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**Report of the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and
Related Matters in the Near and Middle East on its
forty-third session, held in Tehran from 16 to
20 November 2008**

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* The present report is issued in Arabic, English and Russian, the working languages of the subsidiary body.



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I. Matters calling for action by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs or brought to its attention

Recommendations adopted by the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East at its forty-third session

1. At its forty-third session, the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East adopted a number of recommendations made by its working groups. The recommendations are presented below. For the observations and conclusions that led to the recommendations, see chapter V below.

1. Use and effectiveness of special investigative techniques, including controlled delivery as an operational response to dismantle drug trafficking groups

2. The following recommendations were made with regard to the use and effectiveness of special investigative techniques, including controlled delivery as an operational response to dismantle drug trafficking groups:

(a) Governments should ensure that appropriate legislation was in place to allow the application of advanced investigative techniques, including controlled deliveries, telephone intercepts and undercover operations, and that, to the extent possible, such legislation was compatible with that of neighbouring countries, in order to facilitate the sharing of information and the launching of combined investigations;

(b) Governments should collect detailed information on the drug trafficking situation as it relates to their national territory and should regularly provide such information to regional and/or international bodies for analysis to ensure that effective and timely countermeasures can be identified and implemented in conjunction with the other parties concerned;

(c) Governments should consider the formation of ad hoc working groups, pursuant to the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its thirty-sixth session, to carry out combined investigations, including the launching and coordination of multi-jurisdictional controlled delivery operations, into cases of mutual concern, while also utilizing available regional information cells (the Central Asian Information and Coordination Centre, the Gulf Centre for Criminal Intelligence and the Tehran cell).

2. Ensuring the efficient exchange of information and extending operational cooperation against drug trafficking groups at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels

3. The following recommendations were made with regard to ensuring the efficient exchange of information and extending operational cooperation against drug trafficking groups at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels:

(a) Governments should support the development of information exchange platforms in the Near and Middle East in order to institutionalize exchange of the operational information essential to the launching of coordinated investigations. In particular, the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

under the triangular initiative to establish the information cell in Tehran should be noted. The Tehran cell will be utilized by the Governments of Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan and, once activated, will serve as a vital link not only between those three countries, but also with the Central Asian Information and Coordination Centre for States in Central Asia, and the Gulf Centre for Criminal Intelligence for States in the Persian Gulf area;

(b) Governments should develop standard operating procedures for information exchange relating to interceptions of contraband and arrests of traffickers. Those procedures should be complemented by training programmes for key staff involved in the process at the national, regional and interregional levels;

(c) In view of the increasingly complex methods employed by drug trafficking groups, a focus needs to be placed on the launching of intelligence-led investigations in order to identify, arrest and prosecute high-value targets. Where possible, combined investigations should be conducted by the Governments concerned, and the networks of drug liaison officers should be used to the fullest extent.

3. Controlling the manufacture of and addressing trafficking in synthetic drugs and associated problems in the area of precursor control

4. The following recommendations were made with regard to controlling the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in synthetic drugs and to associated problems in the area of precursor control:

(a) Governments, supported by UNODC, should conduct more research into the growing issue of synthetic drug abuse in the Near and Middle East, in order to enhance the capacity of front-line officers, especially through the provision of specialized training and equipment for both forensic and law enforcement agencies;

(b) Governments should address trafficking in Captagon in the region 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. With regard to the illicit manufacture of Captagon, Governments in the region should engage the assistance of the Project Prism Task Force and should, to that end, commence active participation in the operational activities already under way;

(c) Governments of exporting countries should provide pre-export notifications for all shipments of precursor chemicals using, where possible, the Pre-Export Notification Online (PEN Online) system. Use of that procedure should be extended to include pharmaceutical preparations containing substances controlled under the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988;¹

(d) Governments should also provide the International Narcotics Control Board with estimates of their annual requirements as a further measure to prevent the diversion of precursors. In addition, Governments should consider establishing quotas for the manufacture of those substances within their territory and providing the Board with that information.

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

II. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation

5. At its 1st meeting, on 16 November 2008, the Subcommission considered item 3 of its agenda, entitled “Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation”. For its consideration of the item, the Subcommission had before it a report of the Secretariat on statistics on drug trafficking trends in the Near and Middle East, South, West and Central Asia and worldwide (UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/2) and a note by the Secretariat on the current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation (UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/CRP.1). Lebanon submitted a country report (UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/CRP.2). A representative of UNODC made an audio-visual presentation covering regional and global trends in drug trafficking.

6. Statements were made by the representatives of Azerbaijan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Pakistan, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates and by the observer for the Russian Federation.

7. The speakers noted that numerous successful operations had been conducted by member States of the Subcommission since the last session, which had resulted in seizures of consignments not only of heroin and cannabis resin but also of amphetamine-type stimulants. The operations had been conducted at both the regional and international levels and had shown that effective law enforcement interventions required quick and effective information exchange between concerned parties. The speakers further noted that, while certain mechanisms exist to support the exchange of such information, those mechanisms needed to be enhanced or supplemented within the region to make them fully effective.

8. Several speakers drew attention to the need for data on seizures to be properly analysed in order to assist with the targeting of law enforcement interventions. That was found to be true for illicit drugs, for which the analysis of seizures of such drugs entering and leaving transit countries would enable the establishment of more coordinated operations, and for precursors, for which the availability of detailed information on seizures, complemented with forensic intelligence, would lead to a better understanding of the chemicals currently used in illicit drug manufacture and would lead to activities aimed at identifying and dismantling illicit drug manufacturing laboratories operating in the region. Representatives were reminded of the need to provide accurate information to UNODC through regular reporting mechanisms such as the annual reports questionnaire. Some representatives expressed concern over increasing seizures of high-purity heroin, known locally as “crack heroin”. The need for coordinated forensic support in identifying, quantifying and mapping such seizures was recognized by the representatives.

9. Some representatives commented on the successful use of controlled delivery techniques both within the region and internationally. The role of drug liaison officers was particularly highlighted and representatives were urged to utilize those officers wherever possible in organizing and conducting such operations. One speaker stated that while controlled deliveries were an effective and often utilized tool, differences in national legislation meant that there was a need to develop further mechanisms to allow the prosecution of criminal groups in countries other than those through which the consignment passed or where a seizure was made.

10. Practical examples were provided of parallel and joint investigations conducted with foreign services in order to identify and prosecute criminal groups working in conjunction with counterparts in third countries. Efforts needed to be taken to enhance the ability to arrest and prosecute criminal groups on the basis of evidence gathered during investigations and not solely on the basis of a seizure. Such cases of criminal conspiracy must be properly investigated and prosecuted.

11. In the same vein, several speakers commented on the increasing use of the Internet by drug trafficking groups and on the associated multi-jurisdictional aspects of the crimes committed, which complicated both investigations and prosecutions. While efforts by international bodies such as INTERPOL and the International Narcotics Control Board to assist Governments with such cases were under way, it was accepted that there was a need at the international level to provide Governments with a formal framework and tools to address such complex cases. Other speakers also noted the use of Internet-based information exchange, such as the PEN Online system of the International Narcotics Control Board, as being a useful tool for authorities around the world.

12. A number of speakers emphasized that cannabis herb and cannabis resin accounted for the largest seizures of illicit drugs in the region and that trafficking in those substances was an increasing concern. Several examples of successful intraregional operations were provided to support that statement. When viewed in the light of increasing cannabis plant cultivation and production in the region, in particular in Afghanistan, the meeting agreed that the Subcommission's concerns relating to cannabis herb and cannabis resin should be conveyed to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its fifty-second session in 2009, in order to ensure that the international community provided the necessary support for interdiction activities in the region.

13. Several speakers drew attention to the importance of coordinated regional operations, including the Collective Security Treaty Organization's Channel and UNODC's Targeted Anti-trafficking Regional Communication, Expertise and Training (TARCET). While providing a controlled testing ground for information exchange channels and coordinated operational interventions, those activities resulted in noteworthy seizures of both illicit drugs and precursors during 2008.

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

14. At its 3rd meeting, on 17 November 2008, the Subcommission considered item 5 of its agenda, entitled "Follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly". The Secretary of the Subcommission briefed the representatives on the decisions made by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at the fifty-first session concerning follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. Statements were made by the representatives of Azerbaijan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Pakistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. The observer for the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior also made a statement.

15. The Secretary of the Subcommission informed representatives that at its fifty-first session the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had focused its thematic

discussion on the progress made in meeting the goals and targets set out at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly and considered the final assessment report of the Executive Director on the world drug problem, which contained information collected in all the previous biennial reports.

16. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs had also adopted resolution 51/4, entitled “Preparations for the high-level segment of the fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, relating to the follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly”, in which the Commission had established five open-ended intergovernmental working groups on topics covered by the action plans emanating from the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. In the resolution the Commission had also reiterated that, at its fifty-second session in 2009, it would hold a high-level segment to identify future goals and targets to be set in countering the world drug problem beyond 2009, as well as considering and adopting a political declaration and, as appropriate, other declarations and measures to enhance international cooperation.

17. One of the main achievements highlighted by the speakers was the adoption of balanced and comprehensive national drug control strategies and the establishment of central coordination bodies to guide and monitor drug control policies. Several representatives reported that their Governments had adopted long-term plans to address the issues of illicit drug demand and supply reduction, as well as the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. The representative of Pakistan noted that, in recent years, the number of drug abusers in his country had been reduced, despite the concurrent sharp increase in opium poppy cultivation, illicit opium production and illicit heroin manufacture in neighbouring Afghanistan.

18. Most speakers noted that their States had been resolute in fulfilling their international obligations and had joined all the relevant international treaties and signed memorandums of understanding and extradition treaties with various States. The speakers also emphasized the importance of subregional, regional and international cooperation and the need to maintain and improve the exchange of data and intelligence, in particular among the countries in the region. To that end, the speakers had participated in various international and regional initiatives and had organized and participated in conferences and seminars. Some speakers noted the importance of cooperation with United Nations entities, including UNODC, other international organizations such as the World Customs Organization, and various regional mechanisms.

19. It was noted that regional and international cooperation was particularly important in the context of controlled deliveries. The observer for one regional organization spoke of the need of carrying out controlled deliveries in transit countries and of the difficulties posed by differing legislation.

20. In relation to emerging trends, a few speakers noted the increase in the purity of heroin from Afghanistan and one speaker commented on the recent changes in drug trafficking methods and groups, the increased use of air routes and the increase in smuggling of cannabis resin in the countries of the Persian Gulf area.

21. Some speakers noted that their Governments had taken measures to expedite judicial proceedings against drug traffickers and to ensure that they received harsher sentences. Several speakers emphasized the importance of posting drug liaison

officers in as many locations as possible in order to facilitate investigations and prosecution efforts.

22. Several speakers reported that their Governments had established effective mechanisms and institutions to monitor precursor chemicals and to prevent their diversion. One representative indicated that relevant agencies in his country had organized meetings on that issue with the chemical industry. Furthermore, most representatives reported that their States had adopted comprehensive legislation to fight money-laundering and to criminalize proceeds derived from drug trafficking.

23. Some speakers noted that their Governments had been referring drug addicts to treatment facilities, instead of prosecuting them, and that in addition to establishing treatment centres, they had been involving non-governmental organizations and civil society in improving and providing treatment and rehabilitation services.

24. Some speakers noted the importance of extensive awareness-raising activities in the prevention of drug abuse, including among youth and other vulnerable populations and their families, and one speaker noted that in his country non-governmental organizations had been involved in such activities.

25. It was reported that a significant number of seizures of illicit drugs, including amphetamine-type stimulants, had been made in several countries in the region. Moreover, a number of representatives noted that in their countries border checkpoints were equipped with the necessary equipment and physical infrastructure, while some speakers remarked on the utility of drug detection dogs, X-ray machines and other tools. Moreover, one speaker proposed that the border management agencies in the region could exchange information on drug traffickers, in order to facilitate their identification and arrest.

IV. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its forty-first session

26. At its 2nd meeting, on 17 November 2008, the Subcommission considered item 6 of its agenda, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its forty-first session". For its consideration of the item, the Subcommission had before it a background paper prepared by the Secretariat (UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/3) on the basis of information provided by Governments in response to a questionnaire. The paper reflected the replies received by the Secretariat from Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates by 3 November 2008. After that date or in the course of the session, replies to the questionnaire were also received from Afghanistan, Kuwait and Turkey. The Secretary of the Subcommission introduced the agenda item. Statements were made by the representatives of Azerbaijan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. A statement was also made by the observer for the Russian Federation and by the observer for the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior.

27. With regard to the first set of recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its forty-first session, on enhancing drug law enforcement effectiveness against trafficking in opiates in the region, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the participants that a close exchange of information was taking place between his country and Afghanistan. The Islamic Republic of Iran had trained

police officers from Afghanistan and was ready to continue to do so, if so requested. Training material had been provided to the Police Academy of Afghanistan, including a syllabus, curricula and an online information library. It was also noted that the use of controlled deliveries had made it possible to seize large amounts of illicit drugs, in cooperation with other States in the region, such as Oman and Turkey.

28. The representative of Pakistan reported that the drug law enforcement authorities in his country were cooperating with their counterparts in Afghanistan and in the context of regional forums. The representative said, however, that he hoped that increased feedback on backtracking investigations would be obtained from the counter-narcotics authorities of Afghanistan. The borders of Pakistan were well patrolled, and scanning machines and other surveillance equipment had been installed.

29. In relation to the second set of recommendations concerning regional cooperation in the exchange of criminal intelligence on drug trafficking, representatives of Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Pakistan stated that their Governments had posted drug liaison officers in Afghanistan. The representative of Saudi Arabia reported that his Government had posted drug liaison officers in a large number of countries. Direct communication between drug liaison officers and local law enforcement agencies greatly facilitated the exchange of information and had resulted in increased seizures of illicit drugs.

30. The representative of Pakistan reported that his Government had direct contact with the counter-narcotics agencies of Iran (Islamic Republic of), Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, while in other cases the exchange of information was taking place at the diplomatic level, through embassies. Joint investigations on drug trafficking had been carried out with other States.

31. With regard to the recommendation on ensuring an adequate response to the increasing use of maritime conveyances to transport illicit drugs, the representative of Pakistan reported on large seizures of drugs found in shipping containers. The coastline and territorial waters of Pakistan were patrolled to counter drug trafficking by sea. There was, however, a need to build capacity in that area and to increase the number of fast vessels to patrol the coastline.

32. The representative of Azerbaijan reported on joint operations and investigations involving his State and the law enforcement authorities of Georgia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation and Turkey. Azerbaijan relied on direct communication, as the use of other communication means was insecure and could compromise operations. It was noted by another representative that INTERPOL had already provided a fast and secure channel for the exchange of information.

V. Consideration of topics by working groups

33. At its 4th to 6th meetings, from 17 to 19 November, the Subcommission established working groups to examine the three topics under item 4 of its agenda, entitled "Consideration of topics by working groups". The observations made by the working groups and the conclusions reached after their consideration of the topics

are presented below. For the recommendations made by the working groups and adopted by the Subcommission, see chapter I above.

Observations and conclusions of the working groups

1. Use and effectiveness of special investigative techniques, including controlled delivery as an operational response to dismantle drug trafficking groups

34. The working group held one meeting, on 19 November 2008. In its consideration of the topic under review, the working group made the following observations:

(a) From the cases presented, the working group observed that drug trafficking groups were constantly developing new routes in response to effective action by law enforcement authorities, and hence effective information/intelligence gathering and analysis were necessary to identify and launch actions along newly established routes;

(b) Specialized investigative techniques, including controlled delivery operations and telephone intercepts, were an integral part of wider investigations to identify drug trafficking groups, routes and entry points into countries and should also target organizers and financiers of criminal groups. Such activities were best conducted with advanced planning and coordination, but the unpredictable nature of information sources frequently rendered such far-reaching investigations difficult;

(c) As demonstrated by case studies presented to the working group, close collaboration between countries, supported by secure and efficient lines of communication, were essential for control delivery operations. Where such channels existed, operations could be effectively initiated from the countries in which the planning and organization took place, even though those countries might not have been on the trafficking route;

(d) Common problems associated with controlled deliveries identified by participants included the lack of appropriate legislation in certain countries, the incompatibility of the legislation of various countries, lack of guaranteed indemnity for transport companies participating in operations, lack of protection for informers and the fear of being obliged to testify in court, and the possibility of the operations leading to the death penalty, which might preclude certain countries from participating in those operations;

(e) Detailed information on trafficking in drugs from the areas of production or manufacture was essential to plan and launch coordinated interventions. While the clandestine nature of trafficking activities made it difficult to identify the routes and estimate the quantities of illicit drugs moving along those routes, the development of risk indicators to identify shipments of concern improved the capabilities of law enforcement officers at international points of entry.

35. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) It was essential that feedback be given to States providing information about illicit consignments, in order to build confidence in the information exchange exercise as well as to facilitate prosecutions and further investigation;

(b) Collective responsibilities existed on the part of national authorities to effectively utilize advanced investigative techniques to collect, analyse and disseminate information and intelligence to their counterparts so that coordinated multilateral investigations could be launched with the aim of identifying and dismantling criminal groups and the methods and routes employed by them;

(c) The utilization of regional coordination centres such as the Central Asian Information and Coordination Centre and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative Centre facilitated the planning and coordination of controlled deliveries and would be used as frequently as possible to further operational activities.

2. Ensuring the efficient exchange of information and extending operational cooperation against drug trafficking groups at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels

36. The working group held one meeting, on 17 November 2008. In its consideration of the topic under review, the working group made the following observations:

(a) The quick and effective exchange of information was an essential tool for countering drug trafficking, as demonstrated in cases reported by representatives that led to seizures of illicit drugs and successful prosecutions of traffickers;

(b) Drug trafficking groups were making use of increasingly sophisticated techniques, in particular communication via the Internet and by e-mail, to coordinate their activities, and member States needed to be equally adept at harnessing the potential of modern technology;

(c) Drug traffickers increasingly operated remotely, moved rapidly, coordinated their activities across multiple locations, States and jurisdictions and exploited weaknesses in legislation;

(d) Frequently, the outcome of investigations tended to target couriers and others playing a minor role in drug trafficking groups, while persons with a more significant role, such as the organizers and financiers, escaped prosecution;

(e) The exchange of information needed to be followed up and feedback needed to be provided that would enable States to take the necessary actions and pursue their own investigations and prosecutions;

(f) Greater successes could be achieved in the effective investigation and prosecution of drug trafficking groups if the law enforcement agencies were to focus equally on the activities of transnational criminal groups and on those groups operating at the local level.

37. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) There was a need for clear standard operating procedures to be developed and institutionalized in order to enable effective communication between law enforcement agencies at both the national and international level;

(b) Confidence in counterparts was required for the exchange of information needed in identifying and prosecuting criminal groups. In that regard, personal contacts were important; however, drug liaison officers were also a crucial tool in such an exchange and should be utilized;

(c) In view of the increasing use of sophisticated technology by traffickers, suitable equipment and training was required by law enforcement officers;

(d) Cooperation between different States in countering drug trafficking was most effective when it extended beyond the simple exchange of information to include joint investigations leading to multi-jurisdictional prosecutions.

3. Controlling the manufacture of and addressing trafficking in synthetic drugs and associated problems in the area of precursor control

38. The working group held one meeting, on 18 November 2008. In its consideration of the topic under review, the working group made the following observations:

(a) Illicit synthetic drugs, particularly amphetamine-type stimulants,² posed an emerging threat for member States of the Subcommission, and trafficking in and abuse of those drugs had the potential to grow to a scale comparable with those of cannabis and opiates;

(b) Countering the production of and trafficking in synthetic drugs was especially problematic because of the variety of chemicals that could be used in the manufacture of those drugs, including non-controlled substitutes and pharmaceutical preparations, which required specialized training and equipment;

(c) From cases presented to the working group, it was noted that airports and seaports, and postal consignments through those ports, were particularly vulnerable points of entry for amphetamine-type stimulants smuggled into the region, and special attention needed to be given to training and equipping authorities stationed at those entry points. It was also recognized that large consignments continued to be smuggled by road;

(d) Existing trade agreements, such as the Afghan Transit Trade Agreement and the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention), contained provisions that could be exploited by traffickers to smuggle chemicals into the region;

(e) Legally established companies were frequently guilty of diverting precursor chemicals from licit trade, either through the provision of false estimates or by over-reporting consumption;

(f) The implementation of best practices on precursor control, such as those prepared by the International Narcotics Control Board, was an essential tool to help member States strengthen mechanisms and improve their effectiveness in countering the manufacture of and trafficking in synthetic drugs;

(g) In recognizing the usefulness of the estimates system implemented by the International Narcotics Control Board for annual requirements for certain precursors, the representatives noted that national quotas on the production of precursor chemicals could help in preventing the diversion of precursors;

(h) Effective precursor interdiction was the most efficient way to counter the illicit production of and subsequent trafficking in opiates in Afghanistan. It was therefore necessary to increase control to effectively monitor the entire distribution

² Including preparations referred to as Captagon.

chain to identify points of diversion, using, where possible, means such as chemical markers.

39. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) Research was necessary to gain an understanding of the reasons behind the growth in the popularity of amphetamine-type stimulants in the region in order to find solutions to reduce demand;

(b) In addition to the mechanisms already in place to monitor and control the import and export of precursor chemicals, there was a need for standard operating procedures to be developed and adopted to ensure that transit consignments were not diverted;

(c) Law enforcement authorities in the region should be adequately trained to meet the threat posed by illicit synthetic drugs, especially amphetamine-type stimulants, and their illicit manufacture, having previously focused their activities on cannabis and heroin;

(d) Effective procedures to address illicit manufacture in the region needed to be developed, including mechanisms to identify and intercept diverted precursor chemicals, conduct controlled deliveries, detect laboratories and launch backtracking investigations.

VI. Organization of the forty-fourth session of the Subcommission

40. At its 7th meeting, on 19 November 2008, the Subcommission considered item 7 of its agenda, entitled "Organization of the forty-fourth session of the Subcommission". For its consideration on the item, the Subcommission had before it a note by the Secretariat drawing attention to certain questions that needed to be addressed concerning its forty-fourth session and a draft provisional agenda for its consideration (UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/4). Statements were made by the representatives of Azerbaijan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates.

41. The Subcommission was informed of the offer by the Government of Lebanon to host the forty-fourth session of the Subcommission in 2009. The Chairman, speaking on behalf of the members of the Subcommission, expressed appreciation for the offer.

42. There was a discussion on potential topics for consideration by the working groups at the forty-fourth session of the Subcommission. The following topics were proposed for consideration: (a) the use of the Internet in trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals; (b) the development, role, use and effectiveness of regional information intelligence centres in the region; and (c) the provision and requirements of forensic support for counter-narcotic activities in the region, especially in light of emerging threats such as Captagon, "crack heroin" and amphetamine-type stimulants.

43. In view of the variety and number of topics proposed, the Secretariat was requested to work with member States to develop a set of focused and coherent topics to be discussed by the Subcommission at its forty-fourth session, also taking

into account new developments and priorities in illicit drug production, trafficking and abuse in the region.

44. The Subcommittee approved the following draft provisional agenda for its forty-fourth session:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation.
4. Consideration of topics by working groups.
5. Follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly.
6. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommittee at its forty-second session.
7. Organization of the forty-fifth session of the Subcommittee.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the report.

VII. Other business

45. At its 7th meeting, on 19 November 2008, the Subcommittee considered item 8 of its agenda, entitled "Other business". The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran recommended that member States should consider ways and means of properly recognizing those law enforcement officers who gave their lives in the fight against drug trafficking, including the granting of posthumous medals of honour. In addition, the names of those officers could be recorded online by the United Nations, in a virtual "roll of honour", based on input provided by member States. Those measures of appreciation might offer some consolation to the families of those who had fallen in the line of duty while fighting drug traffickers. The representatives of Afghanistan and Pakistan expressed support for the proposal.

VIII. Adoption of the report

46. At its 8th meeting, on 20 November 2008, the Subcommittee adopted the report on its forty-third session (UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/L.1 and Add.1-8), including the reports of the working groups and their recommendations, as orally amended.

IX. Organization of the forty-third session of the Subcommittee

A. Opening and duration of the session

47. The forty-third session of the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East, organized by UNODC and

hosted by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was held in Tehran from 16 to 20 November 2008. The Adviser to the President and Secretary-General of the Drug Control Headquarters of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Representative of the Executive Director of UNODC and Representative of the UNODC Country Office in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the President of the International Narcotics Control Board addressed the participants at the opening meeting. Upon being elected Chairman of the forty-third session of the Subcommission, the Director-General for International and Public Affairs of the Drug Control Headquarters of the Islamic Republic of Iran also addressed the meeting.

B. Attendance

48. The following States members of the Subcommission were represented: Afghanistan Azerbaijan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

49. France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Romania and the Russian Federation were represented by observers.

50. The International Narcotics Control Board and the World Health Organization were also represented by observers.

51. The Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior and the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences were also represented by observers.

52. UNODC served as the secretariat of the forty-third session.

C. Election of officers

53. At its 1st meeting, on 16 November 2008, the Subcommission elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chairman: Mahmoud Bayat (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Vice-Chairmen: Hasan Mahmood (Pakistan)
Mohamad Sadiq Saidi (Afghanistan)

Rapporteur: Abdulla Al Bedaiwi (United Arab Emirates)

D. Adoption of the agenda

54. Also at its 1st meeting, the Subcommission adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation.
4. Consideration of topics by working groups:

- (a) Use and effectiveness of special investigative techniques, including controlled delivery as an operational response to dismantle drug trafficking groups;
 - (b) Ensuring the efficient exchange of information and extending operational cooperation against drug trafficking groups at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels;
 - (c) Controlling the production of and trafficking in synthetic drugs and associated problems in the area of precursor control.
- 5. Follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly.
- 6. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommission at its forty-first session.
- 7. Organization of the forty-fourth session of the Subcommission.
- 8. Other business.
- 9. Adoption of the report of the Subcommission on its forty-third session.

E. Documentation

- 55. The documents before the forty-third session of the Subcommission are listed in the annex to the present document.

F. Closure of the session

- 56. The Chairman of the forty-third session made a closing statement.

Annex

List of documents before the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East at its forty-third session

<i>Document</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Title or description</i>
UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/1	2	Provisional agenda, annotations and proposed organization of work
UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/2	3	Report by the Secretariat on statistics on drug trafficking trends in the Near and Middle East, South, West and Central Asia and worldwide
UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/3	6	Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Subcommittee at its forty-first session
UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/4	7	Organization of the forty-fourth session of the Subcommittee
UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/L.1 and Add.1-8	9	Draft report
UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/CRP.1	3	Note by the Secretariat on current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation
UNODC/SUBCOM/2008/CRP.2	3	Country report by Lebanon