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Illicit drug traffic and supply: world situation with regard to drug trafficking and action taken by the subsidiary bodies of the Commission

Action taken by subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Report of the Secretariat

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* E/CN.7/2007/1.



I. Introduction

1. Four meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs were held in 2006: the forty-first session of the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East, held in Amman from 26 to 30 June; the Sixteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), Africa, held in Nairobi from 25 to 29 September; the Sixteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Buenos Aires from 23 to 27 October; and the Thirtieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok from 14 to 17 November.

2. Following a review of trends in drug trafficking and regional and subregional cooperation, each of the subsidiary bodies addressed drug law enforcement issues of priority in its region. Consideration of those issues was facilitated by the discussions that had been held during informal meetings of the working groups established for that purpose. In addition, the implementation of previous recommendations was reviewed by each of the subsidiary bodies.

3. At its forty-first session, the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East considered the following issues: (a) regional trends in trafficking in opiates; (b) regional cooperation in the exchange of criminal intelligence on drug trafficking; and (c) identifying sound practice in the training of law enforcement officials. The Sixteenth Meeting of HONLEA, Africa, considered the following issues: (a) the growing importance of Africa in international trafficking in cocaine; (b) illicit cultivation of cannabis plant in Africa, trafficking in cannabis and its impact; and (c) identifying and maintaining effective control over the essential precursors scheduled in Tables I and II of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. The Sixteenth Meeting of HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean, examined the following issues: (a) the response of the region to cocaine manufacture and trafficking; (b) the rising threat of the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants; and (c) maritime trafficking in illicit drugs. The Thirtieth Meeting of HONLEA, Asia and the Pacific, considered the following topics: (a) illicit traffic in and consumption of heroin; (b) witness protection; (c) control of amphetamine-type stimulants and their precursors; and (d) illicit traffic by sea, confined waters and inland waterways.

4. The recommendations of the subsidiary bodies at the above-mentioned meetings are contained in the reports of the meetings (UNODC/SUBCOM/2006/5, UNODC/HONLAF/2006/5, UNODC/HONLAC/2006/5 and UNODC/HONLAP/2006/5), which will be made available to the Commission in the working languages of the respective subsidiary bodies. Their recommendations are summarized in section II below.

II. Recommendations of the subsidiary bodies

A. Forty-first session of the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East

Issue 1. Regional trends in trafficking in opiates

5. Governments must continue to encourage their law enforcement agencies in their communication and cooperation with the new counterpart drug law enforcement authorities in Afghanistan so as to support their development and rise to full operational effectiveness.

6. States members of the Subcommittee directly affected by the transit of opiates through their territories should take proactive steps to enhance their drug law enforcement effectiveness, such as supporting and strengthening front-line officers through the provision of technical equipment to support them in their duties, and should also take proactive steps to regularize closer operational cooperation with regional, subregional and international partners and to develop their domestic capacity to generate an intelligence-driven operational response to the activities of traffickers.

7. In response to the increasing use of maritime conveyances to transport significant cargoes of opiates and cannabis resin, Governments should ensure that their enforcement response to target, identify and intercept drug consignments carried by that means are adequate and effective.

Issue 2. Regional cooperation in the exchange of criminal intelligence on drug trafficking

8. States should be encouraged to invest in the posting of drug liaison officers to source countries that pose significant risks from illicit drug trafficking so as to facilitate the gathering of evidence in order to dismantle and prosecute syndicates engaged in cross-border trafficking in illicit drugs.

9. In response to the growing need for faster communication between agencies when exchanging information in order to support operations against traffickers, Governments must ensure that the procedure to provide the necessary clearance is fast and involves minimum delay in transmission of the information.

10. In anticipation of requests for assistance from foreign law enforcement agencies in the investigation of cross-border trafficking offences, States should be encouraged to adopt a proactive strategy such as the development of investigative teams ready to respond when an overseas investigation requires their domestic operational support.

Issue 3. Identifying sound practice in the training of law enforcement officials

11. Governments should take steps to ensure that their law enforcement training facilities are well-resourced and operate to the highest professional standards so as to maintain a high quality of service to the communities whose needs they meet.

12. In order to counter the increasing sophistication of the methods employed by syndicates engaged in illicit drug trafficking and to build cooperation and

understanding at the grass-roots level, Governments should encourage integrated inter-agency training in counter-narcotics drug enforcement for all their front-line law enforcement agencies.

13. In order to develop the professional skills of their national law enforcement agencies, as well as build the foundations for ongoing and future cooperation, Governments should encourage and support their law enforcement training academies in the development and hosting of training events that include participants from counterpart enforcement agencies in foreign countries with which they work.

14. The Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime should seek to provide the necessary financial resources to maintain the training offered by the Office in the detection and identification of narcotics and should increase the training courses held at the Laboratory and Scientific Section of the Office in Vienna.

B. Sixteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa

Issue 1. The growing importance of Africa in international trafficking in cocaine

15. Governments should encourage the efforts of their national law enforcement agencies to increase their national, regional and international communication and information-sharing, through supporting the use of the online communication systems of Interpol and the Customs Co-operation Council (also called the World Customs Organization).

16. Governments should ensure that judges and magistrates have adequate knowledge of sophisticated, modern investigation techniques by arranging workshops with the participation of law enforcement officers and by encouraging the participation of judges and magistrates in international meetings and conferences related to law enforcement.

17. Governments should, if they have not yet done so, take steps to ratify and implement the international drug control conventions as well as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (General Assembly resolution 55/25, annex I) and the Protocols thereto (Assembly resolution 55/25, annexes II and III, and resolution 55/255, annex) and have in place the necessary laws to facilitate international cooperation.

18. Governments should, if they have not already done so, take steps to ensure that national authorities responsible for drug law enforcement, together with security services, are coordinated and supported through inter-agency operational agreements.

Issue 2. Illicit cultivation of cannabis plant in Africa, trafficking in cannabis and its impact

19. Governments should be encouraged to formally assess the domestic threat of cannabis in order to support the development of effective national strategies to combat cannabis cultivation, trafficking and abuse.

20. Governments should take steps to initiate national awareness-raising campaigns that engage rural communities in support of discouraging cannabis cultivation, together with similar initiatives directed at towns and cities, where demand for cannabis has encouraged its ongoing proliferation.

21. Governments should be encouraged to develop cannabis eradication programmes to effectively discourage its ongoing cultivation and offer viable economic alternatives to rural communities whose incomes are derived from illicit cannabis production.

Issue 3. Identifying and maintaining effective control over the essential precursors scheduled in Tables I and II of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988

22. Governments should ensure that national legislation effectively regulates the control of precursor chemicals, including their sale, import and export, as listed in Tables I and II of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.¹

23. Governments should ensure that a competent authority is established for monitoring the import and export of precursor chemicals and that its activities are coordinated with related law enforcement agencies through inter-agency working agreements.

24. Governments should encourage the training of law enforcement officers in awareness of precursor chemicals and illicit trafficking methodologies and countermeasures.

25. Governments should take steps to develop national strategies to exercise effective control over precursor chemicals.

C. Sixteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean**Issue 1. The response of the region to cocaine manufacture and trafficking**

26. Governments should take steps to introduce measures that actively support the development of inter-agency and cross-border cooperation in order to extend the effectiveness of controls and strengthen measures to counter trafficking in illicit drugs and their precursor chemicals.

27. Governments should take steps to ensure that information concerning competent national authorities responsible for replying to pre-export notification

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1582, No. 27627.

requests is well disseminated and that those offices are adequately supported and managed in order to respond promptly to formal requests from foreign counterparts and to promote the exchange of operational intelligence to combat illicit drug trafficking.

28. Governments undertaking eradication programmes targeting illicit coca bush cultivation should ensure that those actions are accompanied by programmes that offer a viable commercial alternative enabling rural communities to support themselves without resort to a return to illicit cultivation.

Issue 2. The rising threat of the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants

29. Governments that have not already done so should take steps to ensure that their domestic legislation ensures effective control over chemicals commonly used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants and supports the investigation and prosecution of those persons engaged in the manufacture of such stimulants.

30. Governments should ensure that their law enforcement agencies and chemical regulatory and control authorities are aware of the threat posed by the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants and oversee the development of close cooperation and coordination among those authorities and agencies in implementing procedures and practices to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals to be used in the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

31. In order to address the new challenges posed by the use of the Internet to promote and acquire pharmaceuticals containing controlled substances and their precursors, Governments must develop the ability of law enforcement authorities to undertake the investigation of offences committed using the Internet.

Issue 3. Maritime trafficking in illicit drugs

32. In order to strengthen measures to counter maritime trafficking in cocaine and other illicit drugs, Governments must support law enforcement authorities in establishing operational coordination at the regional and international levels for the exchange of information on the movement of small boats.

33. In order to address the illegal use of leisure boats, fishing boats and other small vessels used to support maritime trafficking in cocaine, Governments should review the threat that the illicit use of those vessels poses to their territories and introduce strategies and methods such as national registries, related data-gathering and intelligence analysis in order to meet the challenge and ensure that their law enforcement authorities are empowered, resourced and coordinated to respond effectively.

34. Governments should take steps to ensure that their front-line law enforcement authorities in ports are adequately prepared and equipped for screening, evaluating and examining sea freight containers and to support those authorities in their efforts to coordinate with their counterparts in other ports, both within and outside the region, the timely exchange of information on consignments and sea freight containers.

D. Thirtieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific

Issue 1. Illicit traffic in and consumption of heroin

35. Governments should support their drug law enforcement agencies in their efforts to strengthen cooperation with their professional counterparts, both nationally and internationally, in rapid exchange of information, in undertaking of joint operations and in provision of operational assistance.

36. In response to the well-organized trafficking operations of syndicates operating across the region, such as the Western African networks, Governments should ensure that their drug law enforcement agencies are adequately supported in the development of information about the modus operandi of such groups and capable of responding effectively against their well-organized trafficking operations.

37. Governments should encourage the development of heroin signature analysis and the sharing of results and test samples for further analysis with interested drug law enforcement counterparts.

Issue 2. Witness protection

38. Governments should take steps to ensure that they have in place established procedures to ensure the safety and protection of those persons who are asked to provide court evidence as witnesses.

39. Governments must ensure that adequate funding is made available to support witness protection programmes, so as to maintain community confidence and support in the judicial system.

Issue 3. Control of amphetamine-type stimulants and their precursors

40. Governments should examine their current legislation and procedures governing control over internationally listed precursor chemicals, equipment used in clandestine manufacturing and other nationally identified chemicals commonly diverted for abuse, to ensure that their law enforcement agencies can act effectively against traffickers seeking to obtain such precursors for illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

41. To extend the effectiveness of their law enforcement agencies in dealing with illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants, Governments should encourage their control authorities to develop new partnerships, such as with the chemical industry, in order to engage their support in combating the diversion of precursors.

42. Governments should further strengthen their existing regional and international cooperation in the fight against trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants and in precursor chemical control by supporting the international precursor control initiatives Project Cohesion and Project Prism of the International Narcotics Control Board, as well as by supporting their law enforcement agencies in the active pursuit of backtracking investigations into chemicals and equipment recovered from traffickers.

Issue 4. Illicit traffic by sea, confined waters and inland waterways

43. If they have not already done so, Governments should encourage their border authorities to undertake joint or coordinated maritime patrols with neighbouring or regional partners on inland waterways, in confined waters and in surveillance of vessels of interest in deep water transit past their territorial waters.

44. Governments should ensure that the legal and procedural framework exists to support a coordinated inter-agency, inter-service response to the threat posed by illicit trafficking by sea.

45. To address the threat posed by vessels under foreign flags used to transport illicit drugs, as has been witnessed in recent cases involving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Governments must actively support their border control authorities, develop the operational contacts and establish the legal frameworks needed to ensure timely exchange of information, secure receipt of intelligence and passing of operational requests on matters relating to maritime drug trafficking.
