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**Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic  
and Related Matters in the Near and  
Middle East****Fifty-fourth session**

Tashkent, 23–27 September 2019

**Draft report***Rapporteur:* Tlegen Matkenov (Kazakhstan)**Addendum****Consideration of topics by working groups****Issue (b): Trafficking in synthetic opioids and synthetic cannabinoids and  
measures to counter such trafficking**

1. The working group on the above topic met during the 4th meeting, held on 24 September 2019. In its consideration of the topic in question, the working group formulated the following observations:

(a) The trafficking of amphetamine-type stimulants, in particular amphetamine, and prescription synthetic opioids, in particular tramadol, remains a major concern in some countries in the region;

(b) The appearance of methamphetamine production in the region and increased trafficking are growing concerns in the region. The trafficking of precursor chemicals used in the production of methamphetamine and heroin to Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries remains a major concern in the region;

(c) The emergence of new psychoactive substances, such as synthetic cannabinoids, in some countries in the region has become a concern. A wide range of new psychoactive substances, including synthetic opioids, and harms associated with these drugs are acknowledged;

(d) Some countries in the region have limited capacities and resources to identify new psychoactive substances and chemicals used in the production of these drugs;

(e) Some countries in the region acknowledged lack of information, including toxicological data, on different types of new psychoactive substances, is preventing them from submitting cases for judiciary process and drafting legislation.

2. The working group drew up the following conclusions:

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\* Available only in Arabic, English and Russian, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.



(a) There is a need to strengthen forensic capacity for the front-line law enforcement officers and scientists working in drug testing laboratories in the correct identification of synthetic drugs, including new psychoactive substances and synthetic opioids;

(b) The reporting of new psychoactive substances, as seized and identified, needs to be enhanced in the region;

(c) There is a need to closely monitor the shipments of prescription synthetic opioids and precursor chemicals, including domestic movements, in the region.

3. The working group adopted the following recommendations:

(a) Governments should consider allocating more resources to modernize their drug testing laboratories, enhance the skills of scientists and provide adequate tools and equipment to front-line law enforcement officers;

(b) Governments are encouraged to make full use of the UN toolkit on synthetic drugs which covers a wide range of resources such as guidelines, technical information, links to useful resources, instruments and training, etc., to assist the Member States in designing effective counter measures to contain the threats posed by synthetic drugs;

(c) Governments should take advantage of the information available in the UNODC Early Warning Advisory (EWA) on new psychoactive substances and are also encouraged to provide information to UNODC on new psychoactive substances as these are identified in national drug testing laboratories to enhance the understanding on patterns and trends of their emergence;

(d) Governments are encouraged to allow national forensic laboratories to participate in the UNODC International Collaborative Exercise Programme which aims to assist drug testing laboratories worldwide in assessing their own performance and taking corrective actions, when appropriate.

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