fighting drug trafficking. Both sides expressed their readiness to continue and deepen cooperation between the two countries at the expert level and to exchange intelligence.

612. In November 2009, the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan met in Kabul to review progress made under the Dubai Process, an initiative facilitated by the Government of Canada and aimed at increasing cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan in key areas including counter-narcotics. The discussion focused mainly on activities related to border liaison offices, precursor chemicals, treatment for drug abuse, community engagement, joint operations and equipment and training. In April 2010, at a follow-up session of the Dubai Process, the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan reviewed the status of the modernization of key border crossing points as part of the development of a comprehensive border management strategy.

613. Governments of countries in Central Asia are increasing their bilateral and multilateral cooperation in areas such as the reduction of illicit drug supply and demand, precursor control, border management, countering the spread of HIV/AIDS and fighting

organized crime and money-laundering. They have also been participating in various regional projects and international operations under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Independent States, CSTO, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the States signatories of the 1996 Memorandum of Understanding on Subregional Drug Control Cooperation (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). Similarly, an increasing number of joint programmes are being implemented and supported by the United Nations, the European Union, OSCE, the World Bank, the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL, the Paris Pact Policy Consultative Group, the NATO-Russia Council, mini-Dublin groups and individual Governments.

614. Following the entry into force of the framework agreement on the establishment of the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC), in 2010, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan continued their cooperation in countering trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors. The Board encourages the Governments involved to further enhance their joint activities and to include other countries in West Asia and the Caucasus, in order to ensure greater cooperation in collecting, exchanging and analysing drug-related intelligence, organizing and coordinating joint operations, promoting training and carrying out other efforts to reduce illicit drug supply in West Asia.

615. A meeting organized within the framework of the second phase of the UNODC operation called Targeted Anti-trafficking Regional Communication, Expertise and Training (Operation TARCET) was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 30 and 31 March 2010. The meeting was hosted by CARICC. The main objectives of the second phase of the operation (TARCET II) were to reveal and dismantle channels for the smuggling of precursors to Afghanistan. During the operation, the competent authorities of Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan and the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan seized more than 440 tons of precursors under international control.

616. The exchange of operational information is essential for the successful apprehension of members of drug trafficking organizations, and joint measures taken by the Governments of countries in West Asia to

combat drug trafficking have continued to produce good results. In 2009, there were numerous meetings and joint operations with Turkey and other countries in the region such as Iran (Islamic Republic of) and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as with European countries such as Bulgaria, Germany and the Netherlands.

617. The Governments of 18 Arab countries are working with UNODC on the development and implementation of a regional programme framework to address problems related to drugs and crime for the period 2011-2015. The programme was reviewed at a regional expert group meeting held in Egypt in April 2010, organized jointly with the League of Arab States and the Government of Egypt. The main objectives of the programme are countering trafficking, organized crime and terrorism; promoting integrity and strengthening justice systems; and drug abuse prevention and health. The regional programme will be presented to the Ministerial Council of the League of Arab States at the end of 2010 for adoption.

618. A regional forum for 16 countries of the Middle East and North Africa, hosted by the United Arab Emirates, was held in Dubai in June 2010. The main objective of the forum was to enhance cooperation among law enforcement agencies and treatment centres in the region. At the meeting, participants adopted a set of recommendations, shared with the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior, and highlighted the importance of the establishment and implementation of shared training programmes for law enforcement officers, in the areas of border control, sharing of intelligence and controlled deliveries.

619. Enhanced cooperation in the form of meetings and the exchange of information and involving countries such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey has proved effective, resulting in significant drug seizures in 2009. Joint operations involving Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Turkey have led to important seizures of heroin. In a similar fashion, cooperation between the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey has proved effective in countering trafficking in cannabis originating in the Syrian Arab Republic. Controlled deliveries involving Jordanian authorities and their counterparts in Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic have resulted in significant drug seizures.

620. At its twenty-seventh session, held in Tunisia in March 2010, the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior approved phased plans for the implementation of joint strategies to fight illicit drug use, terrorism, corruption, money-laundering, cybercrime and transnational organized crime. The Council recognized the threat posed to the region by drug trafficking and organized crime and reaffirmed the necessity of unifying their efforts and the need to develop security techniques and enhance regional and international cooperation.

621. The Board notes with appreciation the establishment in Doha by the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf of a criminal information centre for combating drug-related problems. The centre, which will be opened by the end of 2010, is to reinforce the concerted efforts of member States of the Cooperation Council to support work in areas such as preventing the spread of drug abuse.

3. National legislation, policy and action

622. The Government of Pakistan has approved a new drug control policy for 2010 in an effort to re-energize existing drug law enforcement institutions. The new policy seeks to promote international cooperation and regional partnership in tackling drug-related problems and emphasizes the need to control the problem at the source, in countries where opium poppy is grown. The strategy states that socio-economic factors should be taken into consideration and be addressed through rapid industrialization and the establishment of alternative development projects in areas where opium poppy is grown. The new policy aims to strengthen law enforcement agencies and streamline their activities and, at the same time, to enhance drug demand reduction and prevention efforts through education and community mobilization campaigns. The new policy also envisages the development of systems to provide effective and accessible treatment and rehabilitation for drug abusers and the conduct of a survey to determine the prevalence of drug abuse in the country.

623. In 2009, the Government of Jordan enacted a new regulation on prescriptions and records for narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and preparations containing controlled substances that are used in hospitals and specialized clinics. Similar administrative measures were taken in Bahrain. The authorities of Bahrain established drug control offices in various

parts of the country, enhanced collaboration with drug law enforcement agencies of Arab countries through joint training sessions held within national structures. At the national level, the authorities organized various exhibitions and lectures in order to raise public awareness of the danger of drug abuse.

624. In Iraq, the Ministry of Health has established a national drug control committee, headed by the Minister of Health, which will act as a coordinating body for drug control activities carried out by the ministries of the interior, education, justice and labour. A database will be established for collection of information from health institutions. Drug control legislation prepared by the Ministry of Health is in the process of adoption by the Parliament. The Board welcomes those positive developments in drug control in Iraq and encourages the Government to take further steps to ensure that a national drug control strategy is developed and implemented as soon as possible.

625. Ten years ago, the Board, having determined that Afghanistan had become by far the world's largest illicit producer of opium and that that situation seriously endangered the aims of the 1961 Convention, invoked article 14 of that Convention with respect to Afghanistan, calling the attention of the States parties to the 1961 Convention, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to the grave situation in Afghanistan. The Board stresses that limited progress has been made in the past decade in eliminating the impact of Afghan opium. Effective action to counter the threat posed by Afghan opium and to support the Government of Afghanistan requires close regional cooperation and a coalition of all forces at the national, regional and international levels. The Board recognizes that addressing the serious situation in Afghanistan should not be the burden of the Government of Afghanistan alone: it should be a shared responsibility, and it requires the full support and cooperative action of the international community.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

Narcotic drugs

626. According to the *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2010: Summary Findings*, published by UNODC in September 2010, the illicit cultivation of opium poppy in Afghanistan in 2010 remained at the same level as in 2009. However, in 2010, the spread of a disease that

affected opium poppy plants in the main growing provinces resulted in the yield per hectare declining sharply, by 48 per cent compared with 2009, and illicit opium production decreasing to 3,600 tons, slightly more than half the quantity reported for 2009.

627. Almost all of the illicit opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan remained concentrated in the southern and western parts of the country. Helmand remained the province with the largest area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in 2010, accounting for 53 per cent of the total area under such cultivation; it was followed by Kandahar (21 per cent). The number of provinces free of opium poppy in 2010 was the same as in 2009 (20 provinces), and the northern region maintained the poppy-free status it had achieved in 2009.

628. As of March 2010, there was an increase in prices of fresh and dry opium, both at the farm-gate level and at the trader level in Afghanistan. According to UNODC, the national average price for dry opium in Afghanistan at the farm-gate level in September 2010 reached US\$ 207 per kilogram. That represents a marked increase compared with the price in September 2009 (US\$ 78 per kilogram) and the highest price since December 2004.

629. UNODC estimated that at the end of 2009, opium stockpiles in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries totalled some 12,000 tons, equivalent to 2.5 years of global illicit demand for opiates. The fact that illicit opium production decreased significantly in 2010 does not mean that illicit heroin manufacture will also fall by any significant amount, as there are sufficient stocks of opium available.

630. There remains a strong link between security conditions and illicit opium poppy cultivation in the southern provinces of Afghanistan. Information collected by UNODC indicates that the overwhelming majority of villages with poor security are involved in such cultivation. Drug traffickers and other criminal groups encourage villagers to grow opium poppy, ensuring the protection of their opium poppy fields and, in some cases, using threats and intimidation to force the villagers to engage in illicit opium poppy cultivation.

631. Information released by UNODC in August 2010 indicates that 2,316 ha of illicitly cultivated opium poppy were eradicated in Afghanistan through the Governor-led opium poppy eradication campaign, an

area 57 per cent less than the area eradicated in 2009 (5,351 ha) and 88 per cent less than the peak reached in 2007 (19,510 ha). Although the greatest area of illicitly cultivated opium poppy eradicated in 2010 was that reported for Helmand (1,602 ha, or 69 per cent of the total area), that amount is miniscule compared with the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in that province (65,045 ha).

632. Afghanistan has emerged as one of the main countries in which cannabis plants are illicitly cultivated, as evidenced by the outcome of the first ever cannabis survey in Afghanistan. Illicit cultivation of cannabis plant takes place on a large scale in 17 of the 34 provinces in Afghanistan, and the area under such cultivation is estimated at 10,000-24,000 ha, indicating a production capacity of between 1,500 and 3,500 tons of cannabis resin per year. The extremely high yield of cannabis resin in Afghanistan (about 145 kg per hectare) is more than three times the yield in Morocco (40 kg per hectare). In 2009, 67 per cent of farmers growing cannabis plants also grew opium poppy.

633. The campaign against drug trafficking in Afghanistan was much more successful than the illicit crop eradication campaigns in the country. From April 2009 to March 2010, the law enforcement authorities of Afghanistan reported 397 cases of drug trafficking and seized 2.5 tons of heroin, over 7.5 tons of morphine, more than 59 tons of opium, more than 23 tons of cannabis resin, more than 417.5 tons of solid precursor chemicals and almost 40,000 litres of liquid precursor chemicals.

634. The Board once again urges the Government of Afghanistan, as well as the international community, to take effective measures to eradicate illicit opium poppy cultivation and ensure that opium poppy growers are provided with legitimate livelihoods that are sustainable. The Board wishes to emphasize that eradication of illicit opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan will require a sustained effort.

635. Afghan opiates are smuggled predominantly through Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and countries in Central Asia. Those countries are faced with a wide range of problems related to large-scale drug trafficking, such as organized crime, corruption and relatively high illicit demand for opiates.

636. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, there is no significant illicit cultivation of opium poppy. However, as the route through the Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the shortest routes for smuggling Afghan opiates into European countries, it remains the main route used by drug traffickers; an estimated 140 tons of Afghan heroin is smuggled through the country each year. Accordingly the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to be the country in which more opiates are seized than in any other country in the world. In 2009, the seizures of opium (579 tons), heroin (23.4 tons) and morphine (16.1 tons) represented increases of 300 per cent, 113 per cent and 60 per cent compared with 2008.

637. Pakistan continues to be used by drug traffickers as a major transit area for shipments of Afghan opiates. According to UNODC estimates, up to 40 per cent of the opium produced in Afghanistan transits or is abused in Pakistan. From 2007 to 2009, that amounted to roughly 8,800 tons of opium or its equivalent when refined into morphine and heroin.

638. In Pakistan, Government data for 2009 show a decrease in the amount of opium seized (from 28 to 25 tons) and the amount of morphine seized (from 7 to 2 tons), compared with the data for 2008. The amount of seized heroin increased marginally, from 1.9 to 2 tons, whereas the amount of seized cannabis increased sharply by 52 per cent, from 134.6 tons in 2008 to 204.5 tons in 2009.

639. Illicit cultivation of opium poppy continues to take place on a small scale in several countries in Central Asia and the southern Caucasus. The illicitly produced opium is mostly used locally, though a relatively small portion of it is smuggled into the Russian Federation.

640. Trafficking in narcotic drugs along the northern route, through Central Asia, persists: it is estimated that up to 25 per cent of Afghan opiates passed through Central Asia in 2009. However, drug seizures in the subregion have followed a significant downward trend. In 2009, the total amount of drugs seized in the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and in Azerbaijan decreased by 13.4 per cent, from 49.9 tons in 2008 to 43.2 tons in 2009. In particular, the amount of seized heroin decreased by 34.4 per cent, from 3.7 tons in 2008 to 2.4 tons in 2009.

641. This downward trend appears to have continued in 2010. In the first three months of 2010, the total amount of heroin seized in Central Asia decreased by 26 per cent compared with the same period in 2009 (from 897 to 662.5 kg). The amount of seized heroin decreased in Kazakhstan by 60 per cent, in Kyrgyzstan by 64 per cent and in Uzbekistan by 60 per cent. Only Tajikistan reported an increase in seizures of heroin, of 33 per cent, from 266 kg to 353 kg.

642. Compared with 2008, there was a decrease of 54 per cent in the amount of heroin seized in Kazakhstan (from 1.6 tons to 731 kg) and 31 per cent decrease in Tajikistan (from 1.6 tons to 1.1 tons), although those two countries still accounted for 76 per cent of the total amount of heroin seized in Central Asia. The amount of heroin seized in Kyrgyzstan increased by 14 per cent (from 299 kg to 341 kg) and Azerbaijan by 63 per cent (from 144 kg to 235 kg).

643. The total amount of opiates seized in Central Asia and Azerbaijan decreased by 27 per cent, from almost 6 tons in 2008 to 4.4 tons in 2009.

644. According to official reports, the law enforcement authorities of Tajikistan seized 2 tons of drugs in the first six months of 2010, nearly a third less than the amount seized in the same period of 2009. Heroin accounted for more than a quarter of the drugs seized (540 kg). Damage to the opium poppy crop caused by a fungus was one of the main reasons for the decline.

645. The unstable political situation, mountainous landscape and weak border controls, exacerbated by conflicts that exist in some parts of the southern Caucasus, contribute to the spread of all kinds of criminal activities, such as illegal immigration, illicit drug crop cultivation, trafficking and money-laundering.

646. A total of 811 drug-related crime cases linked to the illicit distribution of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors were registered in Armenia in the first half of 2010, a 50-per-cent increase over the same period in 2009.

647. The Middle East, including the Arabian Peninsula, is mainly used as a transit area for smuggling heroin from Afghanistan into Arab countries. Cocaine originating in South America reaches the subregion through Europe.

648. Cannabis remains the most widely abused drug in the Middle East, including the Arabian Peninsula, where the cannabis plant is illicitly cultivated in many countries, such as Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey. In Turkey, 25 per cent more cannabis was seized in 2009 than in 2008, and some of that cannabis may have originated in rural areas of the country.

649. The illicit drug most seized in Jordan, by amount, is cannabis, followed by heroin and Captagon tablets. There has recently been an increase in the number of cocaine shipments seized in Jordan after having transited Europe; the shipments had been destined for Israel and Lebanon.

650. According to the World Customs Organization, a total of 3 tons of cannabis resin were seized in the Middle East in 2009. In Yemen, the largest single seizure of cannabis resin amounted to 2.4 kg and was concealed in a seafreight shipment from Pakistan. Cannabis resin seized in Kuwait originated in Iraq. The Lebanese customs authorities uncovered at a seaport 85 kg of cannabis resin that had been destined for the Netherlands.

651. Although the number of heroin seizures remained stable in the Middle East, there was an increase in the quantity seized. The two largest seizures of heroin in the subregion in 2009 were reported in Jordan (70 kg) and Bahrain (34 kg). The heroin shipment seized in Jordan had arrived from the Syrian Arab Republic by road and had been destined for Saudi Arabia. The heroin shipment seized in Bahrain had departed from the United Arab Emirates and had transited Saudi Arabia.

652. Heroin from Afghanistan continues to be smuggled into European countries via the Balkan, northern Black Sea and Eastern European routes. Seizures of opiates originating in Afghanistan have been reported by the law enforcement agencies of Turkey. In Turkey, nearly 98 per cent of the opium seizures take place in provinces bordering the Islamic Republic of Iran or in the city of Istanbul. The amount of heroin seized in Turkey increased to 15.4 tons in 2008.

Psychotropic substances

653. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants has grown dramatically

and has led to some major drug trafficking. The amount of seized amphetamine-type stimulants reached 2.4 tons in 2009, an increase of 60 per cent over the previous year.

654. Trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants in the Middle East continue to increase. Reports indicate that laboratories illicitly manufacturing Captagon tablets have continued to be dismantled in the subregion, in particular in Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic. The Middle East is the subregion in which the largest amount of amphetamine-type stimulants is seized.

655. Reports of amphetamine seizures in countries in the Middle East continue to refer predominantly to tablets sold as Captagon. Although it is not always clear which psychoactive ingredients are contained in such tablets, reports suggest that the main component is amphetamine smuggled from South-Eastern Europe and that such tablets frequently contain caffeine. Analysis of Captagon tablets seized in Iraq confirmed that they contained between 7 and 20 milligrams of amphetamine and other ingredients such as caffeine and theophylline and not fenetylline.

656. In addition to opiates, cannabis and cocaine, synthetic drugs, including pharmaceutical preparations, in particular tablets containing amphetamine sold as Captagon, are reported to be readily available in Iraq. Synthetic drugs are illegally exported to the country by mixing them among consignments of licit pharmaceutical products.

657. Captagon tablets containing amphetamine that are illicitly manufactured in laboratories in the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey are smuggled into Saudi Arabia, the largest illicit market for Captagon, and Iraq. In 2009, a laboratory illicitly producing Captagon tablets from amphetamine was discovered in Istanbul, Turkey. In the operation, more than 2 million Captagon tablets and the tableting press were seized, as reported by Government sources.

658. Saudi Arabian customs authorities detected more than 13 tons of amphetamine in 2009; the largest seizure (2.5 tons) took place at the border with Jordan. Most of the amphetamine seized in Saudi Arabia had been sent from Jordan; the Syrian Arab Republic and Egypt, in descending order, were also important source countries.

659. According to INTERPOL, in 2009, there was a significant increase in seizures of methamphetamine (in crystalline and liquid form) with links to the Islamic Republic of Iran. In 12 cases, the seized methamphetamine had originated in the Islamic Republic of Iran; however, some countries in the region, such as Qatar, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, were frequently used as countries of departure or transit countries. Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Thailand were identified as countries of destination.

660. The non-medical use of prescription drugs, as well as psychoactive substances not under international control, in particular tranquillizers and sleeping tablets, is increasing in some countries in the Middle East. In Israel, according to the 2009 national survey on illegal use of drugs and alcohol, substances obtained without medical prescription include preparations containing diazepam, methylphenidate and pseudoephedrine. There is also increased abuse of cathinone ("hagigat") tablets, in particular among students. In Kuwait, abuse of preparations containing tramadol is increasing.

Precursors

661. The smuggling of acetic anhydride through West Asia continued in 2009 and 2010. During 2010, authorities in China and Spain suspended suspicious shipments of large quantities of acetic anhydride destined for Iraq. In addition, between September 2009 and May 2010, authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran seized three shipments with a total of 380 litres of acetic anhydride originating in northern Iraq. Furthermore, countries in West Asia, such as Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates, have been used as transit areas for shipments of acetic anhydride originating in China and the Republic of Korea and en route to Afghanistan.

662. Shipments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine destined for countries in West Asia were seized or stopped during the period 2009-2010. The authorities of Canada and India stopped large shipments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, both in the form of raw materials and pharmaceutical preparations, destined for Iraq, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates. In addition, in 2009, there was an increase in seizures of methamphetamine with links to the Islamic Republic of Iran. In view of the high annual licit requirements for pseudoephedrine (55,000 kg) reported by the

authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Board urges the Government to remain vigilant and apply adequate controls to prevent the diversion of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, precursors used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine, from licit channels.

663. Another concern of the Board is the legitimacy of large shipments of P-2-P into Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. Some of those shipments were claimed to be re-exported to Iraq. P-2-P, a precursor of amphetamine, might have been used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

664. In September 2009, the Turkish police seized three clandestine drug laboratories and a storage facility containing several tons of precursor chemicals and drugs, including 400 kg of amphetamine and 600 kg of P-2-P, as well as 5 tons of *alpha*-phenylacetonitrile, a precursor of P-2-P. According to police authorities, the material found could have been used to manufacture more than 200 million amphetamine-type-stimulant tablets, which were probably intended for countries in the Middle East, the main illicit market for such tablets.

5. Abuse and treatment

665. According to *Drug Use in Afghanistan: 2009 Survey; Executive Summary*, prepared by UNODC, there are nearly 1 million problem drug users in Afghanistan aged 15-64. Compared to the findings of a previous survey conducted in 2005, opium use increased by 53 per cent, while heroin use increased by a staggering 140 per cent. Reportedly, no more than 11 per cent of drug abusers awaiting treatment (86,000 individuals) had received any form of treatment or intervention, as there remains an enormous treatment gap, with a capacity of only 10,500 treatment places per year for the 780,000 drug abusers awaiting treatment. Drug addiction is harming health and welfare among the population of Afghanistan, and much greater resources are thus required for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse as part of mainstream health-care and development programmes.

666. Drug dependency in Afghanistan, notably dependency on opiates such as heroin and opioid analgesics, continues to increase. Easy access to cheap drugs and limited access to drug abuse treatment, combined with the effects of three decades of war-related trauma, have resulted in problematic drug use

among almost 1 million Afghans, roughly 8 per cent of the population aged 15-64 years. The effects of that high rate of abuse — twice the global average — are debilitating, not only for those affected but also for their families, communities and the country as a whole.

667. The abuse of opiates continues to pose a major problem in countries neighbouring Afghanistan and even in countries near Afghanistan. Nearly all those countries have high rates of drug abuse. The Islamic Republic of Iran, for example, has the world's highest rate for abuse of opiates: an estimated 2.8 per cent of the population aged 15-64 in 2007. Pakistan also has a high abuse rate for opiates: the estimated rate of drug abuse among the population aged 15-64 in 2009 was 0.7 per cent. Many countries in Central Asia have similar levels of drug abuse, with heroin having replaced cannabis and opium as the main drug of abuse. In Central Asia, the incidence of heroin dependence among registered drug abusers ranges from 50 to 80 per cent, the highest rates being recorded in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

668. As of April 2010, the number of officially registered drug addicts in Kazakhstan stood at 50,506 persons, which represents the highest prevalence rate in Central Asia — 323 per 100,000 individuals (or 0.5 per cent of the adult population). A total of 9,730 persons in Kyrgyzstan (or 0.3 per cent of the adult population) were officially registered as drug abusers in 2010. The number of persons abusing drugs is increasing in Tajikistan as well; according to official statistics, in 2009, there were 8,018 registered drug abusers in the country (or 0.2 per cent of the adult population), of which 81 per cent were abusing heroin. In Uzbekistan, 20,832 persons (or 0.1 per cent of the adult population) were officially registered as drug addicts in 2009; however, according to a UNODC assessment study, 80,000 persons in the country abuse heroin by injection.

669. There are no estimates of the prevalence of drug abuse in countries in the Middle East and in the Gulf States owing to the lack of proper monitoring systems. Lack of adequate resources makes information on the extent and patterns of and trends in drug abuse in the region very limited, which hampers the tailoring of the response to the drug problem. The Board encourages the Governments of those countries to conduct comprehensive surveys and rapid assessments of the

drug abuse situation and to take effective measures in the area of demand reduction.

670. According to the 2009 in-depth survey of new referrals (male) to the addiction unit of the psychological medicine hospital in Kuwait in 2009, the number of new referrals to the unit was greater than in 2008. The proportion of new cases of polydrug users is high (74 per cent). Abuse of amphetamines remains high, while cocaine abuse is very low. Substance abuse such as tramadol has increased.

671. For patients treated at the national centre for rehabilitation in Amman, the primary substance of abuse was alcohol, followed by benzodiazepines, opioids and cannabis. Abuse of Captagon and other stimulants is increasing.

672. Lebanese authorities reported that in 2009, 70 per cent of drug abusers injected drugs. According to national estimates, the majority of drug abusers are polydrug abusers. Among the 1,022 people in treatment (detoxification and rehabilitation), 10 per cent are female, and the most prevalent drugs of abuse continued to be, in descending order, cannabis, heroin, cocaine, benzodiazepines and amphetamine, according to Government sources.

673. With the support of UNODC and other international agencies, the Ministry of Health of Lebanon is launching an opioid substitution therapy programme.

674. According to a 2008 national survey, among 10 provinces in Iraq, a total of 1,462 drug addicts received treatment (52 females and 1,410 males), with the largest proportion in Baghdad (468 individuals).

675. Drug abuse by injection is increasing in many countries in West Asia, contributing to a growing HIV problem. Drug abuse by injection is one of the main driving forces behind the spread of HIV in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, the two countries in the region in which the virus has spread the fastest. Up to 54 per cent of all HIV cases in Tajikistan are related to drug abuse. The same phenomenon has been noted in Pakistan and countries in the southern Caucasus.

676. In 2010, with the support of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNODC and WHO, the Government of Afghanistan scaled up its HIV-prevention efforts, which include the

provision of methadone maintenance therapy, training on health and social services for drug abusers in Kabul.

D. Europe

1. Major developments

677. According to EMCDDA and UNODC, the level of cannabis abuse in Europe is moving into a period of stabilization and even, in some cases, decline. Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, France, Italy, Romania, Spain and Sweden have all reported a decrease in the prevalence of cannabis abuse; the United Kingdom, too, has reported a significant decline over the past few years. Surveys of students conducted in 2008 in Belgium, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom indicate that lifetime prevalence of cannabis abuse was either comparable to or lower than that reported in 2007.

678. Trafficking in cannabis herb remains at a significant level in Europe. Cannabis herb is produced in considerable amounts in the Netherlands and in a number of other Western European countries. Most of the cannabis herb abused in Central Europe and Eastern Europe is produced in Albania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine. The cannabis resin abused in Europe originates, in great part, in Morocco. Cannabis resin produced in Morocco is smuggled, mainly by boat, into the Iberian peninsula, and from there it is transported by freight or passenger vehicle to other countries in Western Europe. A particularly noteworthy development is the increase in illicit cultivation of cannabis plant in Europe, especially indoors and on a large scale.

679. Cocaine is smuggled into Europe by air and by sea. Multi-ton shipments of cocaine are transported by sea from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Suriname and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and dropped off mainly near the coasts of Portugal, Spain and other countries. Although most consignments of cocaine are bound for Western Europe, in recent years authorities have made substantial seizures of cocaine, usually concealed in containers, at major seaports in the Balkans.

680. The abuse of cocaine is spreading from Western Europe to other parts of Europe. In some countries, the abuse of cocaine may be replacing the abuse of