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Illicit drug traffic and supply: world situation with regard to drug trafficking and action taken by subsidiary bodies of the Commission**World situation with regard to drug trafficking****Report of the Secretariat***Summary*

The present report provides an overview of the latest trends in illicit drug production and trafficking worldwide. The statistics and analysis in the report are based on the latest information available to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. In respect of seizure statistics, the report focuses on 2006 and 2007. With regard to illicit drug crop cultivation and illicit drug production, the report focuses on the period 2006-2008.

Cannabis continues to be by far the mostly widely produced, trafficked and consumed plant-based drug worldwide. Global seizures of cannabis resin increased significantly in 2007, in particular in Western and Central Europe; preliminary data also suggest a moderate increase in seizures of cannabis herb. The total area under cannabis cultivation in 2007 in Afghanistan was estimated to be comparable to that in Morocco.

The total area under opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan decreased by almost one fifth in 2008. Nonetheless, Afghanistan continued to account for the vast majority of the world's production of opium. Opium seizures continued to rise in 2007, driven mainly by seizures in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which also contributed significantly to a moderate increase in global heroin seizures.

* E/CN.7/2009/1.



Cultivation of coca bush and manufacture of cocaine continued to be concentrated in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia (in that order). While the total area under coca bush cultivation increased, the stable trend in manufacture of recent years was sustained into 2007. Data for 2007, while incomplete, suggested that such stability was reflected in global seizures of cocaine. Information on individual drug seizures confirmed the growing role of Africa as a transit area for cocaine trafficking.

Seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants worldwide appeared to stabilize in 2006, but in 2007 increased quantities of “ecstasy” were seized at the global level and increases in amphetamine seizures were recorded, at least in Western and Central Europe. It should be emphasized that seizure figures from some key States were unavailable at the time of preparation of the present report, especially with regard to seizures of amphetamine. Estimated global manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants remained largely unchanged in 2006.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report provides an overview of developments in the production of and trafficking in the main illicit drugs at the global and regional levels. Analysis is based on the latest information available to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
2. The report addresses the illicit cultivation of coca bush, opium poppy and cannabis and the illicit production of coca and opium for the years up to and including 2007. With regard to drug trafficking, the report focuses on seizure statistics for 2006 and 2007 (where available) and supplies an update on trafficking trends in opiates, cannabis, cocaine and amphetamine-type stimulants.
3. Information on illicit drug crop cultivation and illicit production of plant-based drugs was drawn from the latest illicit crop monitoring surveys published by UNODC. The primary sources of information on drug trafficking were the replies to part III (Illicit supply of drugs) of the annual reports questionnaire submitted by Governments for 2007 and previous years.
4. By the end of 2008, 107 Member States had submitted their replies to part II of the annual reports questionnaire for 2007. Other supplementary sources of information included reports on significant drug seizures, the *World Drug Report 2008*,¹ published by UNODC, and other reports received by UNODC or submitted to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and its subsidiary bodies (UNODC collated data from a total of 113 countries and territories for 2007).
5. In general, statistics on drug seizures offer valid, indirect indicators of trafficking trends. However, they should be treated with caution, as they also reflect different reporting practices and also depend on the level and effectiveness of law enforcement capacities. In addition, at the time of writing some key States had not completed the reporting process for 2007. Efforts were made to circumvent that problem when analysing the latest trends and to point out those cases where total seizures were likely to be affected substantially. In specific cases, the latest available data (relative to 2006) were provided instead.

II. Global trends in illicit drug crop cultivation and the production of plant-based drugs, 2006-2008

A. Cannabis

6. Unlike other illicit crops, such as coca leaf and opium poppy, cannabis lends itself to diverse cultivation methods since it can easily be grown in a variety of environments. That makes it difficult to assess the extent of its cultivation and production. However, UNODC estimates that cannabis continues to dominate the world's illicit drug markets in terms of the pervasiveness of cultivation, the volume of production and the number of consumers. Based on data relative to the period 1996-2006, UNODC estimated that cannabis was produced in 172 countries and territories.

¹ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XI.11.

7. The total area under cannabis cultivation in 2006 was estimated at 470,000-600,000 hectares (ha), but that does not take into account cannabis growing wild. It appears that the total area under cannabis cultivation in Afghanistan is approaching that of Morocco. In the latest cannabis survey conducted in Morocco,² the total area under cannabis cultivation in that country was estimated at 72,500 ha in 2005, down from 134,000 ha in 2003. Morocco continued to estimate the area under cannabis cultivation at that level in 2006 and 2007. In Afghanistan, the area under cannabis cultivation increased from 30,000 ha in 2005³ to 50,000 ha in 2006 and 70,000 ha in 2007.⁴ The figure for 2007 was equivalent to 36 per cent of the area under opium poppy cultivation in that country during that year.

8. According to UNODC estimates, global cannabis herb production peaked in 2004, at 45,000 tons, and then decreased in 2005, to 42,000 tons, and then again in 2006, to 41,400 tons. In 2006, the Americas accounted for an estimated 55 per cent of global cannabis herb production, followed by Africa (22 per cent), Asia (16 per cent), Europe (6 per cent) and Oceania (1 per cent).

9. It was estimated that, in 2006, 31 per cent of global cannabis herb production (12,900 tons) took place in North America. Production in Mexico (7,400 tons) was the largest worldwide, while production in the United States of America was estimated at 4,700 tons. South America accounted for 24 per cent of global production of cannabis herb (10,000 tons, of which 5,900 tons were produced in Paraguay). In 2007, Mexico reported the eradication of 21,000 ha of cannabis, the largest area of eradicated cannabis reported worldwide for that year.

10. In Africa, cannabis herb production in 2006 was estimated at 8,900 tons, of which 2,500 tons were produced in South Africa. However, cannabis cultivation was thought to be widespread throughout the region, with notable quantities being produced in Malawi, Zambia, Swaziland, Nigeria and Ghana (in decreasing order).

11. Cannabis herb production in Asia was estimated at around 6,700 tons in 2006. In South Asia, significant production occurred in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, while Indonesia and Thailand were the most important producers in East and South-East Asia.

12. Cannabis resin production was far more geographically concentrated than cannabis herb production. Estimates of global cannabis resin production indicated a decrease to 6,000 tons in 2006 from 6,600 tons in 2005 and 7,500 tons in 2004. The decline was largely due to decreased production in Morocco. However, Morocco continued to be the country with the world's largest cannabis resin production in 2006, supplying the illicit markets of Western Europe and North Africa. Afghanistan was the second-largest producer of cannabis resin.

² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Morocco: Cannabis Survey 2005, Executive Summary* (January 2007).

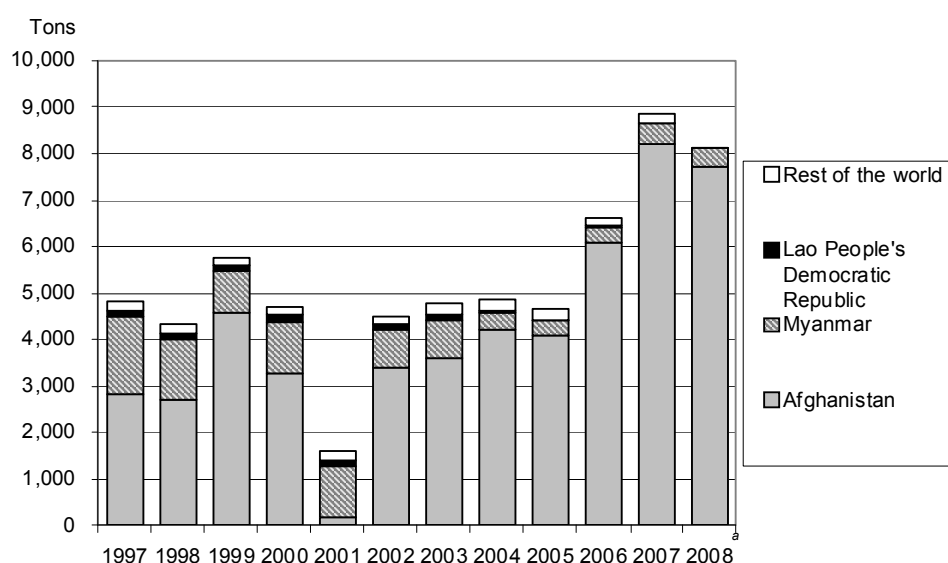
³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Afghanistan: Opium Survey 2006* (November 2006).

⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Afghanistan: Opium Survey 2007* (October 2007).

B. Opium

13. There was significant growth in the production of opiates over the period 2001-2008, driven mainly by production in Afghanistan. Globally, the total area under illicit opium poppy cultivation in 2007 was approximately 235,700 ha, an increase of 17 per cent compared with 2006 (201,000 ha). Global illicit opium production in 2007 grew faster, rising to an estimated 8,870 tons, an increase of one third compared with the estimated 6,610 tons of opium produced in 2006. Preliminary estimates indicate that the total area under cultivation declined to about 200,000 ha in 2008 (essentially the same level as in 2006). However, higher yields helped sustain global production at about 8,300 tons, representing a decrease of only 6 per cent compared with the level in 2007, still significantly above the levels in 2005 and 2006 (see figure I).

Figure I
Global illicit opium production, 1997-2008



^a Data for 2008 were only available for Afghanistan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar.

14. In 2005, 2006 and 2007, illicit opium production became more concentrated in Afghanistan, which accounted for more than 92 per cent of global opium production in 2007 and, according to preliminary estimates, also in 2008. At the beginning of the 1990s, Afghanistan accounted for about 40 per cent of global opium production.

15. The total area under opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan declined to 157,000 ha in 2008 from 193,000 ha in 2007 (a decrease of 19 per cent).⁵ That decline was attributed to successful counter-narcotics efforts in the northern and eastern provinces, as well as to unfavourable weather conditions (for example, extreme drought) leading to crop failure, especially in certain areas. The decline

⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Afghanistan: Opium Survey 2008, Executive Summary* (August 2008).

followed increases for two consecutive years, which saw cultivation rise by 86 per cent between 2005 (104,000 ha) and 2007.

16. The number of poppy-free provinces⁶ in Afghanistan increased from 13 in 2007 to 18 in 2008. Notably, the province of Nangarhar became poppy-free. Opium poppy cultivation was concentrated in seven provinces in the south and west of Afghanistan, namely Helmand, Farah, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Nimroz, Zabul and Daykundi. The area under opium poppy cultivation in Helmand, which alone accounted for 103,590 ha in 2008 (two thirds of the total in Afghanistan), was essentially stable compared with the level in 2007 (102,770 ha).

17. In spite of the notable decrease in the total area under opium poppy cultivation, production of opium in Afghanistan decreased by only 6 per cent, from 8,200 tons in 2007 to 7,700 tons in 2008. The average opium yield rose from 42.5 kg per hectare in 2007 to 48.8 kg per hectare in 2008, due to a shift in cultivation from rain-fed land to well irrigated land in the south.

18. In South-East Asia, opium poppy cultivation has traditionally taken place mainly in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. In those countries, opium poppy tends to be cultivated on steep hills with poor soil and no irrigation facilities, resulting in lower yields than can be achieved in Afghanistan. Thailand's crop monitoring system indicates that negligible amounts of opium poppy have been cultivated in the country for some years. Eradication data from the Government of Viet Nam indicates that opium poppy cultivation is also negligible in that country.

19. In Myanmar, opium poppy cultivation decreased from 163,000 ha in 1996 to 21,500 ha in 2006; it then increased significantly to 27,700 ha in 2007 and again, albeit only slightly, to 28,500 ha in 2008 (the latter increase is statistically insignificant). Opium poppy was reported to be cultivated in Shan, Kachin and Kayah States, in particular in southern Shan State, where double-cropping, irrigation and fertilization resulted in high yields. Opium production in Myanmar in 2008 was estimated at 410 tons, below the level in 2007 (460 tons) but still significantly above the low levels of 2005 and 2006 (the lowest since 1990).

20. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, opium poppy cultivation decreased from 26,800 ha in 1998 to 1,500 ha in 2007 and remained essentially stable in 2008 (1,600 ha). Opium poppy cultivation was confirmed in six of the country's provinces in 2008, but was concentrated mainly in the provinces of Phongsaly and Houaphanh. Opium production declined to 9.0 tons by 2007 and then remained essentially stable at 9.6 tons in 2008.

21. Although smaller quantities of heroin originating in Asia were beginning to find their way to the illicit market in North America, illicit opiates in the Americas continued to be derived primarily from opium poppy cultivation within the same region. The most significant levels of cultivation in the Americas were found in Colombia and Mexico, although those in Colombia had declined significantly since 1998. However, opium poppy cultivation levels in the Americas were low in comparison with those in South-West Asia and South-East Asia.

⁶ A province is defined as "poppy free" when the estimated area under opium poppy cultivation is less than 100 ha.

C. Coca

22. Overall, the global cocaine market continued to be stable in 2007. Although coca bush cultivation remained concentrated in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, the total area estimated to be under coca bush cultivation in those three countries combined rose by 16 per cent in 2007, to 181,600 ha. Of that total, 54.5 per cent was in Colombia, 29.6 per cent in Peru and 15.9 per cent in Bolivia.

23. The increase in global coca bush cultivation was mainly due to a 27 per cent increase in Colombia, where the estimated area under cultivation rose from 78,000 ha in 2006 to 99,000 ha in 2007. The level in 2007 was, however, still less than two thirds of the levels in 1999 and 2000. Smaller increases were registered in Peru (from 51,400 ha in 2006 to 53,700 ha in 2007, equal to an increase of 4 per cent) and Bolivia (from 27,500 ha to 28,900 ha, an increase of 5 per cent).

24. The increase in the estimated area of coca bush cultivation followed a period of stability between 2004 and 2006, when the total area stayed within 4 per cent of the level of 2003 (153,800 ha). The total area in 2007 is however still 14 per cent below the level of 1990 (211,700 ha).

25. Although the estimated area under coca bush cultivation increased, the estimated amount of cocaine manufactured in 2007 remained relatively stable since 2004, when 1,008 tons of that drug were estimated to have been manufactured. The total amount of cocaine manufactured in 2007 was estimated at 994 tons: 600 tons in Colombia, 290 tons in Peru and 104 tons in Bolivia.

26. In Colombia, the Pacific region had the largest areas under cultivation in 2007 (25,960 ha), followed by the Putumayo-Caquetá (21,130 ha), central (20,950 ha) and Meta-Guaviare (19,690 ha) regions. Together, they represented 89 per cent of the total area under coca bush cultivation in Colombia. The largest increase occurred in the central region, where estimated yields declined, and in the Pacific region, where yields were relatively low. On the other hand, Meta-Guaviare, the area with the highest yields, registered a slight decline in the area under coca bush cultivation. These factors contributed to keeping the manufacture of cocaine in 2007 at essentially the same level as in 2006.

27. In Peru, the areas most affected by coca bush cultivation in 2007 continued to be Alto Huallaga (17,200 ha), Apurímac-Ene (16,000 ha) and La Convención-Lares (12,900 ha), which together accounted for 86 per cent of cultivation. However, significant increases were registered in other areas, in particular Palcazú-Pichís-Pachitea (from 426 ha in 2006 to 1,147 ha in 2007) and Inambari-Tambopata (from 2,366 ha in 2006 to 2,864 ha in 2007). In Bolivia, 69 per cent of the area under coca bush cultivation (19,800 ha) in 2007 was to be found in the Yungas of La Paz and 30 per cent (8,800 ha) in Chapare.

28. Governments reported the destruction of 3,173 clandestine coca-processing laboratories in 2007, down from 6,390 in 2006. Over 99 per cent of all dismantled clandestine laboratories continued to be found in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia (in that order), supporting the thesis that virtually the whole cocaine production chain, from coca paste to cocaine base and finally cocaine hydrochloride, was located close to the areas under coca bush cultivation in the three countries. However, while the number of dismantled laboratories in Bolivia fell drastically (only 7 in 2007,

compared with 4,075 in 2006), a sharp increase was registered in Peru (from 11 in 2006 to 666 in 2007).

29. There were very few reports of coca-processing laboratories detected in countries other than Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. In 2007, 18 laboratories were detected in Spain, 5 in Chile, 3 in the United States, 1 in Ecuador, 1 in Mexico and 1 in South Africa.

III. Trends in drug trafficking up to 2007

30. The table below shows the quantities of the major drug types seized globally in 2006 and 2007. It is important to note that some States had not submitted their response to part III of the annual reports questionnaire for 2007 at the time of writing. While the totals in the table are based on all reported seizures, the trend is based on a comparison of totals computed for a restricted set of countries and territories, namely those for which both 2006 and 2007 data were available (102 countries and territories). While the trend appeared to be on the decline in the case of morphine and stable in the case of cocaine, increases were registered in all the other major drug types.

Table
Global drug seizures, 2006 and 2007

Drug type	Reported seizures (kilograms)		Trend ^a
	2006	2007 ^b	
Cannabis			
Cannabis herb	5 234 954	5 277 123	Increase
Cannabis resin	999 136	1 246 784	Increase
Opiates			
Opium (raw and prepared)	383 857	506 487	Increase
Morphine	46 391	27 301	Decrease
Heroin	56 737	63 207	Increase
Cocaine			
Cocaine (base and salts)	704 783	617 015	Stable ^c
Amphetamine-type stimulants			
Amphetamines	42 492	33 937	Increase
“Ecstasy” (MDA, MDEA, MDMA)	4 874	5 886	Increase

Note: MDA=methylenedioxyamphetamine
MDEA=3,4-methylenedioxyethylamphetamine
MDMA=methylenedioxymethamphetamine.

^a Trend based on seizure totals only for 102 countries and territories for which data were available for both 2006 and 2007.

^b Data for 2007 were incomplete at the time of writing; totals are likely to change.

^c The term “stable” refers to a variation of less than 10 per cent.

A. Cannabis

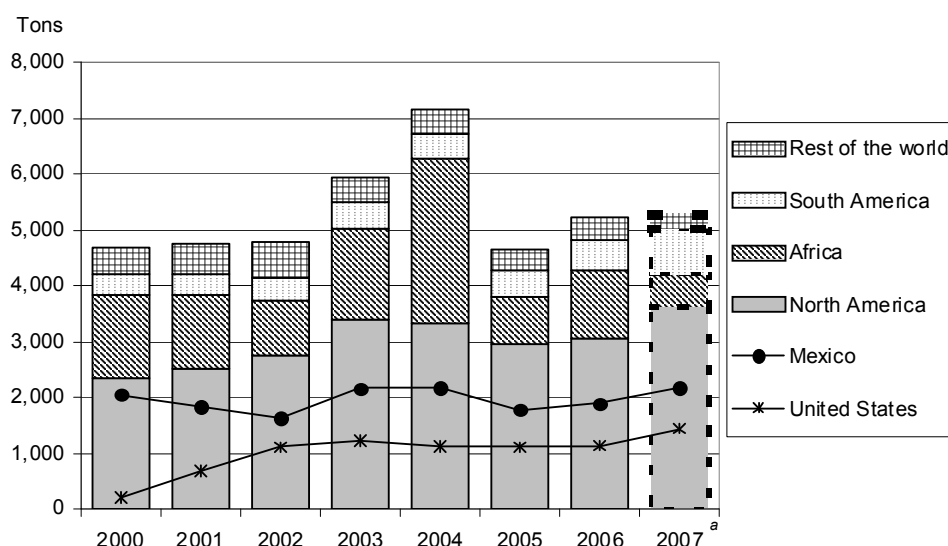
31. Cannabis products⁷ remained the most widely trafficked drugs worldwide, accounting for approximately one half of global drug seizures. Of the 152 countries and territories for which UNODC had collated records of drug seizures in 2006, 142 had seized cannabis products. In 2007, cannabis herb continued to be the most frequently seized drug in Africa, the Americas and Oceania, while cannabis resin was the most frequently seized drug in Europe, followed by cannabis herb.

1. Cannabis herb

32. Global cannabis herb seizures peaked at 7,152 tons in 2004, but stayed significantly below that level in 2005 and 2006 (see figure II). The preliminary total for 2007 amounted to 5,277 tons, only slightly higher than the total for 2006, which amounted to 5,235 tons. However, several States with significant cannabis herb seizures in 2006 had not submitted seizure data for 2007 at the time of writing. A comparison of 2006 and 2007 totals over countries and territories for which data were available for both years indicated a moderately increasing trend.

Figure II

Breakdown of cannabis herb seizures worldwide, 2000-2007



^a Preliminary totals, subject to significant revision.

33. With the single exception of 2004, North America consistently accounted for more than half of global annual cannabis herb seizures over the period 2001-2007 and for 56 per cent of the entire quantity seized over the period 2000-2007. Seizures in that subregion rose by 19 per cent from 3,045 tons in 2006 to 3,624 tons in 2007. Starting in 2001, the largest national annual cannabis herb seizures worldwide were reported by Mexico, followed by the United States. Starting in 2005, cannabis herb

⁷ The term "cannabis products" as used here refers to cannabis herb, cannabis resin and cannabis oil.

seizures in each of those two countries were three times larger than the levels reported in any other country.

34. In Mexico, cannabis herb seizures increased by 15 per cent, from 1,893 tons in 2006 to 2,177 tons in 2007, essentially returning to the high levels of 2003 and 2004. That was due to an increase in the average size of seizures rather than in the number of seizures, which fell from 13,563 in 2006 to 11,977 in 2007. The average size of seizures increased by 30 per cent. In 2007, Mexico also reported seizing 148,000 cannabis plants in 50,000 separate cases.

35. In the United States, the amount of cannabis herb seized was essentially stable in 2006 (1,139 tons) and rose by 27 per cent in 2007 (1,447 tons), roughly following the same trend as seizure quantities in Mexico. However, in contrast with Mexico, in the United States the increase was due more to the number of seizures, which rose by 16 per cent, than to the average size of each seizure, which rose by 9 per cent. In both 2006 and 2007, more than twice the quantity of cannabis herb was seized per seizure (on average) in Mexico than in the United States.

36. Cannabis herb interdiction in Africa peaked at 2,959 tons in 2004, driving the increase in the world total, but in 2005 and 2006 fell back to levels comparable to those before 2003 (see figure II). Nevertheless, the figure for 2006 (1,217 tons) represented an increase of 40 per cent over the previous year, accounting for almost one quarter of the world total in 2006. In 2007, seizures reported by African countries totalled 590 tons, but some countries with significant seizures in 2006 had not submitted seizure data for 2007 at the time of writing.

37. South Africa, which reported seizing the most cannabis herb than any country in Africa in 2005 and 2006, registered a sharp drop, from 359 tons in 2006 to 67 tons in 2007. Cannabis herb seizures in Nigeria amounted to 210 tons in 2007, a level essentially the same as that registered in 2006 (192 tons). Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania accounted for the second and third largest levels of cannabis herb seizures in Africa in 2006, with 272 tons and 225 tons respectively. In Morocco, a country traditionally associated with cannabis resin, seizures of cannabis herb more than quadrupled, from 46 tons in 2006 to 209 tons in 2007. Kenya also registered a notable increase in 2007, reporting seizures of 44 tons (up from 10 tons in 2005, the latest year prior to 2007 for which data for that country were available).

38. South American countries together accounted for 11 per cent of global cannabis herb seizures in 2006. In gross quantities, that amounted to 556 tons, up from 447 tons in 2005. The increasing trend appeared to be sustained into 2007, with the preliminary total for 2007 standing at 815 tons at the time of writing. Thus, seizures in that subregion rose by almost one quarter in 2006 and almost one half in 2007.

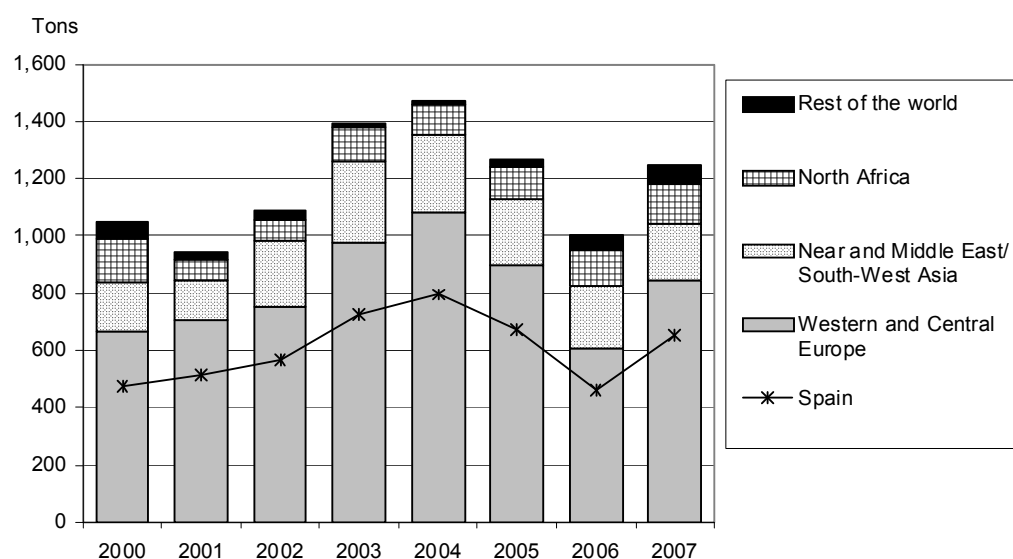
2. Cannabis resin

39. Global cannabis resin seizures peaked at 1,471 tons in 2004 but fell to 999 tons in 2006. Despite the fact that 2007 data for a few countries were unavailable, the known total for 2007 (1,247 tons) already exceeded that for 2006 by 25 per cent at the time of writing. Cannabis resin seizures continued to be concentrated in the subregions of Western and Central Europe, the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia and North Africa (see figure III).

40. From 1996 onwards, the subregion of Western and Central Europe consistently accounted for more than half of annual global cannabis resin seizures. Seizures in that subregion rose to 846 tons in 2007, from 608 tons in 2006. During the period 2000-2007, Spain in particular consistently accounted for more than 70 per cent of annual cannabis resin seizures in Western and Central Europe, setting the trend for the entire subregion (see figure III). While in 2006, 459 tons of cannabis resin were seized in Spain, in 2007 that figure rose to 654 tons. Belgium registered a record high level of seizures in 2007 (59 tons), while in Portugal seizures reached the highest level since 1993 (43 tons).

Figure III

Breakdown of cannabis resin seizures worldwide, 2000-2007



41. Every year from 1998 to 2007, Spanish authorities reported, through the replies to the annual reports questionnaire, the largest annual cannabis resin seizures worldwide. Over the period 2000-2007, Spanish authorities also reported having carried out, on average, more than 1,000 individual drug seizures per year, of which 53 per cent involved seizures of cannabis resin (in 2007, the figure was 43 per cent). Morocco was the only other country frequently cited as the point of origin of cannabis resin, while France was the most frequently cited destination for that drug type. In 2007, other countries frequently mentioned as destinations were the Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal and Italy (in that order).

42. In the subregion of the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia, cannabis resin seizures in 2007 amounted to 196 tons, almost the same level as in 2006 (217 tons). Pakistan continued to report the largest seizures in the subregion (115 tons in 2006 and 110 tons in 2007). Preliminary data indicated that seizures in Afghanistan had more than doubled since the previous year, increasing from 37 tons in 2006 to 84 tons in 2007. Moreover, several sources referred to a single record seizure, effected by Afghan authorities, of 236.8 tons of cannabis resin in 2008.

43. In North Africa, preliminary figures indicate that 140 tons of cannabis resin were seized in 2007, which represents an increase over the 122 tons seized in that subregion in 2006. The main reason for the increase was the seizure in Morocco of 118 tons of cannabis resin in 2007, up from 88 tons in 2006.

44. In 2007, a remarkable spike in cannabis resin seizures was registered in Uzbekistan, where seizures amounted to 53 tons, in contrast with an average of 57 kg over the period 2000-2006 and a particularly low total of 5.8 kg in 2006.

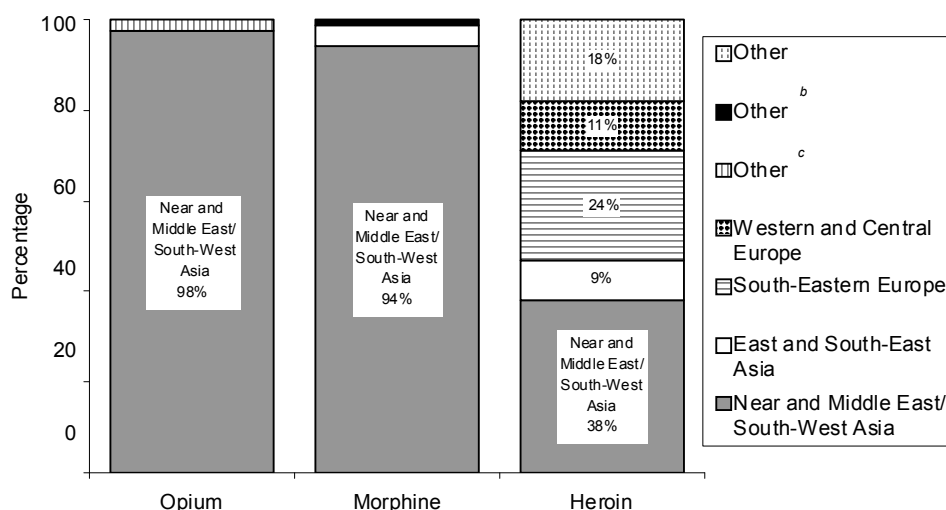
B. Opiates

45. Trafficking in opiates continues along three major routes connecting three major production centres with three distinct markets. One route goes from Afghanistan, the world's largest opium producer, to neighbouring countries in South, South-West and Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Europe. A second route goes from Myanmar and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to neighbouring countries in South-East Asia, notably China, and to countries in Oceania. A third route goes from Latin America to North America.

46. Most global opium and morphine seizures take place in the countries neighbouring Afghanistan. Heroin seizures are less geographically concentrated (see figure IV). UNODC estimates suggest that most opiates leave Afghanistan through the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and countries in Central Asia. In addition to the first trafficking route mentioned above, new distribution patterns are developing whereby Afghanistan is also supplying the market in China via Pakistan and Central Asia, partially offsetting the decline in heroin from Myanmar entering China.

Figure IV

Breakdown of opiate seizures worldwide, 2007^a
(Percentage)



^a Some of the proportions for specified regions were likely to decrease slightly as data from other regions became available.

^b Including Western and Central Europe and South-Eastern Europe.

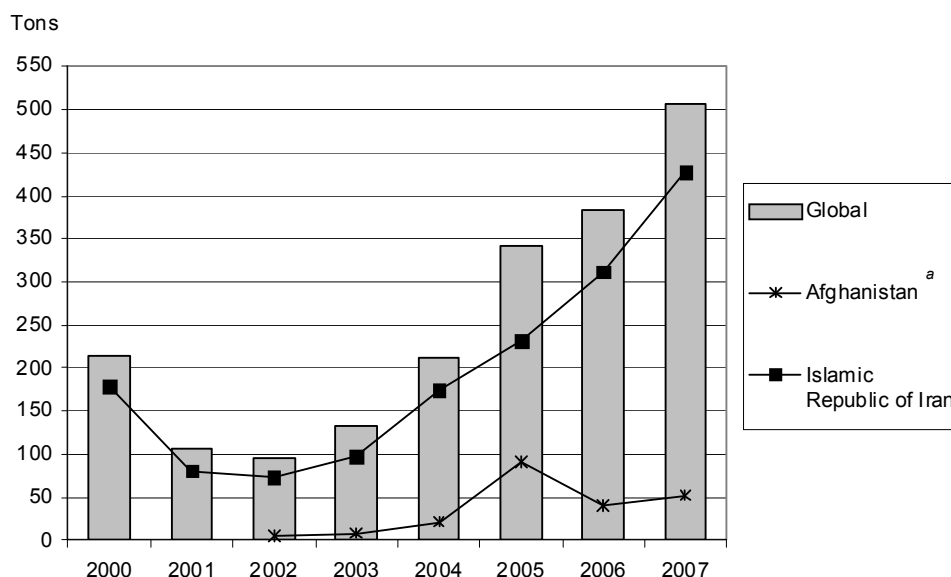
^c Including Western and Central Europe, South-Eastern Europe and East and South-East Asia.

1. Opium

47. Global opium seizures rose steadily, from 96 tons in 2002 to 506 tons in 2007, a fivefold increase over a period of five years. That represented an average year-on-year increase of 40 per cent for five consecutive years. Opium seizures in 2007 were concentrated in Afghanistan and Iran (Islamic Republic of).⁸ Starting in 2004, those two countries consistently accounted for more than 90 per cent of annual global opium seizures (see figure V).

Figure V

Principal opium seizures worldwide, 2000-2007



^a Data for Afghanistan for 2007 are from the UNODC Country Office in Afghanistan. Data from the annual reports questionnaire were not available at the time of preparing the present report.

48. Between 1996 and 2007, the Islamic Republic of Iran accounted for more than two thirds of annual global opium seizures. For five consecutive years, increasing quantities of opium were seized in the country (from 73 tons in 2002 to 427 tons in 2007), reflecting a global trend. The figure for the Islamic Republic of Iran for 2007 exceeded the global total for 2006 (384 tons).

49. Opium seizures in Afghanistan rose sharply starting in 2002, from 5.6 tons to 91 tons in 2005, representing one quarter of global seizures. In 2006, opium seizures in Afghanistan did not continue to rise as they did in the Islamic Republic of Iran; instead, such seizures fell by more than one half to 41 tons. In 2007, seizures rose again, to 52 tons,⁸ but still stood significantly below the peak level of 2005.

50. Pakistan reported having seized 15.4 tons of opium in 2007. Although that amount is small compared with the size of the seizures reported for Afghanistan and Iran (Islamic Republic of), opium seizures in Pakistan increased significantly

⁸ Data on seizures in Afghanistan in 2007 are preliminary and are based on information from the UNODC Country Office in Afghanistan.

over the previous three years. The other countries reporting opium seizures exceeding 2 tons in 2007 were Tajikistan (2.5 tons, up from 1.4 tons in 2006) and Turkmenistan (2.3 tons).

51. Opium seizures in East and South-East Asia, which had reached 10 per cent of the global total in 2003 (13.4 tons), stayed below 3 per cent of the global total between 2003 and 2007, despite the fact that Myanmar registered a sharp increase in opium seizures in 2006 (8.5 tons). In 2007, opium seizures in Myanmar fell to 1.3 tons. The only other country worldwide reporting opium seizures exceeding 1 ton in 2007 was China (1.2 tons, down from 1.7 tons in 2006).

2. Morphine

52. Global morphine seizures fell by 41 per cent, from 46 tons in 2006 to 27 tons in 2007. For the fifth consecutive year, the largest and second largest amounts of morphine seized worldwide were reported by Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran respectively. Those two countries together accounted for more than three quarters of global annual morphine seizures, suggesting that important amounts of heroin were produced outside Afghanistan, as morphine does not have a large user base.

53. The decline in global morphine seizures in 2007 was mainly due to a sharp drop in seizures reported by Pakistan, where seizures fell from 33 tons in 2006 to 11 tons in 2007, representing the lowest level since 2002. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, morphine seizures amounted to 9.7 tons, essentially the level of 2006, when 10.6 tons of morphine were seized.

54. According to preliminary data, seizures in Afghanistan rose sharply from 938 kg in 2006 to 5 tons in 2007.⁸ That represented almost one fifth of global seizures for 2007 and the first time morphine seizures in Afghanistan exceeded 2 tons. Large quantities of morphine were also seized in Myanmar: 1.4 tons in 2006 and 1.1 tons in 2007, quantities more than nine times greater than the average annual total for the entire subregion of East and South-East Asia over the period 1999-2005.

3. Heroin

55. Following two years in which the level of global heroin seizures remained stable, the amount of heroin seized globally rose from 56.7 tons in 2006 to 63.2 tons in 2007. That represented an increase of 11 per cent, but the final total for 2007 might be even higher. Significant increases in heroin seizures occurred in the subregions of the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia, South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and North America, while a significant decline was registered in the subregion of East and South-East Asia.

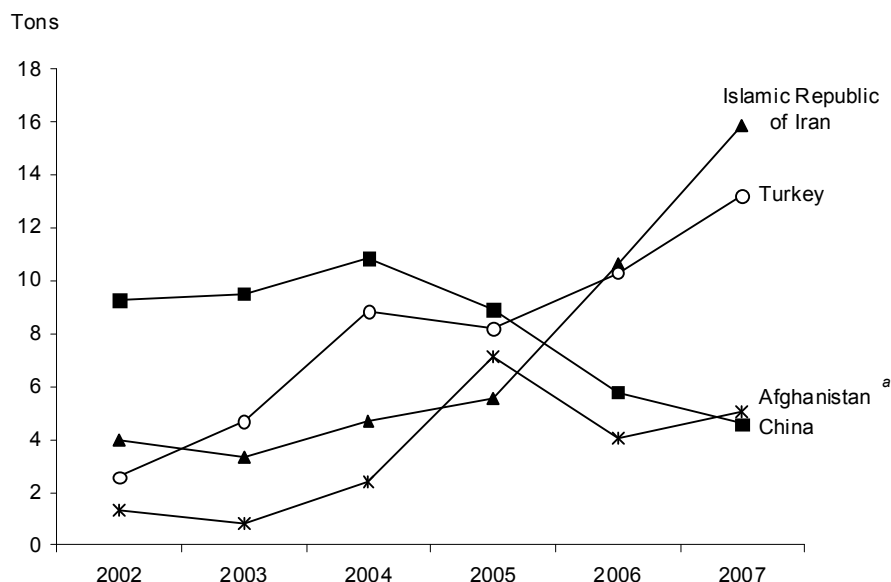
56. Although heroin seizures are less geographically concentrated than seizures of opium and morphine, 2007 was the third consecutive year in which four countries (the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan and China (in that order)) accounted for more than half of annual global heroin seizures (see figure VI).

57. Heroin seizures in the subregion of the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia grew steadily over the period 2004-2007, measured both in proportions (from 18 per cent in 2004 to 38 per cent in 2007) and in quantities (from 10.9 tons in 2004

to 24.1 tons in 2007). That was mainly due to increased levels of interdiction in Afghanistan and Iran (Islamic Republic of). Heroin seizures in Pakistan, while substantial, registered a moderate decrease over the period 2004-2007.

Figure VI

Principal heroin seizures worldwide, 2002-2007



^a Data for Afghanistan for 2007 are from the UNODC Country Office in Afghanistan. Data from the annual reports questionnaire were not available at the time of preparing the present report.

58. Heroin seizures in the Islamic Republic of Iran increased for the fourth consecutive year in 2007, amounting to 15.9 tons. That represented the highest level worldwide that year and more than four times the level registered four years earlier, reflecting a similar increase in opium seizures in the country over the same period. The purity of the heroin seized in the Islamic Republic of Iran also increased. Preliminary data for Afghanistan indicated heroin seizures amounting to 5 tons in 2007, representing an increase of one quarter over the level in 2006 (4 tons). In Pakistan, heroin seizures were essentially stable in 2007, amounting to 2.9 tons.

59. In South-Eastern Europe, heroin seizures increased by one quarter, from 12 tons in 2006 to 15 tons in 2007. That was mainly due to the seizure of 13.2 tons of heroin in Turkey, the second largest amount reported by a single country in 2007. In contrast, heroin seizures in East and South-East Asia fell to 5.6 tons in 2007 from 6.8 tons in 2006, mainly because of a decline in heroin seizures reported by China, where the amount of heroin seized fell for the third consecutive year (to 4.6 tons in 2007).

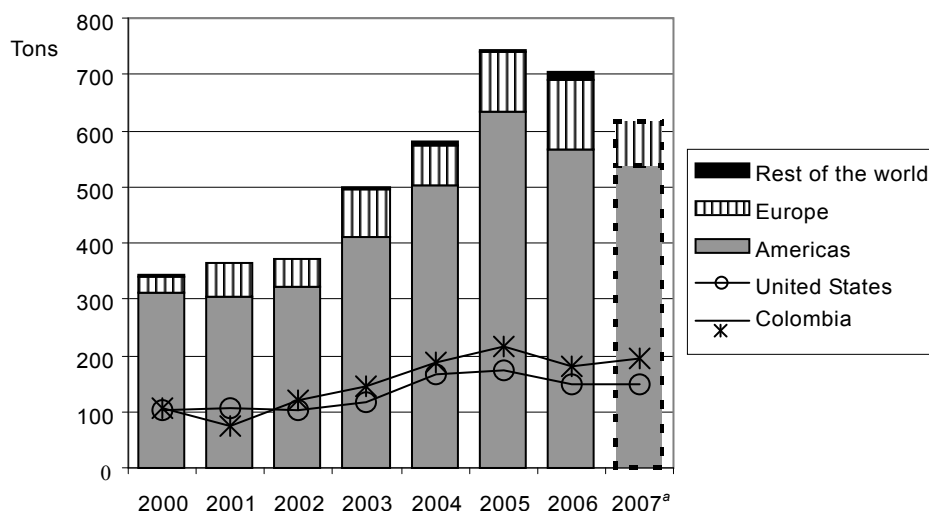
60. Heroin seizures in Western and Central Europe fell to 7.8 tons in 2005 and then remained stable, amounting to 7.1 tons in 2007. However, heroin seizures rose by 38 per cent in Eastern Europe from 2006 to 2007, when they amounted to 3.4 tons. Heroin seizures also rose in North America, by 41 per cent (to 2.8 tons in 2007), while seizures remained stable (at 3.7 tons) in the subregion of Central Asia and in the South Caucasus.

C. Cocaine

61. Following a significant increase over the period 2002-2005, global cocaine seizures stabilized in 2006. Reported seizures amounted to 617 tons in 2007, representing a decrease of 12 per cent over the level in 2006 (705 tons). Although 2007 seizure data for several countries are currently not available, seizure totals based only on countries for which data are available for both 2006 and 2007 indicate a stable trend (see figure VII).

Figure VII

Breakdown of cocaine seizures worldwide, 2000-2007



^a Preliminary totals, subject to significant revision.

62. The world's main cocaine trafficking routes continue to lead from the Andean countries, notably Colombia, to countries in North America, notably the United States. From 1980 (the earliest year for which records are available) onwards, the Americas consistently accounted for more than four fifths of annual global cocaine seizures. Starting in 1998, cocaine seizures in Colombia and the United States together accounted for more than half of the total cocaine seizures in the Americas (see figure VII).

63. Starting in 2002, Colombia consistently reported the largest annual cocaine seizures worldwide, accounting for 30 per cent of global cocaine seizures over the period 2002-2007. Cocaine seizures in that country rose steadily from 2001 (75 tons) to a record level in 2005 (215 tons) and then fell by 15 per cent in 2006 (to 181 tons) and rose again slightly in 2007 (to 195 tons).

64. South America, which continued to account for virtually all cocaine manufactured worldwide, also accounted for 45 per cent of global cocaine seizures in 2006. Apart from Colombia, countries that also reported large cocaine seizures in 2007 were the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (32 tons), Ecuador (25 tons), Bolivia (18 tons), Peru (14 tons) and Chile (11 tons). The International Narcotics Control Board also reported that, in 2006, 99 per cent of global seizures of

potassium permanganate (a substance used in the illicit manufacture of cocaine) were reported to have taken place in South American countries.⁹

65. Starting in 2002, the second largest annual cocaine seizures worldwide were consistently reported by the United States, the country with the largest illicit market for cocaine. Over the period 2002-2007, cocaine seizures in that country followed essentially the same trend as in Colombia (see figure VII). The United States accounted for almost one fourth (24 per cent) of global cocaine seizures over the same period.

66. Mexico was the main transit country for cocaine shipments to North America. Efforts by Mexican authorities to counter drug trafficking were apparently yielding significant results, as cocaine seizures in Mexico rose from 21.3 tons in 2006 to more than double that amount in 2007 (48.2 tons). In contrast, cocaine seizures by authorities in the United States along that country's border with Mexico declined by 20 per cent during the first half of 2007 compared with the first half of 2006. Mexico also reported that in both 2006 and 2007, 90 per cent of the cocaine seized had been en route to the United States.

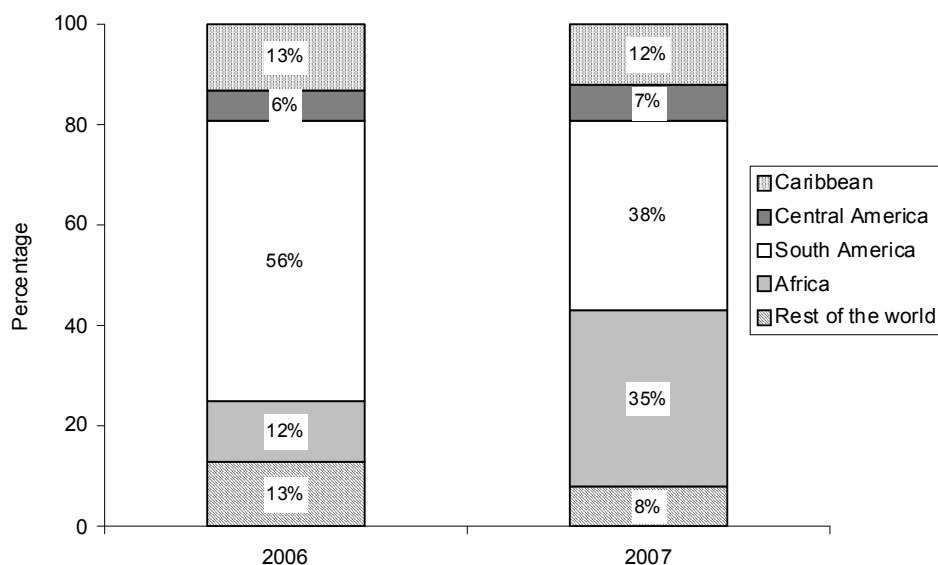
67. In Europe, following increases in 2005 and 2006, cocaine seizures fell by 38 per cent, from 121 tons in 2006 to 75 tons in 2007. Although the final total for 2007 may increase slightly, a comparison of 2006 and 2007 totals for European countries for which data for both years are currently available indicate a decrease of 39 per cent, confirming the downward trend. (Those countries accounted for 97 per cent of the European total in 2006.)

68. With the single exception of the Netherlands, the six European countries reporting the largest cocaine seizures in 2006 registered significant decreases in 2007. The largest decline, both in proportion and in quantity, was registered by Portugal, which reported cocaine seizures totalling 34.5 tons in 2006 and 7.4 tons in 2007 (approximately one fifth of the level recorded in 2006). Spain continued to account for the largest amount of cocaine seized in Europe, despite a drop of 24 per cent, from 49.7 tons in 2006 to 37.8 tons in 2007. Cocaine seizures in the Netherlands remained stable (10.6 tons in 2006 compared with 10.5 tons in 2007), while significant decreases over the period 2006-2007 were registered by Belgium (minus 37 per cent), France (minus 35 per cent) and Italy (minus 15 per cent).

69. An analysis of cocaine consignments seized in Europe based on information contained in the UNODC individual drug seizure Database confirmed the growing role of Africa as a transit point in smuggling cocaine from South America into Europe. In 2007, Latin America continued to be cited as the point of origin in more than half the seizures in which the origin of the seized cocaine was known, but specific African countries (or Africa as a whole) accounted for 35 per cent of cases in 2007 compared with 12 per cent of cases in 2006 (see figure VIII).

⁹ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2007 on the Implementation of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.XI.4).

Figure VIII
Reported origin of individual cocaine seizures in Europe, 2006 and 2007



70. Nonetheless, countries in Africa reported seizing only 1.7 tons of cocaine in 2007, equivalent to 0.3 per cent of the global total for that year. Although several African countries had not submitted their replies to part III of the annual reports questionnaire for 2007 at the time of writing, those that had submitted their replies accounted for 99 per cent of the African total in 2006.

71. The emerging cocaine trafficking routes leading from South America to Europe via Africa involve, most prominently, a number of West African countries. A UNODC report on drug trafficking in West Africa¹⁰ published in 2008 concluded that most of the cocaine from South America apparently arrived in Africa through one of two countries: either Guinea-Bissau or Ghana. Once in Africa, the drugs were then smuggled through other West African countries before being transported out of Africa by boat or on commercial flights.

D. Amphetamine-type stimulants

72. Global seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants¹¹ appeared to stabilize in 2006 but seizure data for 2007, while still incomplete, suggested a return to the increasing trend of previous years. In 2006, global seizures of substances in the amphetamine group (amphetamine, methamphetamine and unspecified

¹⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat in West Africa* (November 2008).

¹¹ Amphetamine-type stimulants, as defined by UNODC, consist of: (a) amphetamines (amphetamine, methamphetamine); (b) "ecstasy" (methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)) and related substances such as methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA) (the "'ecstasy'-group substances"); and (c) a number of other synthetic stimulants such as methcathinone, phentermine and fenetylline.

amphetamines) collectively amounted to 42.5 tons¹² (compared with 41.3 tons in 2005), while seizures of “ecstasy” amounted to 4.9 tons¹² (5.1 tons in 2005). In 2007, global “ecstasy” seizures increased to 5.9 tons, driven partly by the contribution of Western and Central Europe, which also registered a marked increase in amphetamine seizures. Although data from the annual reports questionnaire relating to the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia were limited, there was strong evidence that amphetamine trafficking in that subregion had continued to grow.¹³

73. Global production estimates remained largely unchanged between 2000 and 2006, with a mid-point estimate for the year 2006 of 494 tons. Production was concentrated in North America, East and South-East Asia, Europe, Oceania and Southern Africa.

74. In 2007, the number of detected clandestine laboratories manufacturing methamphetamine (on a small or large scale) in the United States continued to decline. Canada provided information about several clandestine laboratories manufacturing methamphetamine or “ecstasy” on a large scale and pointed out the prominent role played by organized criminal groups with links to Asia in the illicit trade in both types of drug.

75. The Russian Federation continued to report declining numbers of illicit laboratories manufacturing amphetamine in 2007, while the number of identified methamphetamine-manufacturing laboratories remained high in the Czech Republic. In Australia, the number of detected laboratories involved in the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants in general declined, but there was an increase in those manufacturing MDMA, a substance that used to originate almost exclusively in Western and Central Europe. China and Indonesia both registered an increase in numbers of clandestine laboratories involved in the manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants.

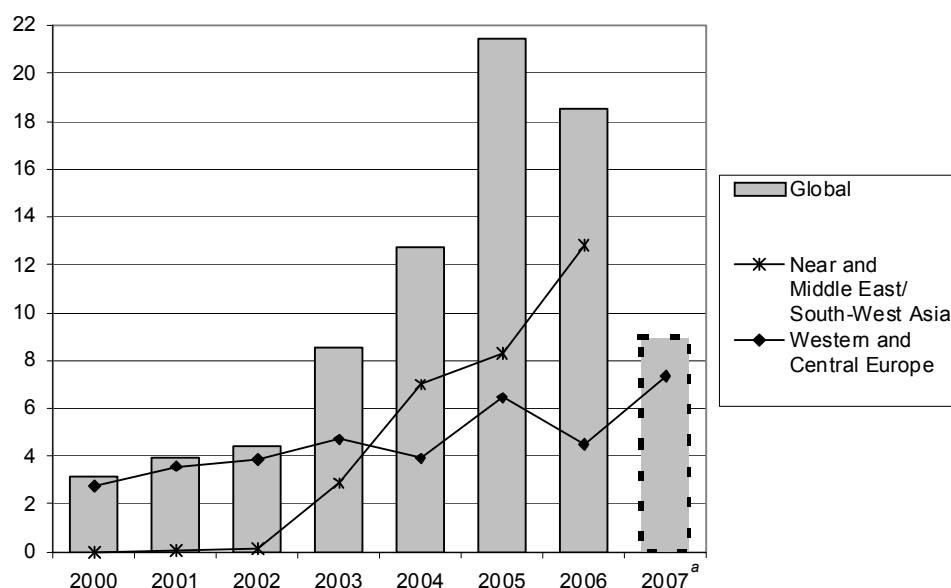
1. Amphetamine

76. Global seizures of amphetamine rose sharply over the period 2002-2005, reaching 21.4 tons in 2005. Such seizures then fell by 14 per cent in 2006 to 18.5 tons, mainly because of the contribution of Western and Central Europe, where the trend was more than reversed the following year, with seizures rising to a record level in 2007 (see figure IX). In the subregion of the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia, seizures continued to rise in 2006. Although some countries in that subregion had not submitted replies to the annual reports questionnaire for 2007 at the time of writing, data from the World Customs Organization suggest that the increasing trend in the subregion was sustained into 2007, so the global total for 2007 may be comparable to, or even exceed, the peak level of 2005.

¹² For the purposes of statistics on seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants, one tablet is assumed to contain 30 mg of active ingredient, with the exception of “ecstasy” tablets, which are assumed to contain 100 mg of active ingredient.

¹³ Including data from the World Customs Organization and data provided by Lebanese authorities at a meeting on Captagon smuggling to the Middle East region, held in Beirut on 17 and 18 December 2008.

Figure IX
Amphetamine seizures worldwide, 2000-2007
 (Ton equivalents)



^a The total for 2007 is preliminary and is likely to increase substantially.

77. From 2004 to 2006, amphetamine seizures in the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia exceeded those in Western and Central Europe, which had consistently accounted for more than 85 per cent of global annual amphetamine seizures prior to 2003. In the Near and Middle East/South-West Asia, the amphetamine seized was mainly in the form of counterfeit Captagon tablets. Such seizures totalled 12.8 tons in 2006. In 2007, according to data contained in the World Customs Organization's *Customs and Drugs Report 2007*, seizures in Saudi Arabia alone amounted to 13.9 tons; most of the Captagon continued to arrive in Saudi Arabia from the Syrian Arab Republic via Jordan, by road. Some consignments of Captagon seized in the subregion consisted of more than one million tablets.

78. In Western and Central Europe, amphetamine seizures rose from 4.5 tons in 2006 to 7.3 tons in 2007. Individual seizures were relatively small, averaging 178 grams (based only on seizure data from States that specified the number of seizures). The largest increase was registered by the Netherlands, which reported seizures of 2.8 tons in 2007, representing the highest level of amphetamine seizures ever reported by a European country and more than four times the level registered in that country in 2006 (634 kg). Such seizures also increased in Germany, from 712 kg in 2006 to 810 kg in 2007. Amphetamine seizures in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (England and Wales only) were estimated at 1.4 tons or more in 2006.

2. Methamphetamine

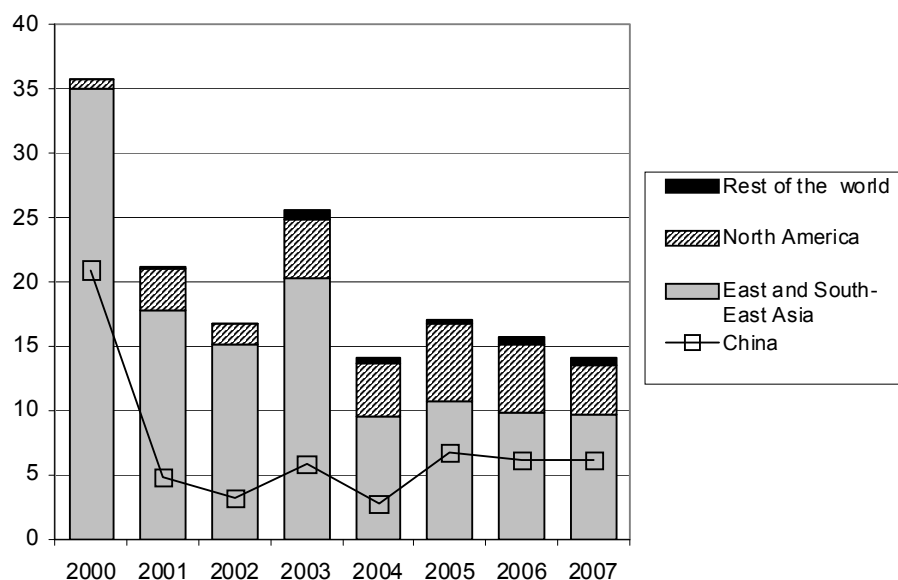
79. Global seizures of methamphetamine in 2006 amounted to 15.7 tons, essentially the same level as in 2005 and the preliminary total for 2007 stood at 14.1 tons. A comparison of the 2006 and 2007 totals for those countries for which

data are available for both years (accounting for 98 per cent of the global total in 2006) indicated that those levels continued into 2007 (see figure X). Methamphetamine seizures continued to be concentrated in East and South-Asia and in North America.

Figure X

Breakdown of methamphetamine seizures worldwide, 2000-2007

(Ton equivalents)



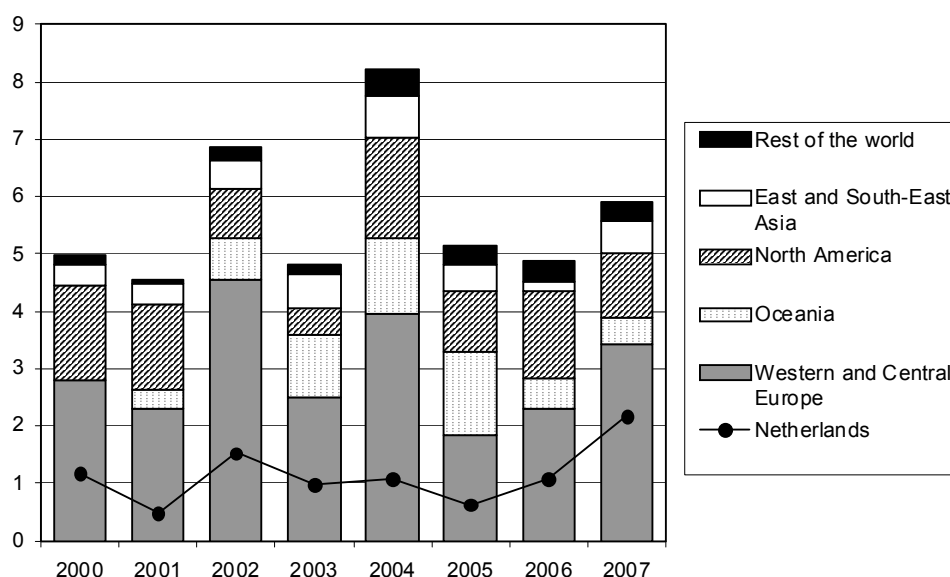
80. East and South-East Asia continued to account for most of the methamphetamine seized globally (9.8 tons in 2006 and 9.7 tons in 2007). For the third consecutive year, in 2007 China reported the largest seizures of methamphetamine worldwide (6.1 tons). In Thailand, methamphetamine seizures declined significantly in the period 2000-2006, but amounted to 1.3 tons in 2007. In Indonesia, the high levels of 2006 (1.2 tons) were sustained into 2007, while methamphetamine seizures in Japan more than doubled, rising from 146 kg in 2006 to 359 kg in 2007.

81. In North America, methamphetamine seizures dropped from 5.4 tons in 2006 to 3.8 tons in 2007. The decline was mainly attributable to a decrease of 39 per cent in the United States, where 2.8 tons were seized in 2007 (down from 4.5 tons in 2006). In Mexico, however, seizures rose from 753 kg in 2006 to 920 kg in 2007 and almost tripled in Canada, from 59 kg in 2006 to 171 kg in 2007.

3. "Ecstasy"-type substances

82. The preliminary total for global seizures of "ecstasy"-type substances in 2007 amounted to 5.9 tons in 2007, representing an increase of 21 per cent over the level in 2006. The increase was mainly due to the contributions of Western and Central Europe and, to a lesser extent, East and South-East Asia, while decreases were registered in North America and Oceania (see figure XI).

Figure XI
Breakdown of “ecstasy” seizures worldwide, 2000-2007
 (Ton equivalents)



83. In Western and Central Europe, “ecstasy” seizures increased for the second consecutive year, reaching 3.4 tons in 2007, representing more than half of global seizures that year. In the Netherlands, “ecstasy” seizures doubled from 1.1 tons in 2006 to 2.2 tons in 2007, the highest amount ever reported by a country for a single year. Seizures of “ecstasy” in the United Kingdom (England and Wales only) in 2006 were estimated at 658 kg.

84. Significant increases were also registered in East and South-East Asia, where “ecstasy” seizures rose to 556 kg in 2007 from 157 kg (an unusually low level) in 2006. In 2007, seizures amounted to 222 kg in China and reached a record level in Indonesia (150 kg) and Japan (129 kg).

85. A decreasing trend was also observed in North America. Seizures of “ecstasy” fell in Canada, Mexico and the United States from 1.5 tons in 2006 to 1.1 tons in 2007. The largest decrease was registered by Canada, where “ecstasy” seizures in 2007 dropped to less than one third of the level in 2006. The United States continued to account for the largest “ecstasy” seizures in the subregion, at just above 1 ton in 2007.

86. In Oceania, for three consecutive years (2004-2006) more than 99 per cent of “ecstasy” seizures took place in Australia, although a drop was registered in 2007 (from 536 kg in 2006 to 470 kg in 2007). On 8 August 2008, however, the Australian Federal Police reported “ecstasy” seizures in excess of 4 tons.¹⁴

¹⁴ That may have been the gross weight of the seizure rather than the amount of MDMA. Even so, it is an extraordinarily large quantity.

4. Precursor chemicals and pharmaceutical preparations used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants¹⁵

87. The International Narcotics Control Board reported seizures involving 6,720 kg of ephedrine and 739 kg of pseudoephedrine in 2006, effected by a total of 30 Governments. Evidence suggested that Africa had become a major area for the diversion of precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants (in particular ephedrine and pseudoephedrine) and that the diversion of pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, as well as of the raw materials, was also increasing in West Asia.

88. The Board reported that, in 2006, interdiction of 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone (3,4-MDP-2-P) declined, with only two countries reporting seizures, namely Canada (7,378 litres) and the Netherlands (105 litres). At the same time, seizures of piperonal, which can be used as a substitute for 3,4-MDP-2-P in the manufacture of MDMA, declined to 1 kg, a much lower quantity than that seized in the previous five years. Seizures of 1-phenyl-2-propanone (P-2-P) also declined in all regions except Europe.

89. The Board further reported that Australia, France and the United States had reported the seizure of 62 litres of safrole (a precursor for MDMA) in 2006, of which 50 litres had been seized in Australia alone. The safrole had originated in South Africa, Thailand and the United States.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

90. Illicit opium poppy cultivation and opium production in Afghanistan continue to be matters of serious concern. As most of the global illicit production of opium is occurring in that country, it is essential that international efforts to assist the Government of Afghanistan in rectifying the situation be strengthened and sustained for years to come.

91. In Afghanistan, the area under cannabis cultivation in 2007 was estimated to be more than one third of the area under opium poppy cultivation. Afghanistan was estimated to have accounted for almost one third of global production of cannabis resin in 2006 and the cultivation of cannabis plant is becoming as lucrative as that of opium poppy. The scale of the opium trade in Afghanistan should not detract attention from the growing problem of cannabis in that country.

92. The volume of cocaine being trafficked via the African continent, in particular to Western Europe, has increased. Many law enforcement agencies in Africa lack the necessary technical equipment, trained personnel and access to forensic services to effectively combat the problem. Further international support is required to assist African law enforcement agencies to develop the expertise to counter the serious and growing problem and to promote closer cooperation with their counterparts in other countries.

93. Trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants continues to be a matter of serious concern, in particular in Western and Central Europe and in the Near and

¹⁵ *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2007 ...*

Middle East/South-West Asia. In the latter subregion in particular, Governments should address Captagon trafficking in a coordinated manner with the assistance of international organizations such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the International Narcotics Control Board and the World Customs Organization.

94. Statistical analysis can be useful in developing an effective global strategy against drug trafficking. However, such an analysis is subject to the availability of quality data from Member States. Serious gaps in seizure data often arise precisely in those subregions which are at the forefront of the latest developments, such as the Near and Middle East and West Africa. It is recommended that Member States submit their comprehensive responses to the annual reports questionnaire in a regular and timely fashion.
