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English, French and Spanish only\*

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**Twenty-second Meeting of Heads of  
National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies,  
Latin America and the Caribbean**  
Antigua, Guatemala, 1-5 October 2012  
Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*\*  
**Major regional drug trafficking trends and  
countermeasures**

**Statistics on drug trafficking trends in the Americas**

**Note by the Secretariat**

*Summary*

The present note by the Secretariat provides an overview of the current trends in illicit drug production and trafficking in the Americas, based on the latest information available to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The report provides information on illicit drug cultivation and production and statistics on drug seizures for 2009, 2010 and, where available, 2011. The note also provides a global overview of current trends in illicit drug production and trafficking.

Cannabis seizure and eradication data suggest that the production of cannabis herb is increasingly widespread, but the small-scale and localized nature of cannabis cultivation and production make it difficult to assess. In 2010, cannabis herb seizures in North America accounted for some 70 per cent of the world total, whereas South America accounted for some 10 per cent.

Significant illicit cultivation of opium poppy was reported by Mexico and Colombia in 2010, with a combined area of 14,341 hectares (ha), which amounted to approximately 7.5 per cent of the global total of illicit opium poppy cultivation for the same year.

In 2010, coca bush cultivation remained concentrated in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia and Peru; the most marked shift was a continued decline in the area under cultivation in Colombia. While North America and Western and Central

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\* English, French and Spanish are the working languages of the subsidiary body.

\*\* UNODC/HONLAC/22/1.



Europe continued to be the major destinations for cocaine smuggled out of South America, the scale of the cocaine phenomenon appeared to be contained in both of these well-established illicit markets. Conversely, various countries with a limited illicit market for cocaine exhibited indications of an increased availability of cocaine.

In 2010, the global supply chain of amphetamine-type stimulants continued to evolve in terms of the extent of manufacture, patterns in trafficking routes and the nature of substances involved. Methamphetamine remained widely available in North America and Asia and the Pacific but also appeared to spread to new markets, with global seizures increasing significantly.

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## I. Introduction

1. The present report provides an overview of the developments in the production and trafficking of the main illicit drugs worldwide and with a particular focus on the Americas.
2. The report addresses the illicit cultivation of cannabis, opium poppy and coca bush and the illicit production of cannabis derivatives, opium and cocaine for 2009, 2010 and, where available, 2011. With regard to drug trafficking, the report concentrates on seizure statistics for 2010 and, where available, 2011 and provides an update on trafficking trends for cannabis derivatives, opiates, cocaine and amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS).<sup>1</sup>
3. Information on illicit drug crop cultivation and the production of plant-based drugs has been drawn from the replies to part IV of the annual reports questionnaire (ARQ) submitted by Governments.<sup>2</sup> In the case of the Americas, more than 40 per cent of the countries in the region responded to the 2011 ARQ. Supplementary sources of information included the 2012 World Drug Report<sup>3</sup> and the 2012 Report of the Secretariat on the world situation with regard to drug trafficking.<sup>4</sup>

## II. Global overview

4. Since cannabis plant lends itself to different cultivation methods, precise estimation of its cultivation and production is difficult. Nonetheless, latest UNODC estimates suggest that cannabis continues to be the most widely cultivated, trafficked and consumed drug in the world.<sup>5</sup>
5. In 2010, cannabis herb continued to be illicitly used, trafficked and produced in most countries. Given the relative ease with which it may be produced, illicit demand for cannabis herb could often be met by local production, resulting in more localized trafficking flows in comparison with those for other plant-based drugs. Partial data for 2010 suggest that global seizures of cannabis herb remained stable in comparison with 2009. Significant quantities of cannabis herb were seized in all regions, with the largest quantities being registered by countries in North America, South America and Africa (see figure I).

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<sup>1</sup> Amphetamine-type stimulants, as defined by UNODC, consist of: (a) amphetamines (amphetamine, methamphetamine); (b) “ecstasy” (methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)) and related substances such as methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA) (the “ecstasy”-group substances); and (c) a number of other synthetic stimulants such as methcathinone, phentermine and fenetylline.

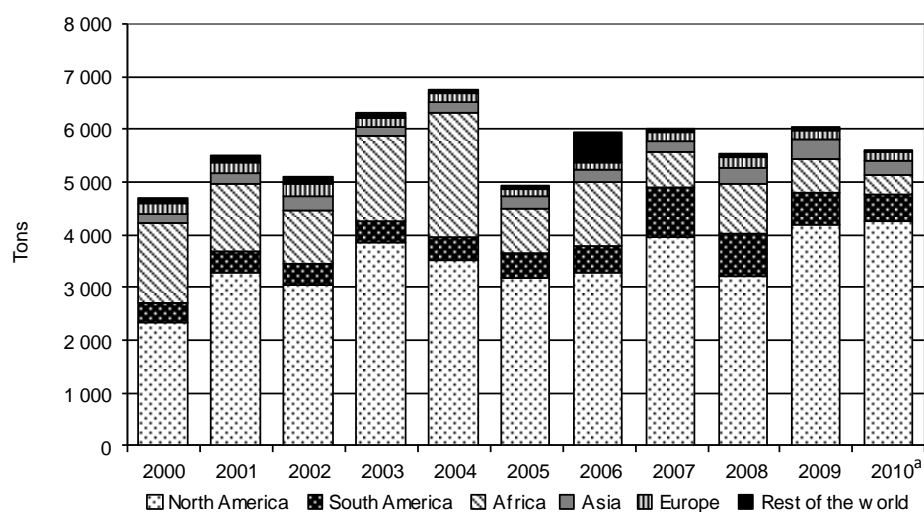
<sup>2</sup> As indicated in the 2012 World Drug Report, challenges remain in making such estimates because of data gaps and the varying quality of the available data. One major problem is the irregularity and incompleteness in ARQ reporting by Member States. Irregular reporting may result in absence of data for some years, and may influence the reported trend in a given year. Secondly, submitted questionnaires are not always complete or comprehensive, and thirdly, much of the data collected are subject to limitations and biases. These issues affect the reliability, quality and comparability of the information received.

<sup>3</sup> 2012 World Drug Report.

<sup>4</sup> E/CN.7/2012/4.

<sup>5</sup> 2012 World Drug Report.

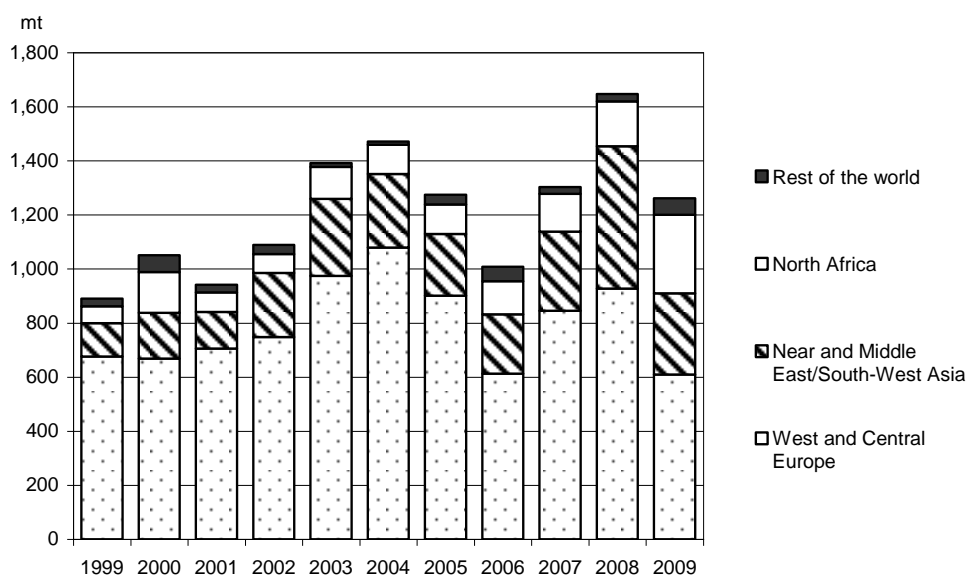
Figure I  
**Seizures of cannabis herb worldwide, 2000-2010**  
 (Tons)



<sup>a</sup> Data for 2010 were incomplete at the time of preparation of the present report.  
 Total excludes seizures in the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

6. Global cannabis resin seizures dropped from 1,648 mt in 2008 to 1,261 mt in 2009, a reduction of 23 per cent (see figure II). The drop was mainly driven by significant decreases in West and Central Europe and Near and Middle East/South-West Asia.

Figure II  
**Breakdown of global cannabis resin seizures, 1999-2009**

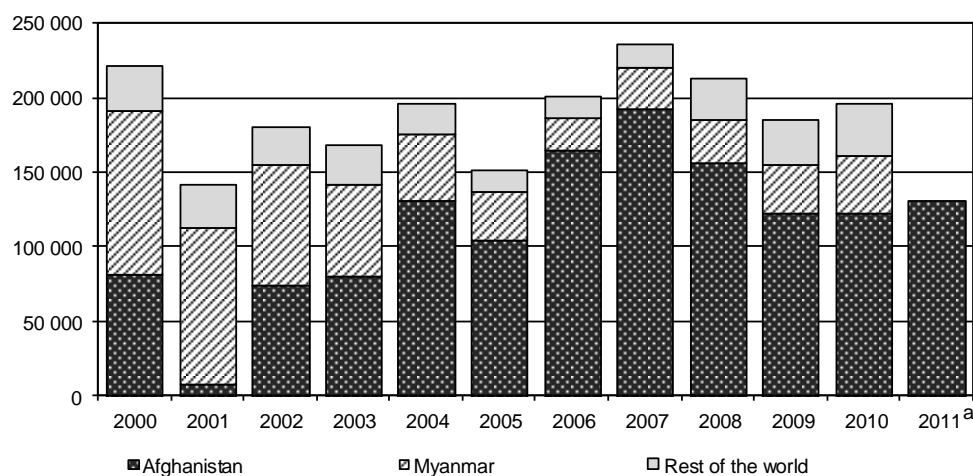


7. In 2010, the area under illicit opium poppy cultivation was estimated at 195,677 ha globally, only slightly more than in 2009 (185,935 ha). In 2010, Afghanistan accounted for 63 per cent of the global total, continuing to be the country with by far the largest area under cultivation (see figure III). In 2010, the opium poppy crop in Afghanistan was severely affected by disease, so that opium production declined significantly there and, as a result, at the global level. Global opium poppy production in 2010 was estimated at 4,860 tons, down from 7,853 tons in 2009. In 2011, however, the decline in opium production in Afghanistan was largely (although not entirely) reversed.

Figure III

**Opium poppy cultivation worldwide, 2000-2011**

(Hectares)

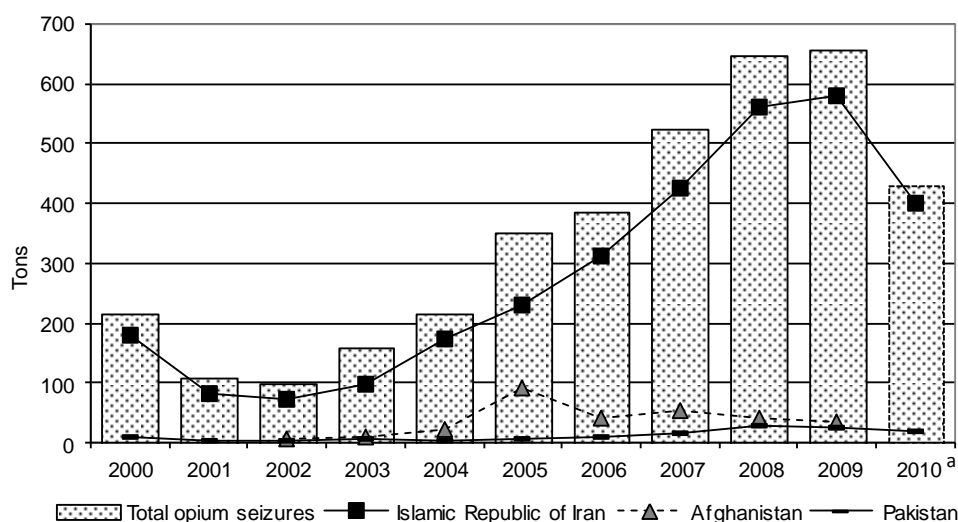


<sup>a</sup> For 2011, data were available for Afghanistan only.

8. Global seizures of opium grew at a marked, sustained pace during the period 2002-2008 and stabilized in 2009 at 653 tons. Incomplete data for 2010 suggest that, following a significant decline in opium production in Afghanistan, seizures of opium declined significantly. Since 2004, three countries — Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan — have consistently accounted for more than 90 per cent of global seizures of opium (see figure IV).

9. With an increase of approximately 7 per cent, global seizures of heroin remained rather stable in 2010 (81 tons in 2010 compared with 76 tons in 2009), though heroin seizures increased in the trafficking routes that stem from the opium production areas in South-East Asia and Central and South America, mainly Colombia, Guatemala and Mexico.

Figure IV  
**Global seizures of opium, 2000-2010**  
 (Tons)



<sup>a</sup> For 2010, no data were available for Afghanistan. The total for 2010 is based on incomplete data and subject to revision.

10. In 2010, the area under coca cultivation in Colombia continued to decrease from 68,000 ha to 57,000 ha. All major growing regions recorded reduction, but the Pacific region remained the largest coca cultivation region (42 per cent of the coca cultivation in Colombia). The Central and Meta-Guaviare regions in Colombia represented another 25 per cent and 14 per cent respectively.

11. In Peru, the area under coca cultivation amounted to 61,200 ha in 2010, largely the same as that in 2009 (59,900 ha). Noticeable increases were registered in the Apurímac-Ene region, making it the largest growing region in Peru (32 per cent).

12. Total coca cultivation dropped from 158,800 ha in 2009 to 149,100 ha in 2010, a reduction of 6 per cent. This was driven by noticeable decrease in cultivation in Colombia. Since 2007, the significant reduction of coca cultivation in Colombia has been the major source of decrease in global coca cultivation.

13. The world's main illicit markets for cocaine, in North America and Western and Central Europe, continue to be supplied by trafficking routes originating in South America, notably the Andean countries. Cocaine is mainly smuggled northwards into North America or across the Atlantic into Europe, either directly or via the Caribbean or Africa.

14. Global seizures of cocaine have remained stable for several years, ranging from 690 tons to 731 tons during the period 2006-2009. At the time of preparation of the present report, incomplete data suggested a continued stable trend in 2010 or possibly a slight decrease, with the partial total standing at 653 tons, compared with 731 tons in 2009. While seizures of cocaine appeared stable in the Americas and in Western and Central Europe, several regions where cocaine trafficking has so far

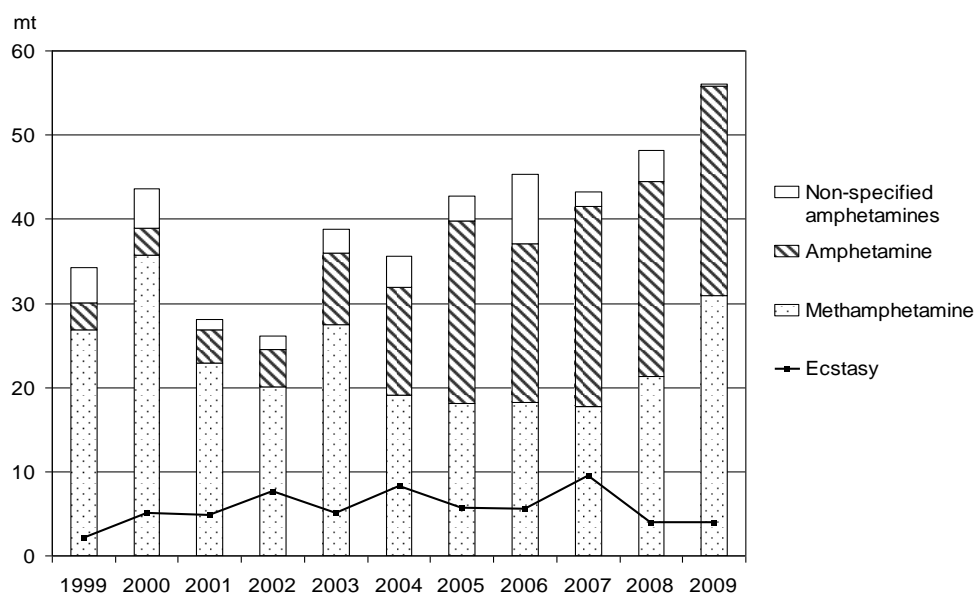
been limited showed a clear upward trend. In 2010, several countries not previously associated with cocaine trafficking or abuse on a large scale registered moderate but sharply increasing (in comparison with 2009) seizures of cocaine. Those countries included Australia, China, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Russian Federation and Turkey.

15. Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) can be broadly classified into two types: (i) the amphetamines group (which includes amphetamine, methamphetamine and non-specified amphetamines) and (ii) the “ecstasy” group. Driven by a greater amount of methamphetamine seizures, global seizure of the amphetamines group rose significantly in 2009, up from 48 mt to 56 mt. Total methamphetamine and amphetamine seizures reached 31 mt and 25 mt respectively. Meanwhile, global seizures of substances within the “ecstasy” group amounted to 3.9 mt in 2009, at a comparable level to that in 2008.

16. Unlike seizure data of plant-based drugs, the collection of quality ATS seizure data relies heavily on the proper identification and classification of seized controlled substances. This issue presents particular challenges to a number of African countries, where the lack of laboratory services makes it difficult to investigate the nature of seized substances.

Figure V

**Global seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants, 1999-2009**





### III. Trends in illicit drug crop cultivation and the production of plant-based drugs in the Americas

#### A. Cannabis

17. In contrast with other drug crops such as coca bush and opium poppy, cannabis plant lends itself to diverse cultivation methods and is therefore easily grown in varied environments. This in turn makes assessment of the extent of cannabis plant cultivation and cannabis production very difficult. Nevertheless, reports of cannabis plant cultivation, together with indirect indicators, such as seizures of cannabis, suggest that cultivation of cannabis plant and production of cannabis occurred in most countries worldwide.

18. Conversely, production of cannabis resin tended to be concentrated in just a few countries, of which Afghanistan and Morocco were the most prominent examples. The most recent cannabis survey conducted by UNODC in Morocco took place in 2005. The total area under cannabis cultivation in that country was estimated at 72,500 hectares (ha) in 2005. Moroccan authorities estimated the net area under cannabis cultivation (after eradication efforts) to be 60,000 ha in 2008 and 47,500 ha in 2010.

#### B. Opium

19. It appeared that opium poppy cultivation was occurring on a significant scale in Mexico. According to the Department of Justice of the United States of America,<sup>6</sup> the supply of heroin in the United States was drawn mainly from Mexico and South America (notably Colombia), and the availability of heroin originating in Mexico was increasing. Although recent estimates from the Government of Mexico of the net area under cultivation were not available, Mexican authorities reported the eradication of 14,753 ha of illicitly cultivated opium poppy in 2009 and 15,491 ha in 2010. In Colombia, the net area under cultivation was estimated at 356 ha in 2009 and 341 ha in 2010.

20. Between 2002 and 2007, opium production became increasingly concentrated in Afghanistan and its share in global opium production increased from 75 per cent to 92 per cent. In 2010, opium production in Afghanistan accounted for 74 per cent of the global total, followed by Myanmar (12 per cent). Although data for 2010 production in Mexico is not yet available, its share in global opium production registered slight increases over the recent past, from 1 per cent in 2002 to 5 per cent in 2009.

#### C. Coca

21. The Plurinational State of Bolivia, Colombia and Peru were the three countries that continued to account for practically all cultivation of coca bush worldwide. The total area under cultivation fell slightly in 2010, due to a continued decrease in

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<sup>6</sup> United States of America, Department of Justice, National Drug Intelligence Center, *National Drug Threat Assessment 2011* (August 2011).

Colombia. The illicit extraction of cocaine alkaloids from coca leaves, a first step in the manufacture of cocaine, was believed to be taking place exclusively in those three countries, which also accounted for the majority of cocaine hydrochloride manufactured worldwide. There were, nevertheless, indications of some processing of cocaine, on a limited scale, taking place in neighbouring countries, with clandestine laboratories being seized in 2009 in Argentina, Ecuador<sup>7</sup> and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), as well as in Mexico.

22. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the area under coca bush cultivation remained stable, amounting to 31,000 ha<sup>8</sup> in 2010. The Yungas region of La Paz continued to account for approximately two thirds of that area, with most of the remainder in the Chapare region and a much smaller area in Apolo. Data from law enforcement agencies point to intensified efforts to contain cultivation of coca bush and manufacture of cocaine: eradication of coca bush cultivation rose from 6,341 ha in 2009 to 8,200 ha in 2010 (including voluntary and forced eradication), and a large and increasing number of laboratories<sup>9</sup> (5,965, up from 4,880 in 2009) and coca maceration pits (7,948, up from 6,664 in 2009) were seized in 2010.

23. In Colombia, coca bush cultivation fell from 73,000 ha in 2009 to 62,000 ha in 2010,<sup>10</sup> while the estimated manufacture of cocaine fell from 410 tons in 2009 to 350 tons in 2010. The decline in coca bush cultivation in 2010 was the third consecutive year-on-year decrease. While cultivation was identified in 23 of the country's 32 departments in 2010, 8 departments (Nariño, Cauca, Guaviare, Antioquia, Putumayo, Córdoba, Bolívar and Chocó) accounted for more than three quarters of the total. The decline was most pronounced in the Meta-Guaviare region, but decreases were registered in all the major growing regions. The Pacific region continued to account for more than one third of the total. In 2010, 44,000 ha under coca bush cultivation were manually eradicated in Colombia, and 102,000 ha were eradicated by aerial spraying. Moreover, 2,651 clandestine laboratories were seized in 2010.

24. In Peru, the total area under coca bush cultivation gradually increased after 2005, with the level in 2010 representing an increase of 27 per cent over a span of five years, although remaining far short of the high levels registered prior to 1996. In 2010, however, the upward trend in the total area under cultivation was contained by eradication efforts. A total of 12,253 ha under coca bush cultivation were eradicated (including through voluntary and forced eradication) in 2010. The net area under coca bush cultivation changed very little in comparison with 2009, amounting to 61,200 ha in 2010 (compared with 59,900 ha in 2009), but there was a marked shift away from the Alto Huallaga region (which accounted for 29 per cent of the total

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Government of Ecuador, "Ecuador: monitoreo de cultivos de coca 2009" (June 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Including 12,000 ha under coca bush cultivation permitted by Bolivian law for traditional uses (Ley del régimen de la coca y sustancias controladas, 1988).

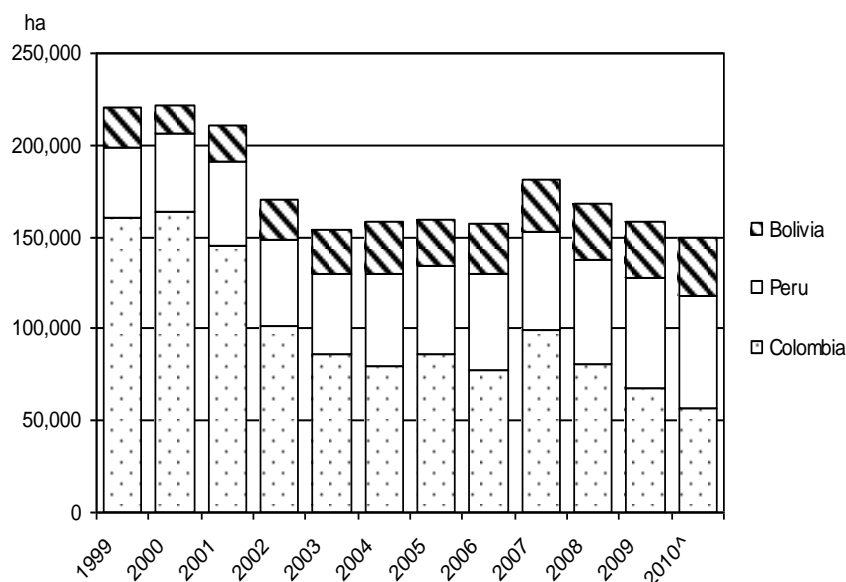
<sup>9</sup> Including facilities manufacturing cocaine hydrochloride, as well as intermediate products such as cocaine base and coca paste.

<sup>10</sup> The estimates for 2009 and 2010 represent adjustments to the figures obtained by the methodology used for prior years. The adjustments take into account the increased incidence of fields that are too small to be reliably detected by low-resolution satellite imagery. For the purposes of comparison with years prior to 2009, the unadjusted figures were 68,000 ha for 2009 and 57,000 ha for 2010.

in 2009), where such cultivation fell by one quarter, and towards the three regions of Apurímac-Ene, Palcazú-Pichis-Pachitea and Marañón-Putumayo-Bajo Amazonas. Moreover, in 2010 Peruvian authorities reported dismantling 21 laboratories manufacturing cocaine salt and 1,296 laboratories yielding cocaine in base form, possibly at varying degrees of refinement.

Figure VI

**Global illicit coca cultivation, 1999-2010**



^ 2010 data for Bolivia was not available at time of writing and thus 2009 data has been used.

## D. Amphetamine-type stimulants

25. Unlike opium poppy and coca plant, the manufacture of ATS is not limited to particular geographical locations and ATS laboratories tend to be located close to the consumption markets. Meanwhile, precursors and other chemicals required for the manufacture of ATS are trafficked across regions.

26. In 2009, the seizure of about 10,600 ATS-related laboratories were reported — a higher number than that in 2008 (8,400 laboratories). Among all types of ATS, methamphetamine continues to be the most widely manufactured ATS. The number of its laboratories increased significantly, up from 8,300 in 2008 to 10,200 in 2009.

27. Although the manufacture of ATS has been more concentrated in the Americas and East and South-East Asia, its production has also appeared in some African countries like South Africa and Egypt. Such production, however, tended to remain at low levels and was intended for the domestic market only.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> For a more detailed review of the global manufacture of ATS, please refer to World Drug Report 2012.

## IV. Trends in drug trafficking in the Americas

28. The table shows the reported quantities of drugs seized for selected drug types in 2009 and 2010. Seizures attributable to countries and territories in Latin America and the Caribbean are expressed both in terms of total weight and as a percentage of the global total for the corresponding drug type. In terms of the proportion of global seizures that took place in Latin American and the Caribbean countries, the most prominent drug types were cocaine and cannabis herb.

Table

### Drug seizures: Latin America and the Caribbean and worldwide, 2009 and 2010

Drug type	2009			2010		
	<i>Latin America and the Caribbean (kilograms)</i>	<i>Global (kilograms)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Latin America and the Caribbean (kilograms)</i>	<i>Global (kilograms)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>Cannabis</b>						
Cannabis herb	619,786	6,021,927	10.3	609,257	5,000,000	12
<b>Coca</b>						
Cocaine <sup>a</sup>	540,748	731,472	73.9	444,461	694,248	64
<b>Opiates</b>						
Opium <sup>b</sup>	74	653,009	0.0	23	492,438	0.0
<b>ATS</b>						
Amphetamine and methamphetamine	189	64,515	0.5	2	64,412	0.0
"Ecstasy" <sup>c</sup>	54	5,435	1.0	97	3,788	1.0

<sup>a</sup> Cocaine base and cocaine salts.

<sup>b</sup> Raw opium and prepared opium.

<sup>c</sup> Methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA), 3,4-methylenedioxyethylamphetamine (MDEA) and methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA).

### A. Cannabis

#### 1. Cannabis herb

29. North America also took up the largest share of global cannabis herb seizures (70 per cent). This is followed by Africa (11 per cent), South America (10 per cent), Asia (6 per cent) and Europe (3 per cent).

30. The largest quantities of cannabis herb seized continued to be registered in Mexico. Mexican authorities reported that the vast majority of cannabis herb exiting, as well as entering, its territory was smuggled by land; once dried, the cannabis herb was packed in plastic bags with the help of presses and hydraulic jacks and then transported to illicit markets, both in Mexico and in other countries.

31. Authorities in the United States seized amounts of cannabis herb that were comparable to those seized in Mexico; the United States assessed that 44 per cent of the cannabis herb seized in 2010 originated in Mexico, while only 7 per cent originated in the United States and a large proportion (44 per cent) was of unknown

origin. Apart from trafficking by land, trafficking by mail accounted for a significant proportion (more than one fifth) of cannabis herb seized on its way to the United States.

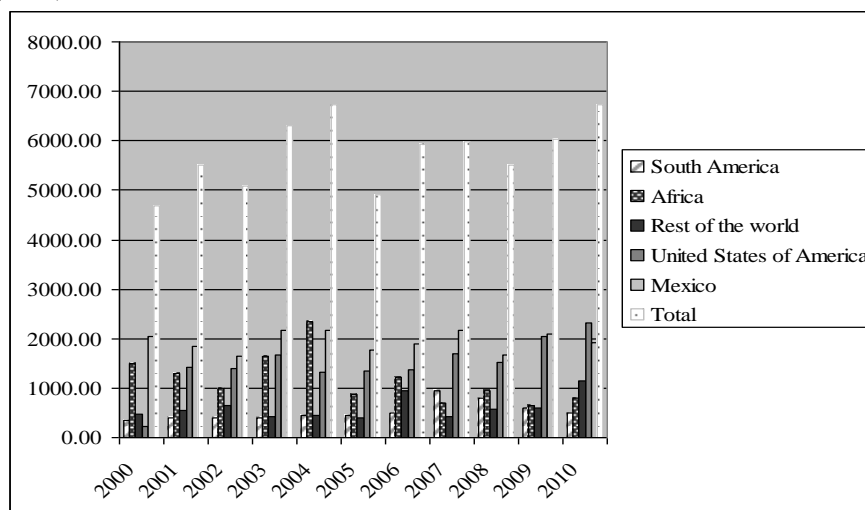
32. United States authorities also reported that the rising level of cannabis seized from Mexico, combined with an increasing high level of cultivation in the United States, had resulted in increased availability of cannabis herb. Significant quantities of cannabis herb from Canada are smuggled into the United States. Canadian authorities seized 51 tons of cannabis herb and 1.9 million cannabis plants in 2010, and United States authorities assessed that 12 per cent of all the cannabis herb entering the United States in 2010 had entered the country from Canada (although not necessarily all of the cannabis herb was produced in Canada).

33. Several countries in South America reported large quantities of seized cannabis herb in 2009 and 2010. In Colombia, the total amount of seized cannabis herb rose from 209 tons in 2009 to 255 tons in 2010. Brazil registered seizures of cannabis herb totalling 155 tons in 2010; and in Paraguay, which had been associated with extensive cultivation of cannabis, such seizures reached 84 tons in 2009. The total amount of cannabis herb seized in Argentina appeared to decline sharply, from 92 tons in 2009 to 36 tons in 2010,<sup>12</sup> while seizures in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela rose from 33 tons in 2009 to 39 tons in 2010.

34. In recent years, the Plurinational State of Bolivia has reported very large quantities of seized cannabis herb. Authorities there reported having seized a total of 1,073 tons of cannabis herb in 2010; however, that figure likely includes large quantities of cannabis plant that were eradicated. A breakdown of that figure, indicating the quantities of seized cannabis herb, was not available. Nevertheless, the aggregate quantity denotes a notable long-term increase, as the level in 2010 was more than eight times that in 2006 (125 tons).

Figure VII

**Cannabis herb seizures in the Americas and worldwide, 2000-2010**  
(Tons)



<sup>12</sup> It was not clear to what extent seizures in 2009 and 2010 were comparable, as the quantity for 2010 did not include seizures by federal forces (if any).

## **2. Cannabis resin**

35. In the Americas, as in Oceania, South-East Asia, Southern Africa and West Africa, cannabis is consumed mainly in the form of cannabis herb. At the global level cannabis resin seizures amounted to just about one quarter of cannabis herb seizures over the period 1990-2009. Production of cannabis resin, in contrast with that of cannabis herb, was concentrated in a small number of countries, among which the most prominent examples were Afghanistan and Morocco. Consequently, trafficking in cannabis resin followed more distinct flows, with large quantities reaching Europe (mainly via Spain) from Morocco and reaching Pakistan from Afghanistan.

36. In the Americas, in spite of a moderate rise in 2009, cannabis resin seizures remained limited. Seizures of cannabis resin in the Americas decreased from 10.765 tons in 2009 to 8.990 tons in 2010, with West and Central Europe reporting the largest amounts seized in the same year (534 tons). Amounting to less than 1 per cent of the global total, however, cannabis resin seized within the region remained insignificant.

## **B. Opiates**

### **1. Opium**

37. Opium seized in the Americas in 2010 accounted for 0.7 per cent of the world total and was mainly found in North America (in particular the United States and Mexico), as compared to the period 2008-2009, where it amounted to only 0.3 per cent. Between 2009 and 2010, opium seized in the Americas increased from 2,122 kg to 3,389 kg; the amount of opium seized in North America increased from 2,048 kg in 2009 to 3,389 in 2010, while in South America it decreased from 74 kg in 2009 to 23 in 2010.

### **2. Heroin**

38. In 2010, heroin seizures in the Americas and the Caribbean (6.854 tons) constituted about 7.2 per cent of the world total. The majority of those heroin seizures took place in North America (3.985 tons or 4 per cent of the global total).

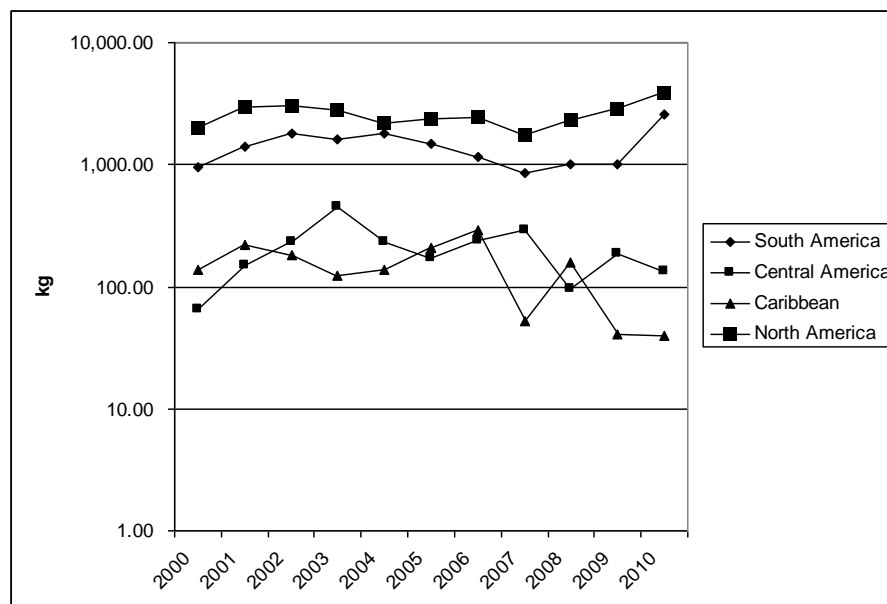
39. In the United States, seizures of heroin rose by almost one half, from 2.4 tons in 2009 to a record level of 3.5 tons in 2010. United States authorities reported that increased heroin manufacture in Mexico and the increased involvement of Mexican transnational criminal organizations in the distribution of South American heroin had contributed to wider heroin availability in many illicit markets in the United States, including in some markets where the drug had previously been unavailable. Heroin reaching the illicit markets in the United States originated not only in Mexico, but also in South American countries, notably Colombia. In 2010, seizures of heroin also reached record levels in Colombia (1.7 tons, more than twice the level in 2009) and Ecuador (853 kg, almost five times the level in 2009), while in Mexico the increase was less pronounced (from 283 kg in 2009 to 374 kg in 2010). In Canada, although there had been an increase in heroin seizures from 2008 to 2009, seizures decreased considerably, from 213 kg in 2009 to 98 kg in 2010.

40. Reported seizures of heroin and morphine combined in 2010 in the region were 0.1 tons in Canada, 3.5 tons in the United States, 0.4 tons in Mexico, 0.03 tons in the Caribbean combined, 0.2 tons in Central America combined, 0.9 tons in Ecuador, 1.7 tons in Colombia, and 0.05 tons in Venezuela.

Figure VIII

### Heroin seizures in the Americas, 2000-2010

(Kilograms)



## C. Cocaine

41. The world's main illicit markets for cocaine, in North America and Western and Central Europe, continue to be supplied by trafficking routes originating in South America, notably the Andean countries. Cocaine is mainly smuggled northwards into North America or across the Atlantic into Europe (directly or via the Caribbean or Africa).

42. In South America, Colombia continued to account for the largest quantity of cocaine seized, although that figure fell from 253 tons in 2009 to 211 tons in 2010. Colombian authorities mentioned the use of submersible and semi-submersible vessels as one of the most important strategies for cocaine trafficking and assessed that in 2010, 56 per cent of seized cocaine salts had been smuggled along maritime routes and 41 per cent had been smuggled by land. In Peru, seizures of cocaine rose by almost one half in 2010, reaching 31 tons, the highest level in that country since 1990. Peru reported that groups comprised of Colombian and Mexican nationals were active in cocaine trafficking within its territory. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, seizures of cocaine edged slightly higher than the already increased levels of 2008 and 2009, reaching a record level of 29 tons.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Data submitted by Bolivian authorities to UNODC.

43. According to Ecuadorean authorities,<sup>14</sup> Ecuador is believed to be used by traffickers for the stockpiling, storage and distribution of drugs, trafficking in precursor chemicals and other drug-related offences. Seizures of cocaine in Ecuador reached a record level of 65 tons in 2009, but fell to 15 tons in 2010, the lowest level since 2004. Ecuadorean authorities attributed the decline to a change in the trafficking patterns, following the increased impact of law enforcement activities in 2009. In 2010, significant quantities of cocaine were also seized in Brazil (27 tons), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (25 tons), Chile (9.9 tons) and Argentina (7.3 tons).

44. Large quantities of cocaine continued to be seized in Panama; the figure for 2010 — 53 tons of cocaine — was the third largest quantity seized in a single country (after Colombia and the United States). According to United States authorities,<sup>15</sup> traffickers used Panama's coast and its transportation infrastructure, including four major containerized seaports, the Pan-American Highway and an expanded airport, to facilitate the movement of licit and illicit commodities.

45. The United States continued to have a major illicit market for cocaine, and Mexico continued to be a key transit country for illicit cocaine consignments entering the United States. While seizures by United States authorities rose substantially, from 108 tons in 2009 to 163 tons in 2010, seizures in Mexico fell from 21.6 tons to 9.4 tons, the lowest level since 1987. According to United States authorities, the southern parts of California and Texas were the primary entry points for cocaine. The availability of cocaine in the United States has declined since 2007, and in 2011 it was expected to remain below the 2007 level. Based on all cocaine purchases recorded in the United States System to Retrieve Information from Drug Evidence (STRIDE) database, including transactions at both the retail level and the wholesale level, the average purity-adjusted price of cocaine rose sharply between the second and fourth quarters of 2008 (from \$124 to \$197 per pure gram) and remained relatively high until the third quarter of 2010 (\$165 per pure gram). Conflict among the various drug trafficking cartels, as well as drug control operations, disrupted the ability of traffickers to move cocaine from South America towards the United States.<sup>16</sup> Mexican authorities reported that criminal organizations had had to reorganize following the struggles for the control of trafficking routes and the strategy of joint operations by Mexican authorities.

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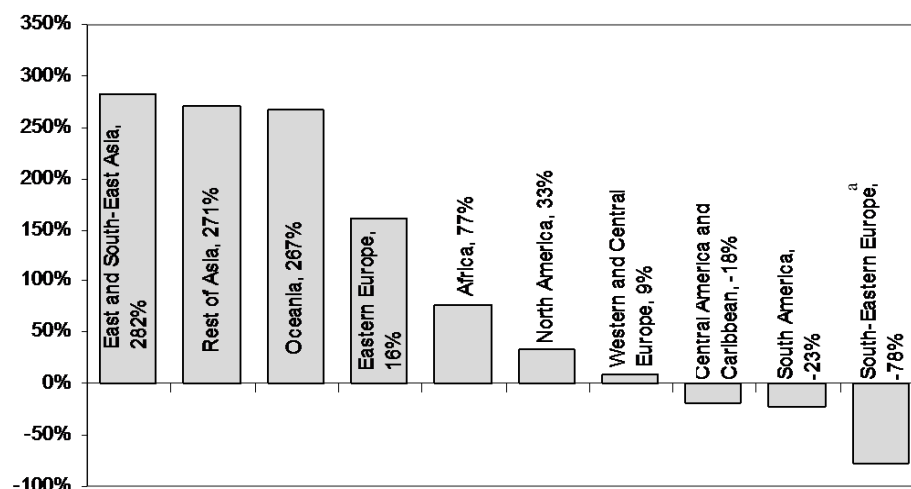
<sup>14</sup> Country report submitted by Ecuador to the Twenty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Santiago from 3 to 7 October 2011.

<sup>15</sup> United States, Department of State, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (March 2011).

<sup>16</sup> United States National Drug Threat Assessment 2011.



Figure IX  
**Year-on-year trends in seizures of cocaine, 2010 in comparison with 2009,  
 by region**  
 (Percentage increase or decrease)



*Note:* Seizure data for 2010 were incomplete at time of writing. The comparison was made on the basis of data for a restricted set of 86 countries and territories for which seizure data were available for both 2009 and 2010.

<sup>a</sup> The overall decline in South-Eastern Europe is mainly the result of a single, extraordinarily large seizure in Romania in 2009.

#### **D. Amphetamine-type stimulants and other synthetic psychotropic substances**

46. Large quantities of methamphetamine continued to be illicitly manufactured in Mexico and smuggled into the United States. Seizures of methamphetamine in Mexico increased sharply; they had never exceeded 1 ton prior to 2009, but they rose to 6.1 tons in 2009 and 12.8 tons in 2010. A similar trend was observed in the number of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories seized; while the number of such laboratories seized each year had never exceeded 34 prior to 2009, it reached 191 in 2009 and 128 in 2010. Mexican authorities reported that clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were detected primarily in states on the Pacific coast, such as Michoacan, Jalisco and Sinaloa, and to a lesser extent in states in the central part of the country, such as Guanajuato.

47. Data on methamphetamine prices and purity published by the United States Department of Justice suggest that the availability of methamphetamine in the United States increased. According to the same source, in the financial year 2010, seizures of methamphetamine in the United States rose by 32 per cent in comparison with the previous financial year.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, high levels of manufacture in Mexico,

<sup>17</sup> The United States reported to UNODC seizures of 4.2 tons of methamphetamine in 2010; however, it was not clear if that was comparable with the quantity of 7.5 tons and 40 thousand tablets reported seized in 2009.

along with an increase in the number of domestic manufacturing operations, combined to make methamphetamine readily available throughout the United States. In 2010, 2,754 laboratories illicitly manufacturing methamphetamine powder were seized in the United States.

48. In recent years, the global market for “ecstasy” showed a marked decline, with global seizures falling from the record level of 16.6 tons in 2007 to 6.0 tons in 2008 and 5.0 tons in 2009. The decline was possibly the result of reduced availability of the precursors required for the manufacture of methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA, commonly known as “ecstasy”). It was accompanied by a tendency to resort to other psychoactive ingredients, some of which are not under international control, both alongside MDMA and as an alternative to that substance. As illicit manufacturers of MDMA switch to other methods for manufacturing MDMA and alternative precursors, however, the availability of MDMA is susceptible to a possible rebound. Incomplete data for 2010 suggest that, while the availability of MDMA was still relatively low, the downward trend had stabilized or possibly reversed.

49. One notable exception to the overall downward trend in the “ecstasy” market prevalent worldwide in recent years has been the illicit market in North America. According to United States authorities, high levels of MDMA manufacture by criminal organizations based in Canada and increased MDMA trafficking by Mexican criminal organizations, have increased the availability of MDMA in the United States. Between 2006 and 2009, seizures of “ecstasy” tablets in the United States rose from 2.6 million to 4.6 million, while seizures of other forms of “ecstasy” rose from 1.5 to 2.3 tons. Based on data published by the National Drug Intelligence Center of the United States Department of Justice, in the financial year 2010, aggregate seizures of “ecstasy” fell only slightly (by 14 per cent) in comparison with such seizures in the previous financial year.

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