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**Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Law  
Enforcement Agencies, Africa**

Yamoussoukro, 8-12 September 2008

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

**Current situation with respect to subregional and regional  
cooperation in countering drug trafficking****Current situation with respect to subregional and regional  
cooperation in countering drug trafficking**

1. Since the Seventeenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa, held in Nairobi from 17 to 21 September 2007, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has formulated and implemented programmes to address problems related to drugs and organized crime in Africa.

**I. Africa-wide initiatives**

2. In a number of African countries, drugs, crime and corruption are undermining development efforts. High levels of income inequality, a high proportion of youth in the population, many of whom are orphaned and marginalized, high rates of urbanization, low levels of criminal justice resources, firearms proliferation, wars and civil conflicts, as well as weak controls over criminal activities, leave Africa vulnerable to organized crime, drug trafficking, trafficking in human beings, money-laundering and corruption. In particular, Africa is increasingly being used to trans-ship and stockpile illicit drugs. This is evidenced by the large seizures of cocaine in West Africa, the continued trafficking and stockpiling of other narcotic drugs such as heroin through East Africa, and the production in and trafficking of amphetamine-type stimulants and other types of narcotics through Southern Africa. North Africa is targeted by drug trafficking activities and often by drugs en route to Europe. Africa as a whole is also increasingly being used to re-route precursor chemicals, which are often destined for Mexico and Latin America.

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\* UNODC/HONLAF/2008/1.



## **African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention**

3. The Revised African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2007-2012), with a Mechanism for Implementation, Follow-up and Evaluation of the Revised African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2007-2012), as endorsed by the Executive Council of the African Union at its twelfth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa from 25 to 29 January 2008, and by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its tenth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa from 31 January to 2 February 2008, reflects an attempt to address the above vulnerabilities by integrating drug control issues and crime prevention policies within national legal and institutional frameworks.

4. The project on law enforcement advisory services and capacity-building in Africa, for Africa and the Middle East, is ongoing, with a law enforcement adviser posted in the UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa. In the year under review, from September 2007 to September 2008, the law enforcement adviser has contributed to the development of several law enforcement-related projects and programmes, participated in assessment missions and assisted in the implementation of an ongoing law enforcement project in Africa and the Middle East. The project has been extended for a new two-year period (July 2008 to June 2010). The fact that the number of law enforcement-related projects is increasing in Africa and the Middle East, with a consequent increase in the number of law enforcement project coordinators, has allowed for a change in the strategy of the project. In future, the law enforcement adviser project will act as an “umbrella project”, embracing and receiving support from other project coordinators in Africa and the Middle East.

5. In response to requests for assistance from African Governments and from laboratories in African countries, UNODC has consulted laboratory experts from the African region and drafted a project to address the lack of forensic capacity in large parts of Africa and to examine the consequences of this lack of capacity for the criminal justice systems of African countries. The project would build on the achievements and lessons learned from past UNODC assistance and mobilize the donor community and African Governments to implement the recommended actions for forensic service systems of the Revised African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2007-2012).

6. UNODC has taken the initiative to develop the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP), in cooperation with INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization. The objective of the AIRCOP project is to create joint anti-trafficking units in 18 airports on drug trafficking routes in Africa and link them with the INTERPOL I-24/7 database and communication system and the World Customs Organization Customs Enforcement Network communication system. It may also be possible to link airports in Africa to airports in source and destination countries. The European Commission has pledged 3 million euros to the AIRCOP project, which is expected to start in mid-2009, with a 48-month duration. The European Commission has also requested UNODC to replicate the AIRCOP project for Latin America and to build synergy between AIRCOP Africa and AIRCOP Latin America.

7. In response to requests for support for law enforcement operations in African countries, between 2007 and early 2008 UNODC provided in excess of 70 drug and precursor field detection kits, including tests for cocaine and amphetamine-type stimulants, to Burkina Faso, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali and Senegal. UNODC expects to distribute over 100 more kits in the coming months to Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Namibia and selected countries in West Africa.

## **II. West Africa**

8. West Africa remains the most important trans-shipment point and stockpile location for cocaine destined for Europe. Large quantities of cocaine are being seized, both along the Atlantic coast of Africa and further inland. Many drug couriers travelling by air from West Africa are being arrested in Europe. In 2006 and 2007, an increase was observed in the use of small and medium sized aircraft to traffic cocaine from Latin America to Europe.

### **Economic Community of West African States plan of action against trafficking in persons**

9. At the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 15 June 2007, the Heads of State and Government expressed serious concern about the unprecedented increase in reported cases of drug trafficking in several Member States and unanimously decided to include the fight against drug trafficking and organized crime among the operational priorities of ECOWAS. It was also agreed that a new regional plan of action be developed, which could provide a conclusive and efficient response to the issue. The Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), the specialized institution responsible for the coordination of the anti-money-laundering and terrorism financing regional mechanism, was thus entrusted, in December 2007, with the preparation of a draft regional plan of action. Following an extensive process of consultation involving the ECOWAS anti-drug unit, national anti-narcotic inter-ministerial bodies, UNODC and other international partners, GIABA remitted a draft plan of action to the ECOWAS Commission. The draft plan of action is currently under review.

10. In an attempt to curb the smuggling of cocaine from Latin America to West Africa, UNODC launched a transatlantic intelligence exchange project in 2007. The three-year project is aimed at establishing a multiregional intelligence exchange mechanism for drug interdiction in Europe, Latin America and West Africa and promoting intelligence-led investigation of drug-related cases. Seven Latin American countries and six West African countries have been selected to participate in the project.

11. The Global Container Control Programme, which is implemented jointly by UNODC and the World Customs Organization, has project sites in Ecuador (2 ports), Ghana, Pakistan and Senegal. Project implementation in Senegal has been completed. The joint anti-trafficking team in the port of Dakar has been trained and equipped and is operational. In Ghana, a joint anti-trafficking team has been

established in the port of Tema. To date, the team has received theoretical training; practical training will follow in the second half of 2008. With funds provided by France, UNODC is planning to conduct assessment missions to ports in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. Planning for an assessment mission to Benin, which will be the first such mission, has been finalized. UNODC is seeking additional funds in order to extend the programme to include ports in East and Southern Africa.

12. In collaboration with the inter-ministerial drug control committee and the Ministry of Justice of Cape Verde, UNODC is implementing an integrated drug control and crime prevention programme for Cape Verde. A large part of that programme is the Cape Verde anti-trafficking programme, which is aimed at enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies in Cape Verde to prevent and combat more effectively the scourge of drugs and organized crime. The activities of the programme include establishing and training inter-agency teams for countering trafficking in four international airports and three seaports, and the establishment of a state-of-the-art drug-analysis and forensic laboratory. The programme also aims to build synergy with the Global Container Control Programme and AIRCOP.

13. At the end of 2007, UNODC launched a comprehensive law enforcement capacity-building programme for Guinea-Bissau to prevent and combat drug trafficking to and from the country. The project is now in its second phase, which is estimated to last 12 months, and aims to build the capacity of the judicial police in Guinea-Bissau. A third phase, with a 24-month duration, will follow and will aim to enhance the fundamentals for good policing by building a police academy, introducing large training components and providing equipment, and refurbishing a prison. UNODC has also established a project office in Bissau and recruited an international project coordinator/law enforcement adviser.

14. The UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa has undertaken assessment missions to Mali, Mauritania and the Niger with a view to developing comprehensive country programmes and strategies on drug control and crime prevention. Programmes for each of these countries have been finalized and are awaiting donor funding.

15. Nigeria continued to host the secretariat of the West Africa Joint Operations (WAJO) initiative, established in 2002. In 2006, WAJO activities focused on the sharing of intelligence by the joint task force, which was set up as its operational arm. There were no regional activities by WAJO in 2007 or 2008.

16. With regard to efforts to counter money-laundering, the Central Bank of West African States adopted a directive in July 2007 to counter the financing of terrorism, while in Togo in March 2008 the West African Economic and Monetary Union adopted a draft uniform law on countering the financing of terrorism. With a view to developing and coordinating national and regional strategies against money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, UNODC and GIABA organized a national workshop on such strategies in the Niger in March 2007. During the second half of 2007, two subregional workshops on the elaboration of national strategies to prevent money-laundering and counter the financing of terrorism were organized. The first, held in Accra from 9 to 11 July 2007 for ECOWAS English-speaking countries, was organized by the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, in cooperation with GIABA and the Commonwealth. UNODC sponsored four participants per delegation, representing all the sectors concerned (the central bank,

the police, the office of the attorney-general and/or the ministry of justice), for the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The second workshop was held in Bamako from 28 to 30 August 2007 for ECOWAS French-speaking countries and was jointly organized by the Law Enforcement, Organized Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Unit and the Regional Office for West and Central Africa, both of UNODC, with the support of the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the International Monetary Fund, the secretariat of GIABA and the Ministry of National Security and Civil Protection and the Ministry of African Integration, both of Mali. UNODC sponsored four participants per delegation, representing all the sectors concerned (the central bank, the police, the office of the attorney-general and/or the ministry of justice) for Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, the Niger and Togo. This initiative meets the objectives of UNODC project I 25, which is aimed at supporting the fight against money-laundering in West Africa, as well as the objectives of the GIABA action plan 2007-2009. In addition, UNODC gave support to GIABA during the organization of its regional workshop on typology exercises, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 16 to 20 April 2007.

17. UNODC has initiated a computer-based training programme for countering money-laundering in selected West African countries. The training was offered to law enforcement and other relevant national authorities in Côte d'Ivoire in April 2007 and in the Niger in May 2007. The UNODC computer-based training mobile centre was based in Benin for four weeks from October 2007 and in Guinea for six weeks from November 2007. In response to a technical assistance request from the president of the Senegalese financial intelligence unit, the UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa, Global Programme against Money-Laundering and Law Enforcement, Organized Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Unit planned, organized and delivered a three-day training course targeted at prosecutors in Senegal from 13 to 15 November 2007. About 50 prosecutors from the 11 regions of Senegal and some investigators and members of the financial intelligence unit of Senegal attended the seminar. The presence of Belgian, French and Swiss experts enabled the Senegalese prosecutors to compare their legal practices and the implementation of their respective laws and regulations.

18. In cooperation with GIABA, UNODC launched two studies on the vulnerability of informal parallel markets to money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, one in Ghana in May 2007 and the other in Sierra Leone in June 2007. A third study is to be launched in Benin. Data from the studies will contribute to increasing knowledge of money-laundering and terrorist financing and their scope in the three countries.

### **III. Central Africa**

19. UNODC has continued to strengthen its contacts with the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) in the fight against organized crime, money-laundering and terrorism in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. A joint Terrorism Prevention Branch/Global Programme against Money-Laundering mission was undertaken to organize and deliver a subregional seminar on combating the financing of terrorism

and money-laundering, held from 7 to 9 April 2008, for member States of CEMAC and the Economic Community of Central African States, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and Foreign Affairs of Gabon. About 30 officials attended the three-day workshop. UNODC secured the participation of international experts: a representative of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council, a representative of the Action Group against Money-Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC), a representative of CEMAC, a magistrate from the mutual legal assistance office of the Ministry of Justice of France, a legal expert from the Senegalese financial intelligence unit, the head of analysis of the financial intelligence unit of Côte d'Ivoire, and a representative of the INTERPOL regional office in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The workshop comprised presentations on the regional and international anti-money-laundering and countering-the-financing-of-terrorism legal and institutional frameworks, including presentations given by each delegation on their respective national systems; on the detection of money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, with examples of regional typologies; on the freezing and asset forfeiture mechanisms (pertaining to United Nations conventions and Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1267 (1999)) and their implementation; and on inter-agency and international cooperation.

20. On 4 April 2003, the CEMAC countries adopted a comprehensive regulation on anti-money-laundering and countering the financing of terrorism, which contains provisions on criminalization and preventive and detection measures. Pursuant to that regulation, the relevant provisions were immediately incorporated into the domestic laws of the respective CEMAC countries. In 2000, the CEMAC countries established a regional group called the Action Group against Money-Laundering in Central Africa (GABAC) to adopt common policy and joint strategy to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism in the region. The secretariat of GABAC is in Bangui. Only two financial intelligence units, in Cameroon and Gabon, are operational in the CEMAC region. GABAC has recently received extensive assistance from international development partners to meet the criteria to become a Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF)-style regional body, which would be granted observer status with FATF. Burundi adopted anti-money-laundering and countering-the-financing-of-terrorism legislation on 4 April 2008 and a revised draft penal code is being considered by the parliament. The Democratic Republic of the Congo also enacted anti-money-laundering and countering-the-financing-of-terrorism legislation on 19 July 2004. Discussions are ongoing between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group about the possible admission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as an observer.

#### **IV. Southern Africa**

21. At the invitation of the INTERPOL subregional bureau for Southern Africa and the secretariat of the Southern African Regional Police Chief Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO), the UNODC Laboratory and Scientific Section participated in the fifth meeting of SARPCCO heads and directors of forensic science institutions, held in Livingstone, Zambia, in April 2008. The participants, including heads of forensic science institutions from Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi,

Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, recommended closer cooperation with UNODC, especially in the areas of forensic training and quality assurance issues. They also requested UNODC assistance for the creation of a subregional network of forensic science laboratories. A follow-up regional workshop is planned for the fourth quarter of 2008 in South Africa.

22. With a view to developing a comprehensive laboratory and scientific support programme, an initial assessment of the status of forensic science services was carried out in 2008, based on replies to questionnaires sent to SARPCCO countries in 2007. The feedback received suggested that forensic capacity in SARPCCO countries was characterized by various levels of equipment, staffing and governmental support, ranging from highly sophisticated to laboratories that did not meet minimum requirements. The assessment further suggested that most laboratories were providing, or had the mandate to provide, forensic services beyond drug analysis. The outcome of the assessment will form the basis for the development of a subregional cooperation programme that will be formulated in accordance with the recommended actions of the Revised African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2007-2012).

## **V. East Africa**

23. UNODC launched a project against trafficking at the airport of Addis Ababa in January 2007. The project aims to enhance capacities to counter trafficking at the airport by creating a joint airport control team and by providing training and equipment. The project is also aimed at improving law enforcement efforts to counter organized crime in general by enhancing the training capacities of the police college through reviewing the training syllabus and providing computer-based training. UNODC has also established a project office in Addis Ababa.

## **VI. North Africa**

24. During the period under review, two essential political documents pertaining to subregional and regional cooperation in countering drug trafficking were adopted. The first, entitled the “Dubai statement on strategic planning and cooperation in drug control”, was adopted at a regional seminar of the heads of anti-drug agencies, held in Dubai from 29 to 31 October 2007. It focuses on actions related to strategic planning and cooperation; operational aspects of cooperation and coordination; strengthening cross-border cooperation to control drugs; human resources development and training; awareness-raising about and the prevention of illicit drug trafficking and use; and the role of the media. The Dubai statement also provides provisions for the establishment of an implementation mechanism in the form of a follow-up committee, composed of heads of anti-drug agencies from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, as well as of representatives from the Dubai police of the United Arab Emirates and the UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa. The work of the follow-up committee is closely coordinated with that of the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior.

25. The second document is the “Tripoli action plan on countering drug trafficking and money-laundering using the mail”, adopted at a regional symposium on

countering drug trafficking and money-laundering using the mail, held in Tripoli from 25 to 27 November 2007. The symposium was attended by the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa, the Universal Postal Union, INTERPOL and UNODC. The Tripoli action plan deals with actions related to measures to be taken to counter drug trafficking and money-laundering conducted through international mail services; cooperation and information-sharing; human resources development; and awareness-raising on curbing the smuggling of drugs using the courier system. The action plan also envisages the establishment of a follow-up committee within the framework of the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior.

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