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Commission on Narcotic Drugs**Fifty-first session**

Vienna, 10-14 March 2008

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Thematic debate on the follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly: general overview and progress achieved by Governments in meeting the goals and targets for the years 2003 and 2008 set out in the Political Declaration adopted by the Assembly at its twentieth special session**Complementary drug-related data and expertise to support the global assessment by Member States of the implementation of the declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session****Report by Interpol*****Summary*

Pursuant to Commission of Narcotic Drugs resolutions 49/1 “Collection and use of complementary drug-related data and expertise to support the global assessment by Member States of the implementation of the declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session” and 50/12 “Measures to meet the goal of establishing by 2009 the progress achieved in implementing the declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session”, intergovernmental organizations active in the field of international drug control were invited to submit regionally consolidated comparative analyses of the current situation and trends in various areas of drug control in their fields of action with that prevailing in the period 1998-2000. Organizations were also invited to present the actions and changes that had taken place in their regions or fields of action in relation to the implementation of the goals

* E/CN.7/2008/1.

** The text of the report is reproduced as it was received by the Secretariat.



and targets set in the Political Declaration and the measures to enhance international cooperation to counter the world drug problem, and related action plans, adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, 8 to 10 June 1998 (A/RES/S-20/2, A/RES/S-20/3 and A/RES/S-20/4).

Several organizations provided information in response to the above request. In addition, UNODC also received unprocessed data from a number of organizations.¹ Where relevant, this information was used to complement the data provided by Member States through the Biennial Reports Questionnaire (BRQ) and reflected in the fifth report of the Executive Director on the world drug problem (E/CN.7/2008/2 and Addenda 1 to 6).

The report by Interpol contains information concerning the current status and trends of implementation of the action plans and measures adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, focusing on the implementation by its members in the areas of precursor control and the illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants.

¹ ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD); Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF); South-American Financial Action Task Force (GAFISUD); South-Caucasus Anti-Drug Programme (SCAD) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

Precursor Control

The below analysis is based on the relevant sections of the Biennial Reports Questionnaires (BRQ) and the questions contained therein.

II. General (national drug strategies/action plans)

Interpol is presently focusing on 2 regions in the area of synthetic drugs and precursors. These are the African and Asian regions. The Secretariat is also following up on current trends.

Synthetic drugs are defined as full synthetic drugs.

- 1. Does your country have a national drug strategy or action plan?**
- 3. Is the national drug strategy or action plan multisectoral?**
- 4. Which are the main sectors represented in the national drug strategy or action plan?**

Organized Crime has perceived the African region over the last 2 years as increasingly profitable. It is being used more and more as a transit point and storage place for precursors and illicit drugs.

South Africa was the first country in this region to discover the presence of this type of crime and has now implemented a national monitoring programme for combating diversion and the production of synthetic drugs.

In 2005, the rise of the production and abuse of methamphetamine became an additional concern, and the South African government has now invested a lot of effort to combat this new trend. South Africa is confronting the production of amphetamine-methamphetamine-mdma and Methaqualone (Mandrax).

In practice, investigations revealed that the criminal organizations were taking precursor materials out of South Africa to production sites abroad. The ATS were then smuggled back into South Africa as a finished product.

Follow-up to these investigations by other countries in the region can and will result in the emergence of new problems because of the lack of needed infrastructures and the expert knowledge prerequisite for taking appropriate measures.

South Africa is putting a lot of effort in assisting other countries.

Both different and uncommon countries within this region are used for transiting.

In general

In many countries structures for handling precursors in combined activities with either law enforcement, the chemical or the pharmaceutical industries are not yet in place.

Criminal activities in this field are not recognized sufficiently, nor are law enforcement agencies informed enough or have sufficient knowledge to handle it effectively.

African region

Interpol (SC/DCO) started up activities (2003) in the field of Synthetic drugs and precursors together with the South African Police.

Being increasingly confronted with international influences from organized crime and/or by international trade, the Chiefs of Police from 23 different African countries recommended (IPSG 2005) to support each country in setting up a network for the monitoring of synthetic drugs and precursors.

In support of this future network, the IPSG is working together with its 4 regional bureaux, South Africa and the Prism task force. A working programme has been put in place.

It is planned that in November 2006 participating countries will send their national liaison points to be trained.

In order to support the improvement and development of the police (and customs) agencies Interpol, together with the South African police, developed a national (quick) scan model to identify partners or activities needed to improve the national policies and to coordinate and start a multidisciplinary approach.

Experiences and lessons learned from former assessments and guidance delivered to the “new” EU countries have been integrated into this quick scan model.

Following the national impact generated by international organized crime, Interpol can state that within the African region, South Africa is doing well and invites other countries in the region to participate in their multilateral programmes.

Developing practical activities in the African region showed that information and structures needed to establish national drug strategies and action plans have not sufficiently been covered yet.

UNODC is organizing activities in this field, too. The UNODC office in Nairobi organized a meeting on pharmaceuticals during which the possibility was raised that pharmaceuticals were being used to obtain precursor materials. This year (2006) a meeting on precursors was organized by this office. Staying on the topic of IPSG/UNODC cooperation, the IPSG is following the progress of the United Nations container control programme.

3. For South Africa this is a full multisectoral cooperation. Police-customs-industry are working together closely.

The Asian region

The best way to stop criminal activities is to start where it originates. Because many of the seized precursors originate from China, this country still is considered to be a main source country for the diversion of precursor materials.

In the last few years, considerable progress has been achieved by the Chinese government and warrants special mention here.

The results of these efforts are visible in the market of diversion of precursor materials i.e., more seizures related to better controls and cooperation are occurring. The exchange of intelligence and cooperation between countries should also be

mentioned. Good examples of this are the operations between the Philippines-Malaysia and China.

Legislation has changed and now is more adapted to the international standards.

China is a member of the Prism Task Force and supports its activities.

The changes of controls in China are believed to have contributed to a displacement effect whereby India is now coming into more focus for criminal organizations.

Frequently pharmaceutical products and precursors are ordered through the Internet (or forms the basis for the first contacts) between sellers and the buyers of basic substances to be used as precursors for all types of ATS's.

The Russian Federation is becoming a bigger player in the field of diversion of precursors. It must be mentioned that more precursor materials originating from this area are being diverted (and seized) to the EU.

The new activities started in the Balkans (Seci center) and in the Central Asian region (Caricc) are encouraging.

Compared to the situation in 1998-2000, a lot of progress has been made.

III. Control of precursors

Goals: States to adopt and implement national laws required for compliance with article on precursors control of 1988 United Nations Convention

States to review regularly and strengthen existing precursor controls

Anti-Trafficking Section (A TS), in coordination with Laboratory and Scientific Section (LSS)

(a) international/regional bodies: INTERPOL, WCO, EUROPOL, SECI, GCC, IMO, CICAD/MEM for statistics, trends in precursor control and related criminal activity, data on controlled deliveries, support provided and progress made to open communication between competent authorities on information exchange; reports from Members relating to trafficking by sea

Since 1998-2000 many changes have taken place. The definitions and methods used to collect statistics are part of these changes. Consistency on synthetic drugs and precursors has improved over the last 5 years. The different services and law enforcement agencies deliver their national statistics based on the agreements with the INCB. As mentioned earlier the number of participating ministries and law enforcement agencies are still a matter of concern for collecting information.

The (re)designing of a practical, uniform format to be used (full or partly) by the partners involved would be most welcome and helpful. Although this could generate certain judicial problems, the benefits would be great for the delivering countries and for the above-mentioned organizations.

Following the developments in investigations and the handling of qualified information (related to special investigation techniques and national policies) involved this information is classified and only shared on a bilateral base with countries doing investigations together.

(b) national bodies: DEA, the Netherlands precursor control unit, BKA, Thai Narcotics Control Board, China narcotics Control Committee for changes they have instigated, trends they monitored, forecasts they have.

5. Has your Government any laws pertaining to precursor control?

Most of the IPSG member countries have enacted legislation governing precursor controls. If they are not available as agreed on in the international agreements, the national penal codes on drugs will nevertheless enable investigations. Knowledge of precursors unfortunately is not on par with existing laws. Examples of best practices originate from the Western countries. For law enforcement it remains that the biggest problem is cooperation and information exchange with the controlling agencies (i.e. licensing or authorization office, or the Customs and Excise).

Besides this, each country more or less has different (national) ministries involved when a country deals with precursors. Bringing this information on line/together already is a time-consuming activity. This delay can hinder effective follow-up.

Customs are able to exchange direct information throughout the world in order to be informed and carry out their controls in a timely and efficient manner. Controls, investigations and the respective services involved continue to be separate in most of the countries. This causes delays and a situation of conflicting priorities among the ministries involved.

Customs are not allowed to store nominal data. The police cannot access customs and other financial data. National regulations or the lack of knowledge therefore blocks the timely exchange of information (for all parties) and effective law enforcement investigations.

In spite of the difficulties mentioned above, compared to the situation in 1998-2000, considerable progress has been made.

8. Does control include a system of prior import/export authorization?

The system for import/export authorization is in place in most of the IPSG member countries but often not sufficiently mastered.

Following the investigations brought to our attention it was noted that false goods/substances were entered on the authorization forms and freight handling bills. Only the freight handling bills appeared to have been corrected in a much later (but too late to respond) phase.

Depending on the quality/training and the numbers of staff involved, procedures may or may not be handled efficiently.

The electronic PENs are working well provided the needed structure is set in place. The overall effectiveness will change when this system receives the appropriate structure in the countries, i.e. meaning that services will have direct access and integrated Internet systems.

The time frames mentioned in the usage of the forms are always restrictive and often as a result under pressure (receiving/handling/priorities).

Compared to the situation in 1998-2000 a lot of progress has been made.

10. Has your government working procedures for monitoring transactions of Precursors?

Only a few Western countries are currently following up on this topic to their full extent. This also is related to the availability of the contacts with the chemical and pharmaceutical industry.

From a practical point of view this takes a lot of investigative time from dedicated law enforcement bodies. It still ranks low among national investigative priorities.

A big difference with the period 1998-2000 is the usage and possibilities of the Internet.

The problem is that of the development of a global market both by licensed as well as unlicensed website holders. Ordering of goods can take place in every country in the world and will be shipped by parcel post, light freight and even combined container shipments (grouped haulage; mixed freight).

Handling and controlling this phenomenon causes new difficulties for the countries involved.

The private express delivery industry working under the business principle of JIT ("just in time deliveries") is aggressive in its lobbying of local and national governments citing delays caused by lengthy controls. This hinders effective and thorough controls.

Getting a national overview about the production and trade within chemical and pharmaceutical industry for the developing countries remains a difficulty; it will be exploited by criminal organizations.

Within the backtracking procedures packaging is taking a very important role. The United Nations codes used are helpful and can perhaps be improved.

Repackaging or camouflaging is a frequently used method both after or before the diversion of the precursors.

Compared to the situation in 1998-2000 progress has been made.

12. Has a code of conduct been established with the chemical ministry?

The countries are assisted by the guidelines provided by the UN. Depending which service is dealing as the national contact point (mostly customs) there will be a need for law enforcement to follow up.

The establishment of codes of conduct requires a dedicated capacity able to respond to the notifications and contact points within the industry.

The guidelines are successful and the latest UNODC version of the video training about how chemical industry can play a role in suppressing illicit drug manufacture is a very helpful and efficient tool used in different countries.

Compared to the situation in 1998-2000 progress has been made.

14. Has your Government taken measures to prevent trade in and diversion of materials and equipment for illicit drug production?

Only a few countries are presently ready to handle the trade and the diversion of materials and equipment used. A good example of cooperation between the police and customs can be given by the Philippines. This year (2006) hardware used in clandestine methamphetamine laboratories (originating from China) was seized on several occasions.

This example is given because the Philippines were confronted with the large-scale production of methamphetamines. After investing considerable efforts to combat it they also started monitoring the import and export of these materials. This was generated from the monitoring and they were thus able to detect the materials most often needed for the large-scale production of drugs. These overviews collected from the different countries could be put together and provided to customs worldwide for monitoring purposes.

The diversion of these materials is becoming more complicated because of the widening spread of clandestine synthetic drugs laboratories. Today more countries around the world are confronted with the production of synthetic drugs than in the past. In this early stage the country will not know which hardware or materials they have to look for.

Within the measures needed to be taken priorities, information exchange and management of staff rank among the most important. In many countries, although improvements have been noted, a close cooperation relationship between police and customs is still not sufficiently established.

Compared to the situation in 1998-2000 progress has been made.

16. Have the law enforcement authorities of your country put in place procedures to investigate diversion of chemicals?

In general it still remains a specific and qualified task/function to follow up and to investigate the diversion of chemicals. Depending on being confronted with the need for conducting investigations, procedures will become more or less developed.

One of the problems (on following up diversion) in this field can be seen within the parcel post service. This is a private industry with a special working relationship and clearance agreements with Customs. Depending on who is discovering the illicit sending of ATS or precursor materials (and depending on import/export or transit), law enforcement will be informed and asked to take over the case and open an investigation.

In this particular field the existing problems will only increase. Mostly the law enforcement working in the area of the airport, parcel transit hubs or distribution areas will be obliged to do a follow-up investigation. The amount of activities to be followed up from the partners involved is causing difficulties in the fields of capacity and budgeting.

Compared to the situation in 1998-2000 progress has been made. Pre-notifications, arrival and pre-arrival assessments are used more frequently. It is showing that authorities are trying to handle controls better. Within the African and Asian regions there is still a lot of work to be done.

Compared to the situation in 1998-2000 good progress has been made.

VI. Eradication of illicit drug crops and Alternative Development

The Prism task force is studying the production of safrole. Safrole originates from trees growing in various Asian areas.

This research might lead to new control mechanisms.

The outcomes and recommendations are foreseen at the end of this year (2006).

Interpol is not focusing on eradication programmes.

VII. Illicit manufacture, trafficking and abuse of ATS and their precursors

UNGASS goals:

- I. Devote particular attention to the emerging trends in the illicit manufacture, trafficking and consumption of synthetic drugs
- II. Establish or strengthen national legislation and programmes giving effect to the Action Plan against Illicit Manufacture, Trafficking and Abuse of ATS and their Precursors

CICAD/MEM, ASEAN, ACCORD, EMCDDA, INTERPOL, EUROPOL, WCO

An increased spreading of countries confronted with the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs is noticed.

African region

Last year it became clear that more countries in the African region were confronted with the involvement in the production of synthetic drugs.

To increase the information flow and a better safe-handling of production sites within this African region, the IPSP started a project on the establishment of a network on synthetic drugs and precursor materials (Project DRUM).

Asian region

The IPSP participates in various working groups dealing with these topics. Following these activities the Chinese government agreed to host a working meeting on the production of synthetic drugs and the handling of precursors. The outcome of this meeting should be a multilateral control followed by multilateral investigations (No project name yet).

Internet

Countries are able to conduct investigations of sales over the Internet. The IPSP started an initiative to monitor the Internet and the drugs related criminality (Project Drugs Net).
