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**Open-ended intergovernmental expert
working group on supply reduction**

Vienna, 23-25 June 2008

**Results attained by Member States in achieving the goals
and targets set at the twentieth special session of the
General Assembly, the limitations and problems
encountered and the way forward: supply reduction**

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note was prepared pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 51/4, in which the Commission decided, inter alia, to establish open-ended intergovernmental expert working groups to work in a coordinated manner on the following topics, which correspond to the subjects of the action plans, declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session: (a) drug demand reduction; (b) supply reduction (manufacture and trafficking); (c) countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation; (d) international cooperation on the eradication of illicit drug crops and on alternative development; and (e) control of precursors and of amphetamine-type stimulants.

The open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on supply reduction will discuss results attained by Member States in achieving the goals and targets set at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, limitations and problems encountered and the way forward in the area of supply reduction. The conclusions and recommendations of the working group will be transmitted to intersessional meetings of the Commission to provide material on which to base the drafting of the outcome for the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission.



I. Introduction

1. At the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, Member States adopted the Action Plan against Illicit Manufacture, Trafficking and Abuse of Amphetamine-type Stimulants and Their Precursors (Assembly resolution S-20/4 A), which, with respect to the reduction of the supply of illicit drugs, called for the strengthening of capacities of law enforcement and judicial authorities to combat the criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking and to promote subregional, regional and international cooperation mechanisms to facilitate the sharing of information and technical expertise.

II. Significant and measurable results in supply reduction

2. Over the past 10 years, the responses to the biennial reports questionnaires showed that Member States had taken many broad and important steps towards implementing measures to reduce the supply of illicit drugs in all areas monitored as part of the follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. Progress had also been reflected in the reports of Member States participating in the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, namely, the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East and the meetings of heads of national drug law enforcement agencies.

3. The majority of States reported having adopted comprehensive national drug control strategies and established central coordination bodies to oversee their national responses. Judicial and law enforcement cooperation had advanced and was supported by national legal and procedural frameworks. In most States, for example, the laundering of the proceeds derived from drug trafficking had been made a criminal offence.

4. Considerable progress had also been made in reducing the illicit cultivation of coca bush, although the gains in reduced opium poppy cultivation in South-East Asia had been offset by increased cultivation in Afghanistan. The steady increase in national controls exercised over the chemical substances listed in Table I and Table II of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988¹ had curbed trafficking in those substances and led to major successes in international law enforcement cooperation. The specific action plans adopted by Member States to target the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants and undertaken in conjunction with their efforts in the area of precursor control had also been successful in reducing the illicit supply.

III. Limitations and problems

5. The foregoing notwithstanding, drug trafficking and associated illicit activities remain a global threat to the safety, stability and integrity of communities and Member States.

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1582, No. 27627.

6. Drug trafficking by sea remains the principal *modus operandi* and poses a significant threat to border control strategies.

7. The frequency and effectiveness of international controlled deliveries continue to be hampered by inadequate legislation, expertise, equipment and training. The response of law enforcement authorities is not keeping pace with the advances in the technology available to trafficking groups.

8. The links between drug trafficking and arms trafficking have not been thoroughly examined and, despite the continued resolve to increase cooperation with a view to stemming arms trafficking and achieving tangible results in this area, little has actually been done. Drug trafficking investigations continue to be carried out largely in isolation, without linkages being made between drugs and arms trafficking.

9. Corruption in many law enforcement agencies has not been effectively tackled, making it difficult to identify reliable partners for joint operations and the exchange of information.

10. Witness protection programmes in many States continue to be weak or are non-existent, rendering extremely difficult the investigation and prosecution of organized criminal networks engaged in drug trafficking and related organized criminal activities.

IV. The way forward: supply reduction

A. Drug trafficking by sea

11. With a view to addressing the problem of drug trafficking by sea, the open-ended intergovernmental export working group on supply reduction may wish to consider the following measures: further strengthen operational responses and countermeasures to maritime trafficking of illicit drugs through the establishment of well-resourced coordination mechanisms with procedures agreed upon at the regional and international levels to monitor the movement of vessels and small craft; develop intelligence through the gathering and exchange of information; provide support for operational requirements to respond to identified national and foreign-flagged vessels of interest, and introduce proactive strategies to improve inter-agency cooperation, both domestically and internationally, to bring the collective resources of State authorities together to combat drug trafficking.

12. The following measure may also be of interest: ensure that commercial port operations are supported by drug law enforcement authorities with adequate resources, equipment, training and legal powers to effectively enable the screening, evaluation and examining of commercial freight and sea containers.

B. Challenges in the areas of cooperation, coordination and operations

13. To address the challenges in the areas of cooperation, coordination and operations, the working group may wish to consider the following measures:

implement and strengthen legislation allowing for the application of special investigative techniques and develop the skills of drug law enforcement authorities in the use and application of those techniques to identify and dismantle trafficking groups through:

(a) The use of controlled delivery operations supported by well-disseminated, detailed information on national agency contact points, clear, streamlined request and clearance procedures, inter-agency agreements and cooperation in standard operating procedures;

(b) The use of court-sanctioned evidence-gathering techniques, such as electronic surveillance and structured informant programmes.

14. The following measure may also be of interest: ensure that drug law enforcement agencies are able to respond effectively to new cybertechnologies employed by traffickers through the adoption of adequate legislation and the provision of training to support the investigation and prosecution of offences perpetrated utilizing such technologies, the establishment of national focal points for high-tech crime, the development of capacity and expertise to support forensic investigations and the pursuit of partnerships with private-sector communication providers.

C. Maintaining integrity for effective drug law enforcement

15. With regard to maintaining integrity for effective drug law enforcement, the working group may wish to consider the following measures: examine the contributory causes of corruption within national law enforcement agencies and take steps to make those agencies stronger and more resistant to such malfeasance. Conditions such as low salaries, inadequate training, lack of equipment, weak legislation and poorly supervised operating procedures should be addressed, and measures should be taken to build public confidence in law enforcement authorities.

16. The following measure may also be of interest: introduce proactive strategies within law enforcement agencies, such as anti-corruption action plans, integrity programmes, drug testing and security vetting of staff and recruits, to reduce the opportunities for corrupt practices.

D. Reducing violence

17. With a view to reducing the violence associated with the relationship between drugs and arms trafficking, the working group may wish to consider the following measure: strengthen mechanisms to combat arms trafficking, including strengthening law enforcement capacities, strengthening internal control mechanisms on the licit trade in arms to prevent arms from being diverted and establishing multi-agency task forces to ensure a comprehensive approach to combating the organized criminal networks engaged in arms trafficking and drug trafficking.

18. The following measure may also be of interest: strengthen the judicial process through the establishment of witness protection programmes to encourage the witnesses and victims of organized trafficking networks to safely and securely provide evidence against those networks.