

A. Africa

1. Major developments

299. Africa continues to be one of the main transit areas for drug trafficking. West Africa is regularly used by traffickers to smuggle cocaine and other drugs into Europe. Furthermore, North Africa remains a primary source of drugs entering Europe, while East Africa is increasingly being used as a trafficking hub for Afghan heroin destined for Europe. The latter development is evidenced by the fact that East African countries and certain European countries have reported annual growth in seizures of heroin of African origin. This may be a reason for the increased abuse of heroin in East Africa.

300. Traffickers in search of new illicit markets for cocaine and heroin have targeted the nascent middle class in certain African countries, such as Benin, which has been used as a transit country for many decades, and Namibia, a transit country that is becoming a consumer country. Drug trafficking in West Africa may have an impact on the abuse of certain types of drugs, such as cannabis, cocaine, heroin and amphetamine-type stimulants, in the subregion.

301. The increase in drug trafficking has been accompanied not only by growing illicit drug use, especially among younger people, but also by increasing activities of organized criminal groups. In West and Central Africa, organized crime continues to contribute to social and economic costs by increasing drug trafficking and addiction and by concentrating wealth and power in the hands of comparatively few well-armed criminals.

302. Although the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has made efforts to counter the impact of drug trafficking and abuse in West Africa, there has been an overall increase in drug trafficking between Latin America and Europe using Africa as a transit area. The increase in illicit drug use in West Africa has resulted in challenges related to security, treatment and negative health and social consequences of that drug use.

303. According to South African law enforcement authorities, drug trafficking organizations from China and the Balkans have established a significant presence in Southern Africa. In addition to importing drugs directly into Southern Africa, drug trafficking organizations ship drugs to Maputo, and from there the drugs are transported by truck to South Africa.

2. Regional cooperation

304. A five-year strategic framework on drug control, focusing on drug abuse prevention and treatment standards, as well as the establishment of national and regional drug observatories, was discussed at the first meeting of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control, held in Addis Ababa in April 2015. During that meeting, African ministers of health, population and drug control held a meeting to discuss linkages between health and drug control. The recommendations contained in the final report of the ministers' meeting include: (a) the establishment of a regional drug control focal point by the regional economic community secretariats to develop and implement regional drug control strategies and to support individual States; and (b) the development of regional and national centres of excellence for the treatment and care of drug dependence. The ministers also recommended that the member States of the African Union, in partnership with WHO and UNODC, should develop model laws to provide a basis for legislative review at the member State level to address new and emerging drug control challenges.

305. An ECOWAS action plan for the period 2016-2020 establishes the following priorities for combating drug trafficking and transnational organized crime in West Africa: (a) improvement in the effectiveness of national and subregional cooperation in the detection and suppression of drug trafficking and organized crime; (b) the establishment of appropriate, adequate and effective criminal justice systems; (c) effective and sustainable demand reduction through the prevention of drug abuse, the treatment of drug addiction and the rehabilitation of drug-dependent persons; and (d) the establishment of a viable system for the collection of valid and reliable data for monitoring drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse.

306. Officials from 13 African countries attended the fourth International Annual Meeting of the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP), held in Panama City from 21 to 23 April 2015. The meeting was organized jointly by UNODC, INTERPOL and WCO, with the support of the National Security Council of Panama, with the aim of creating a link between countries participating in AIRCOP, the interregional initiative aimed at facilitating the exchange of experiences and good practices in countering drug trafficking by air, to strengthen the coordination of their activities and share information between the joint airport interdiction task forces. In May 2015, joint airport interdiction task forces were operational in Benin, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Mali, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo.

307. A technical level meeting on heroin trafficking in the maritime domain was held on Mahé, in Seychelles, from 30 March to 1 April 2015. The meeting was aimed at enhancing drug control cooperation among littoral and island States of the Indian Ocean. The interregional initiative, supported by the UNODC Maritime Crime Programme, was attended by high-ranking officers from drug law enforcement agencies and state prosecutors, who proposed recommendations to counter drug trafficking in the area of the Indian Ocean.

3. National legislation, policy and action

308. In 2014, Egypt, Ghana and Nigeria took steps towards strengthening their national legislation and capacities to counter trafficking in drugs, including new psychoactive substances.

309. In November 2014, the Egyptian authorities scheduled five synthetic cannabinoids. The Ministry of Health added the following substances to the list of controlled substances included in the law of 1960: JWH-018, JWH-073, JWH-200, CP 47,497 and the C8 homologue of CP 47,497. According to the new law, the import, export, production, possession, handling, buying and selling of these substances are banned.

310. In Ghana, the authorities broadened the scope of their surveillance operations to include the monitoring of websites through which psychoactive substances are sold. The Parliament of Ghana is considering amendments to the Provisional National Defence Council law to strengthen sanctions related to synthetic psychotropic substances such as methamphetamine and its derivatives; and in order to introduce legislation to transform the Narcotics Control Board, under the Ministry of the Interior, into a drug control commission, under the President, with prosecutorial powers.

311. The Government of Nigeria approved its third national drug control master plan, covering the period 2015-2019. The new master plan, which was launched on 26 June 2015, provides a framework for reducing harm caused by drugs and for suppressing illicit drug production, supply and trafficking, as well as a platform for strengthening drug control responses. The master plan, developed by the interministerial committee on drug control, has four pillars: (a) law enforcement; (b) drug demand reduction; (c) access and control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances used for medical and scientific purposes; and (d) coordination of implementation.

312. In April 2015, the authorities of South Africa convened a conference to examine, among other issues, the potential use of cannabis for medical purposes. The round-table discussions focused on how to address the problems of cannabis use, abuse and dependence in the country.

4. Cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking

(a) Narcotic drugs

313. Illicit cannabis cultivation, production, trafficking and use continue to represent major challenges to countries in Africa. While the illicit production of cannabis resin is concentrated in a few countries in North Africa, cannabis herb is produced throughout the continent.

314. Production of cannabis herb continues to be an issue of concern in Nigeria, where 158 tons of packaged cannabis herb were seized in 2014. Nigeria reported that over 53 million kg of cannabis illicitly cultivated on a total of 4,529 hectares (ha) of farmland were seized and destroyed in 2014, the highest level reported in 10 years. That also represents a dramatic increase over the level reported in 2013 (the eradication of cannabis covering a total area of 847 ha).

315. Nigeria was confirmed as a source country for cannabis destined for China, through the analysis of seizures made at the international airport near Lagos, where a total of 94.3 kg of cannabis were seized in 2014. At the same airport, 90.9 kg of cannabis destined for China also, as well as 64.5 kg destined for the United Arab Emirates, were seized between January and July 2015. In Ghana, 98 kg of cannabis destined for the United Kingdom were seized at Kotoka International Airport in Accra in 2014.

316. Morocco remains one of the world's largest producers of cannabis resin and continues to supply cannabis resin to Europe. Seizures of cannabis resin reported by the Moroccan authorities have declined significantly since 2012 (from 137 tons in 2012 to 107 tons in 2013 and to about 70 tons in 2014), whereas there was an increase in seizures of cannabis resin in other countries in North Africa. The Moroccan authorities made significant efforts to counter illicit cannabis cultivation. In 2013, the Moroccan authorities reported 47,196 ha of cannabis cultivation, 9.2 per cent less than in 2012. The authorities expect the total area under cannabis cultivation to

decline further, to 34,000 ha, in the next few years. It has been reported that the concentration of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in cannabis cultivated in Morocco has increased.

317. Other countries in North Africa continue to report large amounts of seized cannabis resin. Seizures of cannabis resin increased in North Africa by 31 per cent in 2013. The increase was mainly attributed to large quantities of cannabis resin reported seized in Algeria and Egypt. In 2014, however, the seizures of cannabis resin reported by Algeria declined by nearly 14 per cent (from 211 tons in 2013 to 182 tons in 2014), and seizures reported by Egypt declined by 35 per cent (from 84 tons in 2013 to 55 tons in 2014). Most of the cannabis resin seized in Algeria was reportedly seized in a province in the north-western part of the country, on its border with Morocco. Other African countries also reported substantial seizures of the substance in 2014. For example, Tunisian authorities intercepted consignments of cannabis resin totalling 11 tons.

318. In 2014, Egyptian authorities resumed eradication campaigns targeting cannabis and opium poppy cultivation sites, eradicating cannabis plants covering a total area of 344.7 ha and opium poppy covering a total area of 306.5 ha. In 2014, Egyptian authorities seized over 395 tons of cannabis herb, compared with 212 tons seized during the previous year.

319. For West Africa, cocaine trafficking remains a major concern. Cocaine arriving from South America transits in particular countries in West Africa on its way to Europe. One of the main modes of transport used for such trafficking is commercial aircraft; it is likely that that development is related to the increased number of commercial flights between Brazil and West Africa. Data provided by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency of Nigeria on drug interceptions at the international airport near Lagos indicate that a total of about 120 kg of cocaine were seized at the airport in 2014.

320. Togolese authorities seized about 268 kg of cocaine in 2014. Since December 2013, when direct flights to Brazil from the international airport at Lomé first began, the volume of cocaine seized at the airport has increased, reaching 221 kg in 2014. In 2014, 32 cocaine consignments were seized at the international airport at Lomé from flights originating in Brazil; of those consignments, 25 per cent had been destined for Nigeria, 22 per cent for Benin, 16 per cent for Togo and 13 per cent for Guinea-Bissau. Morocco also witnessed the emergence of cocaine trafficking using commercial flights from Brazil. In 2014, 570 kg of cocaine were seized in Morocco.

321. Cabo Verde continues to be used as a hub for organized criminal groups trafficking in cocaine. Cabo Verdean authorities reported in November 2014 the seizure of 521 kg of cocaine, and the interception by the Spanish navy of a consignment of 1,500 kg of cocaine in the Atlantic, 129 km west of Cabo Verde, was reported in January 2015.

322. Seizures of cocaine continue to be reported by countries in East Africa, but to a lesser extent than in previous years. Countries in the subregion had reported the seizure of large quantities of cocaine between 2010 and 2012; the quantities reported in 2014 were smaller. That may indicate a shift in the concealment methods used, from sending large amounts of cocaine in fewer consignments to sending smaller amounts packed in small consignments to avoid detection by law enforcement authorities. In 2014, the Kenyan authorities seized 11 kg of cocaine, 30 per cent of which had arrived by air. Because of the high price of cocaine, estimated at \$35,000-\$36,000 per kilogram, most of the cocaine is reportedly intended for illicit markets in European and other countries and only a small portion of it is kept for local consumption.

323. Africa's importance as a transit area for Afghan heroin destined for Europe and other regions has grown, as suggested by increasing seizures of heroin reported in recent years by some African countries, particularly in East Africa. In 2014, Kenyan authorities reported the seizure of 387 kg of heroin, 3,200 litres of water mixed with heroin and 2,400 litres of diesel mixed with heroin; 377 kg of the 387 kg of heroin had been seized on a single ship in the port of Mombasa.

324. Kenyan authorities reported that heroin is transported to the country in large ships that anchor in the high seas and are then offloaded onto small vessels, including dhows, fishing boats and speedboats. The main countries of destination were Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. As a result of the heroin being trafficked through Kenya, heroin has become one of the most commonly abused drugs in the country, second only to cannabis. Most of the cases involving heroin abuse in Kenya have been reported in Mombasa.

325. Seizure data indicate that the smuggling of heroin to and through the United Republic of Tanzania has also increased. Of all the substances seized by Tanzanian authorities, cannabis, khat (*Catha edulis*) and heroin (in that order) accounted for the highest amounts seized. During the first eight months of 2014, Tanzanian authorities intercepted consignments containing over 321 kg of

heroin, more than in any previous year. The seized heroin originated in Afghanistan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan and had been destined for China, Japan, South Africa, Turkey and the United States, as well as countries in Europe.

326. Egyptian authorities reported that seizures of heroin increased significantly from 260 kg in 2013 to 613 kg in 2014. Algerian and Moroccan authorities also reported seizures of heroin; however, the quantities seized were smaller, totalling less than 10 kg in 2014.

(b) Psychotropic substances

327. The South African Police Service reported an increase in the number of clandestine drug manufacturing laboratories producing synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine (known locally as “tick”), largely intended for the illicit market in South Africa.

328. West Africa appears to have become an established source of the methamphetamine that is smuggled into East and South-East Asia via South Africa or Europe. According to information provided by UNODC, the significant volume of amphetamine-type stimulants seized in West Africa over the past year may indicate an increase in the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants, in particular methamphetamine. A total of 10 clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were dismantled in Nigeria between 2011 and July 2015.

329. In May 2015, Nigerian authorities dismantled two facilities used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine in Anambra State. Between January and July 2015, Nigerian authorities effected four seizures of methamphetamine, totalling approximately 92 kg, at the international airport near Lagos. Three of the seizures were of minimal amounts; however, the fourth seizure is noteworthy for its size—about 91 kg. In addition, Nigerian authorities also reported the detection of 2.6 kg of liquid methamphetamine and 250 g of crystalline methamphetamine and some laboratory equipment used for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine.

330. Senegalese authorities have reported major seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants, including the seizure of 30 kg of methamphetamine at Kidira, near the Malian border, in January 2015, followed by the seizure of an additional 82 kg of methamphetamine in Koumpetoum in February 2015. In both cases, the drugs had originated in Mali and had been smuggled out of Bamako.

331. In 2014, the smuggling of amphetamine-type stimulants through East Africa to illicit markets in Asian countries continued. Kenya reported the illicit manufacture of crystalline methamphetamine using ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, precursors that are legally imported into the country and then diverted. The methamphetamine is then smuggled predominantly to Asian countries and South Africa, the biggest illicit markets for the substance being Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea and Thailand. The abuse of methamphetamine is also increasing in Kenya.

332. West Africa did not play a key role in the synthetic drug market until recent years. The reasons behind the change, part of an overall increase in global illicit demand for amphetamine-type stimulants, may be explained by weak controls on legal imports of their precursors and the socioeconomic situation in the subregion.

(c) Precursors

333. Countries in Africa continue to be vulnerable to trafficking in precursor chemicals, in particular as countries of destination and/or transit countries. The main precursor chemicals involved are ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, which are used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants. According to information provided through PICS, the following African countries have been identified as having been involved in incidents reported between November 2014 and November 2015: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Seychelles, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The seizures communicated through PICS, however, involved relatively small amounts of ephedrine (totalling over 500 kg) and pseudoephedrine (totalling about 70 kg).

334. The data on seizures of substances listed in Tables I and II of the 1988 Convention and seizures of internationally non-scheduled substances remain limited. Information on methods of diversion and illicit manufacture, stopped shipments and thefts involving those substances, which is provided annually by Governments to the Board, has also been insufficient. As at 1 November 2015, the Governments of 16 African countries²⁴ provided form D for 2014 to the Board. Only 4 of the 16 countries (Namibia, Senegal, Zambia and Zimbabwe) reported the seizure of moderate amounts of ephedrine (in bulk form and in the form of

²⁴ Algeria, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

pharmaceutical preparations), ergometrine, isosafrole and potassium permanganate. Most of the ephedrine seized (82 kg) was reported by Senegal.

335. As noted by the Board in its report for 2014,²⁵ by 1 November 2014, the Governments of only a few African countries had invoked article 12, paragraph 10 (a), of the 1988 Convention, requiring them to be informed of shipments of substances in Table I of the Convention prior to their departure from the exporting country. Effective May 2015, the Government of the Sudan requires pre-export notification for imports of all substances in Tables I and II.

336. In May 2015, Nigerian authorities dismantled at least three clandestine laboratories in south-east Nigeria, where toluene, a substance in Table II of the 1988 Convention that is commonly used as a solvent, had been found. There are indications that the precursors were obtained locally, from domestic distribution channels, after they had been legally imported.

337. In February 2015, 133 kg of ephedrine were seized at the international airport near Lagos. The consignment had been sent as cargo and had been destined for Mozambique and South Africa.

338. An additional challenge has emerged in Africa: online sales of controlled drugs (web-based marketplace sales via the Internet). The increase in online trafficking has made it difficult for law enforcement authorities to identify website owners and users involved in trafficking in precursor chemicals.

339. A comprehensive review of the situation with respect to the control of precursors and chemicals frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the region can be found in the 2015 report of the Board on the implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention.

(d) Substances not under international control

340. Some African countries continue to raise their concerns over the abuse of substances not under international control, namely ketamine and tramadol. Nigeria, where ketamine is widely used in human and veterinary practice as an anaesthetic, brought tramadol and ketamine under national control in 2010.

341. The abuse of and trafficking in tramadol, a synthetic opioid not under international control, continues to represent challenges to a number of countries in Africa, notably in North Africa and West Africa. In 2014, more than 43,578 kg of tramadol were seized by the joint port control units of Cotonou, Benin, and Tema, Ghana. In February 2015, the joint port control unit of Cotonou seized 13,612 kg of tramadol, which had arrived from India and had been destined for the Niger. Seizures of tramadol in Egypt declined significantly, from 435 million tablets in 2012 to 157 million tablets in 2014. According to the Egyptian authorities, the decrease could be attributed to the fact that tramadol had been brought under national control in 2013.

342. There continues to be only limited information about the African continent regarding the emergence of new psychoactive substances, the extent of their abuse and their seizures. However, according to information provided to the Board, incidents with new psychoactive substances in 2015 involved the following African countries, particularly as countries of origin or as transit countries: Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa and United Republic of Tanzania. The majority of the incidents concerned khat; the amounts of khat involved were in the range of 6-166 kg. Other seizures communicated during the reporting period included 27 kg of methylone, a synthetic cathinone included in Schedule II of the 1971 Convention by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its fifty-eighth session, in 2015.

5. Abuse and treatment

343. Although the prevention and treatment of drug abuse are part of the main provisions of the international drug control treaties, it is estimated that in Africa only 1 out of 18 people suffering from drug use disorders or drug dependence receive treatment each year and that a large proportion of drug users may not be dependent but may still require intervention.

344. The fact that almost half of the problem drug users who inject drugs follow unsafe injecting practices contributes to the rise in the incidence of HIV. In Southern Africa, for example, evidence indicates that high-risk injecting practices, such as the reuse and sharing of needles and syringes and the ineffective cleaning of injecting equipment, contribute to HIV transmission among people who inject drugs. This is also the case in sub-Saharan countries such as Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, where people who inject drugs often use non-sterile injecting equipment.

²⁵ E/INCB/2014/1, para. 295.

345. Despite the paucity of data on drug abuse in Africa, it is estimated that the annual prevalence of cannabis use in the region remains high (7.5 per cent of the population aged 15-64), almost double the global annual average (3.9 per cent), and it is particularly high in West and Central Africa (12.4 per cent). Cannabis is reported to be the primary substance for which people in Africa receive treatment for substance abuse.

346. According to information on demand for treatment, heroin remains the second most abused drug (after cannabis), in Africa. The annual prevalence of opiate abuse in the region is estimated at 0.3 per cent of the population aged 15-64 (or about 1.88 million individuals).

347. The annual prevalence of cocaine use in Africa, estimated at 0.4 per cent, remains comparable with the global estimate.

348. In West Africa, the growing availability of cocaine, heroin and amphetamine-type stimulants may have led to increased drug abuse and dependence. This increase is attributable to the emergence of illicit production and distribution centres for synthetic drugs in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Nigeria.

349. The Government of Senegal has increased the availability and accessibility of services for the evidence-based treatment and care of drug dependence by setting up in December 2014 the Dakar integrated treatment centre for persons with addictions. The centre, located at the University Hospital of Dakar, also provides a methadone maintenance programme, drug dependence treatment services, outreach programmes and programmes for the treatment of HIV infection and hepatitis infection for drug users.

350. Cabo Verde is piloting a "one-stop shop" for drug abusers, a centre offering multiple drug abuse treatment services in a vulnerable neighbourhood in the capital city of Praia, promoting the implementation of a community-based treatment approach.

351. In Kenya, after an opioid substitution treatment facility (known locally as a medically assisted therapy clinic) was opened in Nairobi in December 2014, a second facility was opened in Malindi in February 2015 and two others were opened in Mombasa in September 2015. The national medically assisted therapy programme, launched on 18 August 2015, has been made available to people who inject drugs. In 2014, there were approximately 18,327 injecting drug users in Kenya, about 18 per cent of whom were HIV-positive, which is significantly higher than the HIV prevalence in the general population (5.6 per cent).

352. Several countries in Africa, namely Burundi, Comoros, Eritrea, Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania, have improved national systems for the treatment of drug dependence, mainly as a result of skill development and capacity-building initiatives. According to UNODC, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania have enhanced their capacity to prevent HIV infection and hepatitis infection among people who inject drugs. Mauritius and Seychelles have received technical support in this area.

353. In South Africa, the government of Gauteng province opened a centre for the treatment of substance abuse in Soweto in May 2015. The centre offers free assistance to alcohol- and drug-dependent persons.

B. Americas

Central America and the Caribbean

1. Major developments

354. The region of Central America and the Caribbean continues to be used as a major trans-shipment area for consignments of drugs originating in South America and destined for North America and Europe. In the Caribbean, countries have begun playing an increasing role as secondary distribution points for cocaine shipments to Europe.²⁶ Impunity, corruption and weak institutions undermine drug control efforts and the rule of law in the region, despite attempts to reform law enforcement and judicial systems. Drug trafficking activities are often carried out under the protection of local gangs (*maras*) operating in border areas, especially in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

355. There are indications that links have been established between drug cartels and criminal organizations operating in the region. Law enforcement authorities have reported a significant change in trafficking patterns, with drug traffickers cancelling confirmed flights at the last minute, only to make bookings immediately thereafter on the same flight, in an attempt to avoid detection during the process of screening the passenger list.²⁷

356. Drug trafficking has become a major security threat and is contributing to an increase in drug abuse in the sub-region. The number of homicides linked to organized

²⁶ *World Drug Report 2015*.

²⁷ *Ibid.*