



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

Regional Office for South Asia

Funded by:



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Precursors are chemicals frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In order to produce synthetic and semi-synthetic drugs of abuse one requires precursors. Trying to control all precursors becomes unwieldy with efforts being spread too thin, over too many chemicals, rendering controls ineffective. International drug control strategy therefore identifies a few key precursors and controls these. Since precursors are often trafficked across borders, there should be harmony between the laws of different countries, both in terms of which precursors are controlled and what kinds of controls are imposed.

The UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988) identifies those precursors which are most crucial to the illicit manufacture of drugs. These are listed in Table I and II of the convention and are universally accepted as precursors.

Precursors of concern in South Asia:

- Acetic Anhydride (heroin)
- Anthranilic acid (methaqualone)
- Ephedrine and Pseudoephedrine (amphetamines)



Seized equipment from an ecstasy laboratory

This project aims to strengthen precursor chemical control in the SAARC countries - namely, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – and promote cooperation with Afghanistan as well as promote inter-regional cooperation. The overall objective is to establish strong and effective precursor control regimes. The project will also strengthen cooperation between them to prevent or reduce diversion from the licit trade. In doing so, the countries benefitting under the project will be able to better fulfil their obligations under UNGASS 1998 in respect of precursor chemical control. This project builds upon achievements stretching back to the mid-1990s in precursor chemical control in South Asia with UNODC assistance. (Note: On 3 April 2007, Afghanistan became the latest member country to join SAARC at the 14th summit in New Delhi.)

PRECURSOR CHEMICAL CONTROL

RAS/H60: Regional precursor control project for South and South West Asia

Budget: US\$ 650,000

Duration: September 2005 - December 2008

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE: By the end of the project all participating countries will have effective precursor control legislation, working mechanisms, standard operating procedures and adequate precursor control training facilities in place

STATUS OF PRECURSOR CONTROL LEGISLATION	
Bangladesh	Exists
Bhutan	Exists
India	Exists
Maldives	Draft
Nepal	Draft
Pakistan	Exists
Sri Lanka	Draft

