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

Vienna, 16-19 November 2009

Provisional agenda and annotations

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation.
4. Consideration of topics by working groups.
 - (a) Combating the on-going challenge from illicit opiate trafficking in the region;
 - (b) The use of the Internet in trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals;
 - (c) Amphetamine-type stimulants.
5. Follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly.
6. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its forty-second session.
7. Organization of the forty-fifth session of the Subcommission.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the report.

Annotations**1. Election of officers**

Elections are held in accordance with the practice set forth in rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. Past custom has been for the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters

in the Near and Middle East to elect a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

The draft provisional agenda for the forty-fourth session was approved by the Subcommission at its forty-third session. Following the adoption of the agenda, the Subcommission will establish a timetable and agree on the organization of work for its forty-fourth session. A proposed organization of work for the consideration of the Subcommission is shown in the annex to the present document.

Documentation

Provisional agenda and annotations (UNODC/SUBCOM/44/1)

3. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation

Participants will be invited to inform the Subcommission of their respective countries' efforts as regards regional and subregional cooperation in areas such as joint investigations, law enforcement training and sharing of information and experience in taking measures to counter drug trafficking. Participants are requested to indicate in particular any practical problems impeding subregional cooperation and measures to overcome those problems.

At its thirty-eighth session, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs recommended that general statements and statistics relating to national trends in drug trafficking should not be made orally during meetings but should be circulated in written form. In particular, the Commission recommended that the meeting be informed of new and important trends having an impact on cooperation and new developments that drug law enforcement agencies of the region need to be made aware of. Governments are invited to submit to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), by 16 October 2009, a two-page report on recent trends in drug trafficking in their respective countries over the past year. Only country reports that have been received by that date will be translated into the other working languages of the meeting.

Documentation

Report of the Secretariat on statistics on drug trafficking trends in the Near and Middle East, in South, West and Central Asia and worldwide (UNODC/SUBCOM/44/2)

Note by the Secretariat on the current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation (UNODC/SUBCOM/44/CRP.1)

4. Consideration of topics by working groups

Ad hoc working groups will be established in order to review issues of regional importance and to facilitate informal discussions and frank exchanges of views on specific matters. The working groups will be invited to present their findings, conclusions and recommendations to the Subcommission for endorsement and inclusion in its report on the forty-fourth session. Each working group will be invited to take into consideration the following in the formulation of its recommendations:

- (a) Identification of specific operational and other problems facing drug law enforcement in the region;
- (b) Discussion of specific countermeasures to combat particular regional patterns of drug trafficking that could or should be implemented at the national, subregional or intraregional levels;
- (c) Enhancement of regional cooperation by identifying potential partners in specific problem areas of drug control;
- (d) Presentation of specific, relevant findings and recommendations to the Subcommission.

The topics below are suggested for consideration by working groups.

(a) Combating the on-going challenge from illicit opiate trafficking in the region

The Annual UNODC Opium Surveys in Afghanistan highlight the significant challenge of opium production confronting the authorities in Afghanistan and the region as a whole. The large scale and on-going production of illicit opiates acts to undermine the rule of law in Afghanistan, whilst the criminal organizations that have established themselves to process and traffic heroin out of the region create instability and tension amongst its neighbours. Traffickers operate outside the law, resulting in violent and deadly confrontations with government authorities and local communities. Trafficking routes for the movement of opium, morphine and refined heroin consignments through Afghanistan's neighbours and in countries out of the region are now well established. In addition, authorities are confronting criminal activity associated with the diversion of essential precursor chemicals, the smuggling and irresponsible disposal of toxic chemicals, clandestine laboratory operations and a growing domestic abuse of opiates as spillage from transit consignments flows to meet regional demand. Participants to this Working Group will be expected to share their experiences on the composition and activities of organized trafficking groups in operation in and through their territory, as well as a discussion on current and commonly adopted smuggling modus operandi and routes. Delegates will be asked to comment upon initiatives they have undertaken either nationally or collectively and in partnership with neighbours across the region to strengthen cross-border cooperation, and to share information and experiences as well as on countermeasures that have proven effective. Case studies and operational examples to highlight the work done should be presented, including by regional information intelligence centres located within the region.

(b) The use of the Internet in trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals

Criminal groups engaged in illicit drug trafficking and other criminal activities are increasingly using modern and sophisticated communication technologies to facilitate the commission of their illegal activities. The widespread use of mobile telephones, advanced technologies such as encrypted e-mail are some of the everyday challenges confronting law enforcement agencies, while the move toward Voice-over-Internet-Protocol transmissions and the growth of public Internet sites present new challenges to law enforcement agencies investigating and searching for evidence to successfully dismantle illegal operations. In step with the operational needs to gain access to criminal communications is the need to obtain evidence from

recovered devices used by suspects under investigation (i.e. computers and mobile telephones), as well as from Internet providers domestically and in foreign jurisdictions. Such developments are highlighting new areas requiring law enforcement expertise and cooperation. Participants in this working group will be asked to outline their national experiences in investigating trafficking offences committed through the use of modern communication technologies, and go through the challenges they have faced and how they have addressed them. Case studies, national strategies and recommendations of good practice should form part of the preparation for this session.

(c) Amphetamine-type stimulants

The global market for amphetamine-type stimulants is the most dynamic among the four major classes of illicit drugs (opiates, cannabis, cocaine and ATS), with significant increases registered world wide over the past 12 months. This region is reflecting the increasing global trend and authorities are therefore being confronted by the challenges of effective border control to prevent importation, controlling the precursor chemicals used in their illicit manufacture and dismantling the ever increasing sophistication of manufacturing operations. This working group will look at the provision and requirements of forensic support for counter-narcotic activities in the region, especially in light of the threat from Captagon abuse, the import and manufacture of amphetamine and methamphetamine, and the appearance of “crack heroin”. Participants will also be asked to report on trends observed domestically in ATS abuse, size and types of seizures made and the groups and syndicates behind these consignments. Presentations around cases investigated and new challenges faced should be prepared.

5. Follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly

At the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held on 11 and 12 March 2009, Heads of State, ministers and government representatives from 132 States gathered to evaluate progress made since 1998 towards meeting the goals and targets established at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to countering the world drug problem together; to identify future priorities and areas requiring further action and goals and targets to be established for drug control beyond 2009; and to adopt a political declaration and other measures to enhance international cooperation. At the high-level segment, Member States adopted the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem. The adoption of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action some 10 years after the twentieth special session of the General Assembly of 1998 has given fresh impetus to international drug control. The meeting will be informed of the results of the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and will also have an opportunity to discuss how Member States in the region could best follow up and implement the international commitments arising from the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, in order to enhance progress and thus address the challenges posed by illicit drug trafficking in the coming years.

6. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommittee at its forty-second session

Participants are invited to inform the Subcommittee of action taken by their respective Governments in the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommittee at its forty-second session, held in Agra (India), from 3 to 7 December 2007. The Subcommittee will have before it a note by the Secretariat prepared on the basis of replies received to a questionnaire concerning action taken by Governments.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the review of implementation by States of the region of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East at its forty-second session (UNODC/SUBCOM/44/3)

7. Organization of the forty-fifth session of the Subcommittee

The Subcommittee will have before it the draft provisional agenda for its forty-fifth session, including topics for discussion in working groups, and may wish to consider possible venues for future sessions. For planning purposes, a decision at the forty-fourth session of the Subcommittee on the venue for the forty-fifth session and on topics for discussion in working groups would greatly facilitate the organization of the forty-fifth session. The Secretariat will provide, on request and for the information of the Subcommittee, a copy of the standard letter of agreement for the hosting of a session of the Subcommittee in which the respective contributions of the United Nations and of the host Government are set out.

The Subcommittee may also wish to discuss any other matter related to the organization of its deliberations with a view to improving their substantive content and the follow-up to them.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat (UNODC/SUBCOM/44/4)

8. Other business

The Subcommittee may wish to address other important issues, such as urgent matters arising from the country reports.

9. Adoption of the report of the Subcommittee on its forty-fourth session

The Subcommittee will adopt the report on its forty-fourth session, including the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the working groups.

Annex

Proposed organization of work

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Title or description</i>
Monday, 16 November		
10 a.m.		Opening of the session
	1	Election of officers
	2	Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
	3	Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation
3 p.m.	3	Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation (<i>continued</i>)
Tuesday, 17 November		
10 a.m.	5	Follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly
	6	Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommittee at its forty-second session
3 p.m.	4	Consideration of topics by Working groups
Wednesday, 18 November		
10 a.m.	4	Consideration of topics by Working groups (<i>continued</i>)
3 p.m.	4	Consideration of topics by Working groups (<i>continued</i>)
Thursday, 19 November		
10 a.m.	4	Consideration of topics by Working groups (<i>continued</i>)
3 p.m.	7	Organization of the forty-fifth session of the Subcommittee
	8	Other business
	9	Adoption of the report