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World situation with regard to drug trafficking and recommendations of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission

Action taken by the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Report of the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. Four meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs were held in 2010: the Twentieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), Africa, held in Nairobi from 13 to 17 September; the Twentieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Lima from 4 to 7 October; the forty-fifth session of the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East, held in Damascus from 8 to 12 November; and the Thirty-fourth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok from 30 November to 3 December.

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. The recommendations of the subsidiary bodies at the above-mentioned meetings are reflected below. The reports of the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Africa (UNODC/HONLAF/20/6), the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA,

* E/CN.7/2011/1.



Latin America and the Caribbean (UNODC/HONLAC/20/6), the Thirty-fourth Meeting of HONLEA, Asia and the Pacific (UNODC/HONLAP/34/6) and the forty-fifth session of the Subcommission (UNODC/SUBCOM/45/6) will be made available to the Commission in the working languages of the respective subsidiary bodies. The reports are also available on the website of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

II. Matters calling for action by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs or brought to its attention

Draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

4. The Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Africa, recommended the adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the following draft resolution:

Measures to support African States

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs,

Acknowledging that available funding for African States will progressively diminish as resource requirements for the implementation of the recommendations recently made by the regional meetings of heads of national drug law enforcement agencies increase,

Recommends that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime:

(a) Mobilize resources and establish a support fund for drug demand and supply reduction and alternative development, and take concrete and urgent action to mobilize resources for logistical support for the implementation of the action plans of member States;

(b) Continue to work decisively to strengthen the human resource capacity of the various entities that make up the drug control chain (such as laboratories, the judiciary and law enforcement agencies);

(c) Contribute to the creation of infrastructure appropriate for addressing the fact that African countries are no longer only used by drug traffickers as transit countries but also as countries in which, to varying degrees, smuggled drugs, particularly cannabis, are used;

(d) Adjust proposed strategies and programmes according to the specific situation of the countries concerned.

III. Recommendations of the subsidiary bodies

5. The recommendations below were transmitted by the subsidiary bodies for consideration and action by the Commission at its fifty-fourth session.

A. Twentieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa

Other recommendations

6. In addition to recommending the adoption of a draft resolution, the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Africa, made the recommendations presented below.

1. Current illicit drug trends in Africa

7. The following recommendations were made with regard to current illicit drug trends in Africa:

(a) The Governments of the region must take steps now to ensure that the appropriate national authorities have the legal power, knowledge, administrative procedures, training and technical support to exercise effective control over the precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of illicit drugs;

(b) In the light of an increased availability of cocaine and heroin, Governments of the region should be encouraged to take proactive measures to raise public awareness about the dangers of abusing illicit drugs and support the development of rehabilitation and treatment facilities for those who have become dependent on such drugs;

(c) Governments of the region should provide their border control officials with clear instructions to deal with persons travelling with diplomatic passports or other official travel documentation affording the privileges and immunities accorded to legally accredited officials.

2. Developing effective responses to the investigation of drug trafficking and related crime offences

8. The following recommendations were made with regard to developing effective responses to the investigation of drug trafficking and related crime offences:

(a) Governments must be encouraged to invest in the training, professional development and operational capacity of their drug law enforcement agencies if they expect their policies to be successful in dismantling groups involved in drug trafficking and in effectively disrupting the damaging flow of illicit drugs into their communities;

(b) To attain consistency in the interpretation of national drug legislation and assist prosecutors and judges to become familiar with the application of such legislation, Governments should consider establishing special drug courts;

(c) To dismantle criminal organizations and further deprive those involved in such organizations of illegally acquired wealth, Governments should examine their national money-laundering and asset forfeiture legislation and consider investing the confiscated proceeds of illegally acquired assets into further building the capacity of their drug law enforcement agencies.

3. Drug trafficking and its corrupting influence on law enforcement

9. The following recommendations were made with regard to drug trafficking and its corrupting influence on law enforcement:

(a) Governments must ensure that their law enforcement officers are adequately paid, professionally trained and properly equipped to perform the duties required of them, and that their law enforcement agencies are sufficiently funded to implement national policies;

(b) Governments should take steps to review the support and funding they provide for the training and professional development of their drug law enforcement officers and to invest more in developing good management and decision-making skills, thereby strengthening integrity and resistance to corruption and improper influence;

(c) Governments are encouraged to ensure that their courts and the officials entrusted with serving the public through the courts are subject to the same critical review of professional practice, performance and codes of conduct to which the operational arms of law enforcement, which also contribute to the proper implementation of the rule of law, are subject.

B. Twentieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean

10. The recommendations below were made by the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean.

1. Targeting drug trafficking by air

11. With regard to the issue entitled “Targeting drug trafficking by air”, the following recommendations were made:

(a) Governments should take steps to standardize procedures and to strengthen their early warning networks in order to provide timely information on illicit flights and improve their ability to conduct interception operations;

(b) Governments should be encouraged to be proactive by, for example, carrying out inspections at aeroplane hangars and maintenance workshops to identify aircraft with stripped cabins or extra fuel tanks with fuel transfer hoses, or that have been modified in other ways, so as to enhance their knowledge and extend their control over the illicit use of private aircraft for drug trafficking;

(c) Governments must ensure that law enforcement authorities responsible for protecting national air borders, airspace and airports are equipped with and trained to use suitable technologies to enable them to be effective against the increasing sophistication of traffickers using commercial, private and light aircraft to transport illicit drugs.

2. Drug trafficking and corruption

12. With regard to the issue entitled “Drug trafficking and corruption”, the following recommendations were made:

(a) Governments should examine the factors contributing to corruption that affect their law enforcement agencies;

(b) Governments are encouraged to strengthen or develop national anti-corruption policies to support the adoption of measures that build the confidence of the public in their law enforcement authorities and limit the potential for the misuse of their powers and the subsequent loss of effectiveness in combating drug trafficking and organized crime;

(c) Governments should encourage the introduction of a robust and transparent complaints-and-review procedure as a response against inappropriate and illegal actions by law enforcement agencies and their staff;

(d) Bearing in mind the document on the ethical commitment against the infiltration of drug trafficking in political parties and movements subscribed to by the political parties and movements of Peru and presented to the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean, it was recommended that the Governments of the countries of the region could put forward initiatives to promote and develop transparent electoral competition with a view to preventing drug trafficking from interfering in politics.

3. Trafficking in synthetic drugs and control of precursors

13. With regard to the issue entitled “Trafficking in synthetic drugs and control of precursors”, the following recommendations were made:

(a) Where controls are not already in place, Governments should take steps to evaluate existing legislation and procedures for managing the import, export and sale of pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine;

(b) Governments are encouraged to adopt a proactive approach to building the capacity of and providing training to chemical regulatory authorities and drug law enforcement agencies so as to enhance their knowledge of scheduled and non-scheduled precursors, substances that may be diverted for use in the illicit manufacture of drugs;

(c) Governments should implement the outcomes agreed upon by the International Precursor Control Symposium, held in Lima from 8 to 10 June 2010, on scheduled and non-scheduled precursors.

C. Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East at its forty-fifth session

14. The recommendations below were made by the Subcommittee at its forty-fifth session.

1. Afghanistan: the ongoing threat from illicit opium production and trafficking

15. The following recommendations were made with regard to the ongoing threat from illicit opium production and trafficking in Afghanistan:

(a) As part of their strategy to counter trafficking in opiates from Afghanistan, Governments should encourage their law enforcement authorities to work with their Afghan counterparts, build partnerships and increase cooperation, thus strengthening the capacity and effectiveness of the new Afghan institutions;

(b) Given the key role of cooperation between drug law enforcement agencies in combating cross-border trafficking, Governments need to ensure that their agencies have the necessary legislative authority, national contact points, an established procedure for the coordination of national authorities, fast clearance procedures and trained officers ready to respond to requests to carry out controlled delivery operations;

(c) If they are to be effective against groups and individuals engaged in the smuggling of heroin, law enforcement authorities must work more closely together, sharing information, coordinating their targeting of suspects and undertaking operations involving controlled delivery, in accordance with national laws;

(d) Law enforcement authorities should be encouraged by their Governments to support cooperative initiatives such as the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre and the Economic Cooperation Organization, which facilitate the coordination of investigations, the gathering of information and the targeting of operations against persons or groups engaged in the smuggling of drugs through the Near and Middle East.

2. Meeting the challenge of effective border management

16. The following recommendations were made with regard to meeting the challenge of effective border management:

(a) In response to the increasing use of international mail and express transport services offered by courier companies, Governments should be encouraged to review their practices and procedures with regard to the screening of inbound and outbound consignments using those services;

(b) Governments should encourage the law enforcement agencies managing their land, sea and air borders to develop cooperation agreements that promote regular information-sharing, joint training for undertaking common tasks, and coordination in the planning and execution of operations against drug trafficking;

(c) Governments should be encouraged to review their approach to border management so as to ensure that their strategies adequately meet national needs and that the border control agencies responsible for implementing those strategies are appropriately staffed, trained and equipped;

(d) Governments should review and, where necessary, upgrade the technology available to their law enforcement agencies for detecting drugs being smuggled by land, sea and air, in order to better meet the challenges of innovative concealment techniques, and in undertaking that review, Governments may wish to seek the support and assistance of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

3. Controlling precursor chemicals and addressing the growing challenge of unregulated alternatives and trafficking in and illicit manufacture and use of amphetamine-type stimulants in the Near and Middle East

17. The following recommendations were made with regard to controlling precursor chemicals and addressing the growing challenge of unregulated alternatives and trafficking in and illicit manufacture and use of amphetamine-type stimulants in the Near and Middle East:

(a) Governments of producing, transit and destination countries should be encouraged to strengthen their control over precursor chemicals and prevent them from being diverted to be used in illicit drug manufacture by gathering and exchanging information on non-scheduled substances, including derivatives especially designed to circumvent existing controls;

(b) In order to strengthen cooperation among relevant chemical and pharmaceutical industries, Governments of producing, transit and destination countries should encourage their competent national authorities to develop codes of conduct or memorandums of understanding that support mutual cooperation in efforts to prevent precursor chemicals from being diverted to be used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, including pharmaceutical preparations and psychotropic substances;

(c) Governments of producing, transit and destination countries should be encouraged to develop practical procedures for the safe handling and disposal of seized precursor chemicals, in cooperation with competent regional and international bodies;

(d) Governments should be encouraged to develop better strategies to control the production of precursor chemicals such as acetic anhydride.

D. Thirty-fourth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific

18. The recommendations below were made by the Thirty-fourth Meeting of HONLEA, Asia and the Pacific.

1. Challenges to effective drug law enforcement

19. The following recommendations were made with regard to the issue entitled "Challenges to effective drug law enforcement":

(a) Governments should ensure that their law enforcement agencies have established and promulgated procedures to follow in response to threats received against officers performing their drug enforcement duties;

(b) Governments must take steps to support their drug law enforcement agencies in developing close operational ties, for example, through the exchange of information on the identification and movement of known traffickers, the undertaking of combined counter-narcotic operations on shared land and river borders and joint training exercises that foster closer cooperation;

(c) Governments should be encouraged to introduce practices that support regular updates for prosecutors and judges on new anti-narcotics laws, changes to existing drug legislation and important court rulings based on existing laws that have an impact on law enforcement operations.

2. Amphetamine-type stimulants: taking effective measures against synthetic drugs

20. The following recommendations were made with regard to the issue entitled “Amphetamine-type stimulants: taking effective measures against synthetic drugs”:

(a) In response to the increasing flow of methamphetamine being trafficked into the region by Iranian nationals, Governments of the region should encourage their drug law enforcement authorities to establish operational contacts with their counterparts in the Islamic Republic of Iran and work closely with them to exchange information about those involved in trafficking in methamphetamine, the methods they have used and other relevant information that would lead to closer operational cooperation to target, arrest and dismantle the syndicates responsible;

(b) Governments should take steps to further strengthen mechanisms for the timely identification, collection and exchange of information on non-scheduled substances, including derivatives specifically designed to circumvent existing controls, especially by making use of the updated limited international special surveillance list of non-scheduled substances;

(c) Regulatory authorities and law enforcement agencies responsible for the control of preparations containing precursor chemicals such as ephedrine and pseudoephedrine should be supported by their Governments to engage the cooperation of the relevant manufacturing industries in a proactive strategy of cooperation to prevent their illegal diversion to illicit drug manufacture;

(d) Governments should provide information to other member States on effective countermeasures taken by them to control substances under the international drug control conventions, in order to ensure that measures better address emerging trends in synthetic drug abuse, control such substances and prevent their trafficking and diversion.

3. Developing effective regional responses to illicit drug trafficking

21. The following recommendations were made with regard to the issue entitled “Developing effective regional responses to illicit drug trafficking”:

(a) Where they have not already done so, Governments should take steps to establish effective financial and regulatory controls over banks and non-bank financial institutions so as to discourage their use for money-laundering and thus preserve the integrity, stability and reliability of their financial trade systems;

(b) Governments should be encouraged to establish an inter-agency response for container control at national ports and container terminals through the establishment of specialist units dedicated to the review, selection and search of identified containers of interest;

(c) In order to better identify containers used for the carriage of illicit drugs and precursors, Governments of the region should take steps to ensure the exchange

of information between authorities on risk indicators, smuggling modi operandi and emerging trends in illicit drug trafficking.

IV. Follow-up to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem

22. Participants in the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Africa, the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean, the forty-fifth session of the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East and the Thirty-fourth Meeting of HONLEA, Asia and the Pacific, considered the item on their agendas entitled “Follow-up to the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem”. For their consideration of the item, they had before them the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, contained in the report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the outcome of the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on progress achieved in meeting the goals and targets set out in the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session (A/64/92-E/2009/98, sect. II. A).

23. Attention was drawn to the subsections of part II of the Plan of Action on enhancing cooperation, coordination and law enforcement operations to reduce supply, addressing new trafficking trends and addressing supply and demand reduction together. It was also emphasized that the General Assembly, in its resolution 64/182, had encouraged the meetings of heads of national drug law enforcement agencies and the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East to continue to contribute to the strengthening of regional and international cooperation.

24. Speakers referred to legal and judicial measures taken by their Governments to update, adopt and enact drug control legislation. Some representatives provided information on efforts made by their Governments to counter money-laundering in the financial service sector related to illicit drugs, as well as to strengthen anti-corruption measures, particularly with a view to preventing the infiltration of drug traffickers into the political system.

25. Regarding demand reduction, delegates reported on the efforts by their Governments to reduce drug demand, including drug abuse prevention and treatment services, social reinsertion, evaluation, early detection, educational programmes and programmes targeting special groups such as students and families, as well as programmes designed to promote positive values in communities at all levels. It was noted that decisive measures had been adopted by Governments including awareness-raising campaigns on the dangers of drug abuse targeting vulnerable groups among the general public through publications and the media. The demand reduction measures referred to by speakers included prevention in the workplace, home and community. Attention was drawn to the contribution made to those efforts by civil society institutions and private and public enterprises.

Reference was also made to recent surveys on the prevalence of drug abuse that provided the framework for targeted interventions and evaluations.

26. Reference was made to the problem of the illicit cultivation of cannabis plant, coca bush and opium poppy. At the Meeting of HONLEA, Africa, speakers emphasized the lack of support and action by donor countries and organizations with regard to the problem of cannabis and appealed for the establishment of alternative development cooperation programmes targeting illicit cannabis plant cultivation. The Subcommission expressed concern about the increase in illicit cannabis production in the Near and Middle East, which also provided a source of finance for terrorist activities.

27. A number of representatives provided information on measures to improve control over precursor chemicals and preparations containing amphetamine-type substances. The need for increased cooperation among member States to strengthen the control of amphetamine-type stimulants and the need to provide financial and other support to Governments in order to implement related measures were emphasized.

V. Organization of future meetings of the subsidiary bodies

28. At the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Africa, in view of the absence of offers to host the Twenty-first Meeting, an appeal was issued to the Governments of the region to try to host subsequent meetings of HONLEA, Africa, in order to facilitate delegates' participation. The Chair called on the Secretariat to provide interested delegations with the relevant background information and to consult with Governments with a view to arriving at an appropriate arrangement, including the possibility of one country hosting the meeting in 2011. The Meeting was informed that the period from 5 to 9 September 2011 had been tentatively reserved for the Twenty-first Meeting.

29. At the Twentieth Meeting of HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean, the representative of Chile informed the Meeting of the intention of the Government of Chile to host the Twenty-first Meeting in 2011. The participants welcomed that offer. A representative of the Secretariat informed the participants that the period from 3 to 7 October 2011 had been reserved for the Twenty-first Meeting and that the Secretariat would communicate with the Government of Chile to make the necessary arrangements.

30. At the forty-fifth session of the Subcommission, the Secretary made an introductory statement outlining action to be taken for the organization of the forty-sixth session of the Subcommission, including the need to identify Governments that would be willing to host the session. The Chair requested the Secretariat to consult with member States to identify a possible host for that session. The period from 31 October to 4 November 2011 has been tentatively reserved for the forty-sixth session of the Subcommission.

31. At the Thirty-fourth Meeting of HONLEA, Asia and the Pacific, no offer was made to host the Thirty-fifth Meeting. The Secretariat would be in contact with the Bureau and interested member States with a view to identifying hosts for the Thirty-fifth Meeting and the Thirty-sixth Meeting. The period from 21 to

25 November 2011 has been tentatively reserved for the Thirty-fifth Meeting of HONLEA, Asia and the Pacific.

32. The attention of the Commission and the members of its subsidiary bodies is drawn to Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/15, entitled “Meetings of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies: Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean”, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to convene those three regional meetings at the capitals of States in the respective regions that might wish to act as host or at the headquarters of the regional commission concerned, annually, beginning in 1988. Accordingly, the Commission should encourage member States in the different regions to consider hosting forthcoming meetings of heads of national drug law enforcement agencies where no host has yet been identified and to coordinate with the Secretariat as soon as possible to allow sufficient time for the organizational arrangements to be made.

33. The Ninth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe, is to be held in Vienna from 14 to 17 June 2011.
