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Report of the Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Tegucigalpa from 13 to 17 October 2008

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* The present report is issued in English, French and Spanish, 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 Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean

1. The Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), Latin America and the Caribbean, set up working groups to consider three main issues and to draw up recommendations on those issues. The observations and conclusions that led to the recommendations are presented in chapter IV below. The Meeting adopted the recommendations below, which had been drawn up by its working groups on the issues.

Issue 1. The region's response to trafficking in cocaine

2. With regard to issue 1, "The region's response to trafficking in cocaine", the following recommendations were made:

(a) Governments must ensure that their law enforcement agencies are adequately equipped, supported and empowered with the authority they require and the resources they need to gather the information necessary to target the movement of suspicious aircraft, vessels and shipping containers believed to be involved in drug trafficking throughout the region;

(b) Governments of countries in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean should encourage and support greater cooperation and coordination between their drug law enforcement authorities and their counterparts in West Africa, so as to better target and arrest those persons responsible for trafficking in cocaine between the region and the African continent;

(c) To prevent the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants from establishing itself within their territories, Governments of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean should take steps to ensure that their legislation and administrative procedures are adequate and flexible enough to control the internationally scheduled precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants and to meet the increasing challenge posed by the use of substitute chemicals in such manufacture.

Issue 2. Strengthening information exchange and operational cooperation at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels

3. With regard to issue 2, "Strengthening information exchange and operational cooperation at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels", the following recommendations were made:

(a) Governments of countries in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean that have not already done so should develop, promulgate and endorse national strategies that support the establishment of mechanisms at the national level that enable the gathering, analysis and exchange of information and intelligence to support the provision of real-time information for operational

activities at the national level and to facilitate cooperation between their national agencies and their counterparts in other countries;

(b) Governments of countries in the region should, to facilitate 24-hour coverage, taking into account factors such as staff rotation, illness and changes in agency responsibilities, support the establishment of offices to act as national focal points. The existence of those offices should be sufficiently well known to their counterparts in other countries, in order to facilitate quick contact among those counterparts as an essential requirement to enable the effective exchange of information among law enforcement and judicial authorities for the conduct of investigations and law enforcement operations across borders;

(c) States should support regular meetings of operational law enforcement agencies from neighbouring States or regional partners in order to facilitate the establishment of direct links and to provide a framework for trusted and effective information exchange and operational cooperation;

(d) States in the region should work together in order to establish a regional information and coordination centre to facilitate the undertaking of successful drug law enforcement investigations.

Issue 3. Demand reduction: law enforcement's role in supporting effective policies

4. With regard to issue 3, "Demand reduction: law enforcement's role in supporting effective policies", the following recommendations were made:

(a) Governments should ensure that syllabuses based on the principles of reduction in illicit drug demand are integrated into the training programmes for officials of all law enforcement agencies (police, customs, prosecutors and judiciary) responsible for the enforcement of legislation to tackle drug abuse and trafficking;

(b) Governments of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean that have not already done so should take steps to introduce within their criminal justice systems appropriate procedures to enable prisoners who are drug abusers to be provided with treatment, education, rehabilitation and reintegration services while serving their prison sentences.

II. Major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures

5. At its 1st-3rd meetings, on 13 and 14 October 2008, the Meeting considered item 3 of its agenda, entitled "Major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures". For the consideration of the item, the Meeting had before it two papers prepared by the Secretariat, entitled "Statistics on drug trafficking trends in the Americas and worldwide" (UNODC/HONLAC/2008/2) and "Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation" (UNODC/HONLAC/2008/CRP.1). In addition, country reports on drug trafficking were submitted by Canada, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (UNODC/HONLAC/2007/CRP.2-13).

6. A representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) introduced the item and made an audio-visual presentation on reported drug trafficking trends in the region in the context of global drug trafficking. The presentation was based on information provided by Governments to UNODC. The representatives of Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) made audio-visual presentations. A statement was made by the representative of Italy.
7. Representatives presented information on the current drug control situation in their countries, describing, inter alia, new developments in trafficking trends and routes and concealment methods, as well as seizures of illicit drugs and precursor chemicals, eradication of illicit crops, dismantling of illicit drug processing laboratories, arrests, prosecutions, money-laundering investigations and operations conducted over the previous two years.
8. Representatives also provided information on significant arrests made, investigations, prosecutions, money-laundering investigations and judicial cases and their status and outcome, as well as on the number of mutual legal assistance requests received, responded to and pending.
9. Particular attention was devoted to the issue of diversion of precursors, with specific reference being made to recent major investigations in Latin America and the Caribbean that had resulted in the seizure of significant volumes of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine and the dismantling of organized criminal groups involving nationals of several countries in the region. In that context, one representative referred to the measures recently adopted in his country to address the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants following a major case involving diversion of precursor chemicals in 2007, as well as cases involving the violent armed robbery of pharmaceutical and chemical companies utilizing those substances and the hijacking of large vehicles transporting them, which had resulted in a significant volume of precursors being diverted. That had led the authorities to take extraordinary measures, which included prohibiting the importation of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, as well as of pharmaceutical preparations containing those substances. Thus, the representative informed the Meeting that any attempt to import those substances into his country should be considered illegal and unauthorized. The representative noted that the measure had given rise to increased attempts to smuggle those substances into his country, as well as to a rise in their black market value. Another representative noted that temporary suspension of imports of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine had been imposed in his country and that the measure had helped to alleviate the diversion problem.
10. Representatives noted new methods of concealing precursor chemicals, particularly ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, including the increasing use of courier services for their smuggling. In that connection, reference was made to several methods used to conceal illicit consignments of precursor chemicals within licit trade, including an attempt to hide a consignment of ephedrine in an export shipment of sugar.
11. Several representatives made reference to legislative developments in their countries that provided for additional measures to tackle drug trafficking. A number of participants highlighted that their legislative frameworks had been updated to provide for an integrated and comprehensive strategy to tackle the illicit drug

problem that placed emphasis on an approach aimed at achieving a balance between supply and demand reduction. One representative noted that in his country attention was being paid to a differentiated treatment for drug abusers, in which they would not be criminalized and would be treated with dignity and respect; the representative stated that those individuals needed access to treatment, rehabilitation and medical services, and efforts were being made to attend to those needs. In that context, however, the representative stated that drug abusers who committed criminal offences would not escape prosecution.

12. A number of representatives also provided information on the revision or development of new multi-year national drug control plans and on their constituent elements and on the emphasis, focus and resources that were being provided, which included the setting up of structures to promote their implementation and to ensure inter-institutional coordination at the respective national levels.

13. Several representatives reported on the development of maritime trafficking routes and on the significance that those routes played in trafficking in illicit drugs, particularly cocaine. In that context, new trends were described, including those relating to specific routes, the trans-shipment of illicit cargo and the points at which the shipments were transferred to other vessels at sea or were put ashore for onward trafficking over land.

14. In providing specific statistics about trafficking and seizures of illicit drugs and precursors, representatives provided additional information on the various modes of transport, such as by land, air, sea and commercial courier services, and by means of human couriers or “mules”, who were now being used also for trafficking in precursors. With regard to trafficking in cocaine, a number of representatives referred to the re-emergence of the use of liquid cocaine and black cocaine as methods of concealment.

15. Several representatives referred to the use of shipping containers for drug trafficking and the countermeasures taken by their authorities to detect substances concealed within licit trade. It was stated that there were difficulties in identifying illicit drugs and precursors hidden in such shipments, due to the volume of trade and, in some cases, insufficient capacity, particularly of specialized equipment.

16. Several representatives made reference to specific instances of regional and international cooperation, covering exchange of information, mutual legal assistance, the signing of bilateral cooperation agreements and the provision of specialized equipment, including the provision of scanners to enhance search capacities at border points. Reference was also made to efforts at the national level to invest in equipment to improve the operational capacity of law enforcement authorities, despite the limited resources available in some of those countries. Other speakers made reference to the specific need for further international cooperation to improve operational capabilities through the provision of training and technical resources.

17. A number of representatives made reference to the changing structures of organized drug trafficking groups, which had transformed from large vertically integrated operations to smaller organizations, specializing in specific areas and operating like smaller illicit entrepreneurial organizations, that joined forces with other such small specialized criminal groups for the purpose of conducting trafficking operations. Making reference to the wealth of information provided in

the various presentations, one representative noted that it would be valuable to share information on the structure, composition and make-up of organized criminal groups operating in the region and on their linkages with organized criminal groups outside of the region.

18. Several representatives provided information on trafficking routes leading from South America through the Caribbean and Central America to North America and Europe. One representative, referring to the growing trafficking in drugs, particularly cocaine, from the Americas through West Africa to Europe, provided information on air and sea routes, the type of aircraft being used, how those aircraft were being acquired and the changing of their registration to prevent their identification. Likewise, several representatives provided information on the use of remote and inaccessible, as well as clandestine, airstrips for trafficking in drugs and on efforts by the authorities to destroy such airfields.

19. Several representatives referred to difficulties affecting the exchange of information. In that regard, reference was made to the fact that often information was not centrally collected at the national level and could not be exchanged rapidly enough to enable effective operational cooperation at the international level.

20. Several representatives referred to topics that could be the focus of discussion at future meetings. It was noted that it would be valuable to analyse information on issues related to illicit drug demand, such as how illicit drug markets were changing and how those changes affected illicit drug production. Thus, it was noted that an analysis of information on illicit drug use and drug prices at the national, regional and international levels could provide indications of how the illicit drug market and trafficking trends were developing. Another area of possible focus was related to a specific analysis of the trends in the use of amphetamine-type stimulants and of measures to promote their control and that of their precursors.

21. A number of further proposals for possible discussion at future meetings were made, including: (a) the establishment of national and regional centralized information and coordination centres that could enable the processing and exchange of information on a real-time basis, including information of a strategic and operational nature; (b) improving mechanisms for mutual legal assistance within the region; (c) establishment of a regional illicit drug control fund with the aim of providing cooperation through training and projects of shared interest to States members; and (d) the establishment of a regional drug observatory to monitor drug trafficking and consumption trends.

22. Several representatives made reference to the assistance received from other countries of the region and beyond, while others expressed their readiness to provide assistance to other countries in the areas in which they had developed specific capacities.

III. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Seventeenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean

23. At its 3rd meeting, on 14 October 2008, the Meeting considered item 4 of its agenda, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the

Seventeenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, by States of the region”. The Meeting had before it a paper prepared by the Secretariat (UNODC/HONLAC/2008/3) on the basis of information provided by Governments in response to a questionnaire sent to all States represented at the Meeting of HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean. The paper reflected the replies received by the Secretariat from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Spain, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, the Netherlands, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) by 4 September 2008. After that date, replies to the questionnaire were submitted by Bolivia, Colombia and Mexico.

24. A representative of UNODC made an introductory statement. The representative of Haiti made an audio-visual presentation. The representative of Jamaica made a statement.

25. The Meeting was informed of action taken by the Government of Haiti to implement the recommendations emanating from the Seventeenth Meeting of HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean, drawing attention to the trafficking situation in the country, particularly with regard to cannabis and cocaine. Information was provided on trafficking routes, points of access by sea and air, as well as the situation of the country as a transit area for illicit drugs intended principally for North America and Europe. Information on specific geographical regions and locations, such as airports and ports, particularly at risk of being used for drug trafficking was also provided. It was noted that, despite the commitment of the authorities to tackle the problem, limited resources made the country particularly vulnerable to drug trafficking groups, which continued to use its territory, waters and airspace for drug trafficking purposes.

26. The representative of Jamaica drew attention to a specific trafficking issue that affected his country and Haiti, in which cannabis was trafficked by sea from Jamaica to Haiti and was then exchanged in part for illicitly acquired weapons that were smuggled into Haiti. The representative noted that the rugged and inaccessible nature of parts of those countries’ coastal regions and limited resources to patrol them might be contributory factors. The trafficked weapons contributed to an already serious situation of violent crime and the high homicide rate that Haiti was experiencing. In that regard, the representative of Jamaica looked forward to working together with the Haitian authorities, as he was confident that such cooperation would result in positive outcomes for both countries on a matter of shared concern.

IV. Consideration of topics by working groups

27. At its 4th-6th meetings, on 14 and 15 October 2008, the Meeting considered item 5 of its agenda, entitled “Consideration of topics by working groups”. The observations and conclusions of the working groups are presented below. For the recommendations of the working groups approved by the plenary, see chapter I above.

Observations and conclusions of the working groups

Issue 1. The region's response to trafficking in cocaine

28. The working group on issue 1, "The region's response to trafficking in cocaine", held two meetings, on 14 and 15 October 2008. In its consideration of the topic, the working group made the following observations:

(a) The region's permeable borders, long coastlines, and remote and rugged terrain posed challenges to the resources of law enforcement authorities. Illicit trafficking by sea remained a major threat, while the use of light aircraft with forged, cloned or stolen registration numbers operating from small, private and remote airstrips to transport cocaine was on the increase throughout the region;

(b) Recent trafficking trends noted in the region included an increase in the use of human couriers or "mules", the reappearance of black cocaine, the modus operandi of suspending cocaine in liquid form and a growing incidence in trafficking in precursors such as ephedrine and pseudoephedrine;

(c) Foreign nationals were increasingly being found engaged in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants in the region;

(d) Central America was being used as a staging point for shipments of cocaine destined for North America and Europe. The movement of those illicit consignments was often protected by local gangs ("maras") operating in the border areas of the region;

(e) The countries of West Africa had become the new targets of trafficking groups smuggling cocaine into Europe.

29. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) To be effective in meeting the challenges of border control, illicit drug law enforcement must be augmented with operational cooperation with armed forces such as national air forces, navies and coastguards;

(b) The incidence of the detection of, and the size of operation of, clandestine laboratories manufacturing amphetamine-type stimulants in some countries in the region was of growing concern;

(c) Increased incidence of property crime, assault, robbery, kidnapping and extortion could be traced to the greater availability of illicit drugs, as a result of traffickers paying local associates in kind instead of with cash;

(d) To act effectively against the use of light aircraft to traffic cocaine through and out of the region, authorities must gather more information about the sale and movement of such aircraft around the region, and should share information about the location, ownership and operation of the region's private landing fields;

(e) The increase in the smuggling of cocaine across the Atlantic to Africa called for coordinated efforts of the authorities of countries in the Americas and Africa in order to address the illicit trade and to act effectively against those responsible.

Issue 2. Strengthening information exchange and operational cooperation at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels

30. The working group on issue 2, “Strengthening information exchange and operational cooperation at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels”, held a meeting on 15 October 2008. In its consideration of the topic, the working group made the following observations:

(a) Information on drug trafficking suspects, vessels, vehicles and aircraft was too scattered and was not coordinated among authorities, and hence there were delays in accessing information of importance to operations;

(b) Most States in Latin America and the Caribbean had established or formalized bilateral cooperation agreements with one or more neighbouring States or regional partners;

(c) Communication between front-line law enforcement agencies on an informal basis was often more direct and quicker than information exchange between prosecutors or the judiciary in countries in the region;

(d) The contacts established through the regional meetings of HONLEA provided a useful first step in identifying counterparts among law enforcement and judicial authorities. Other valuable links were provided through the contact point directories of well-established international law enforcement entities such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the World Customs Organization, as well as the directories of national competent authorities published by UNODC pursuant to the international drug control conventions and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;

(e) To facilitate the free flow of information and support in undertaking drug law enforcement investigations and operations, confidence and trust among authorities must be built, at both the national level and the international level;

(f) Regular meetings of operational law enforcement units (e.g. police, customs authorities from neighbouring countries or regional partners) serve to establish links and provide a framework for trusted and effective information exchange and operational cooperation.

31. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) There was an urgent need to take steps to reduce bureaucracy and delays in establishing contact between the authorities responsible for conducting drug law enforcement investigations, particularly when undertaking controlled deliveries or formally gathering information or evidence through letters rogatory;

(b) There was a need for better real-time information exchange in investigation and operational matters;

(c) The adoption by Central American States of anti-drug units under the coordination of the Permanent Central American Commission for the Eradication of the Illicit Production, Traffic, Consumption and Use of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances had proved an effective strategy in the response to drug trafficking in the region;

(d) More should be done both at the national and regional levels by law enforcement agencies to disseminate information about their counterparts and focal

points in order to support the operational needs of drug law enforcement and judicial investigations;

(e) To match the increasing sophistication of communications, the speed of transport and the growing complexity of international drug trafficking operations, establishing joint agency investigation teams, ideally with regional counterparts, was considered a positive initiative.

Issue 3. Demand reduction: law enforcement's role in supporting effective policies

32. The working group on issue 3, "Demand reduction: law enforcement's role in supporting effective policies", held a meeting on 15 October 2008. In its consideration of the topic, the working group made the following observations:

(a) It was a challenge for law enforcement authorities to change the behaviour of young persons experimenting with illicit drugs. Authorities interacting with drug abusers must take into account their motivation to use such substances;

(b) Young drug offenders were particularly at risk when custodial sentences for drug abuse were issued;

(c) Authorities faced major media challenges, such as the Internet, in changing the attitude of at-risk persons concerning the damaging effects of drug abuse;

(d) The issue of illicit drug demand reduction should be incorporated within all national action plans addressing illicit drugs coordinating the contribution of Government ministries responsible for social welfare, health and youth in support of law enforcement initiatives.

33. The working group drew the following conclusions:

(a) Drug abuse was part of a lifestyle choice. Repressive measures alone would not successfully address drug abuse;

(b) Alternative sentences for dealing with offenders who were drug abusers was an option that courts and law enforcement authorities should be able to consider;

(c) Demand reduction was a key pillar in any national drug control strategy, and a role for law enforcement agencies should be included in any national strategy;

(d) There was an important role to be played by law enforcement agencies in supporting community awareness-raising campaigns discouraging experimentation with and abuse of illicit drugs.

V. Organization of the Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean

34. At its 7th meeting, on 17 October 2008, the Eighteenth Meeting considered item 6 of its agenda, entitled "Organization of the Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean". The

Meeting had before it a note by the Secretariat (UNODC/HONLAC/2008/4) drawing attention to certain issues that needed to be addressed during the Nineteenth Meeting and containing a draft provisional agenda for that Meeting.

35. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela informed the participants of the offer by his Government to host the Nineteenth Meeting in 2009. The participants welcomed that offer. The Secretariat informed the participants that it would communicate with the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to make the necessary arrangements for hosting the Nineteenth Meeting.

36. Further to the discussion under item 3 of the agenda, regarding topics for possible discussion at future meetings (see paras. 20-21 above), a number of issues for discussion were put forward by the working groups at the Nineteenth Meeting, under item 5 of its draft provisional agenda, as follows: (a) strengthening and improving controls in the international movement of shipping containers; (b) control of precursors and preventing the diversion of precursors and sharing experiences, results and difficulties encountered to enable effective control by authorities of countries in the region, including the challenge faced by the authorities in detecting and dismantling clandestine laboratories and related health and safety issues, as well as the safe disposal of seized materials. In addition, it was recommended that further consideration be given to the establishment of an information system that, in real time and in full respect of national legal frameworks, could facilitate the provision and exchange of information among the drug law enforcement authorities in the countries in the region. A number of representatives indicated that they would continue discussing the possible establishment of such a system as follow-up to the Eighteenth Meeting. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela suggested that the Nineteenth Meeting could focus its attention on the growing problem of trafficking in cocaine from Latin America and the Caribbean to Africa, particularly West Africa, and that consideration should be given to inviting representatives of those States to the Nineteenth Meeting for a round-table discussion on operational cooperation and coordination. It was noted that, in accordance with past practice, the Secretariat would finalize, in consultation with States in the region, as appropriate, the wording of the issues to be considered by the working groups at the Nineteenth Meeting.

37. The Meeting took note of the proposals and requested the Secretariat to formulate the issues to be discussed by the working groups prior to the Nineteenth Meeting. On that basis, the following draft provisional agenda for the Nineteenth Meeting was approved:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures.
4. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.
5. Consideration of issues by working groups.
6. Follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly.

7. Organization of the Twentieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the report of the Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.

VI. Adoption of the report of the Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean

38. At its 7th meeting, on 17 October 2008, the Eighteenth Meeting adopted its report (UNODC/HONLAC/2008/L.1 and Add.1-4), including the reports of the working groups and the recommendations contained therein, as orally amended.

VII. Organization of the Meeting

A. Opening and duration of the Meeting

39. The Eighteenth Meeting of HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean, was held in Tegucigalpa from 13 to 17 October 2008. At the opening meeting, held on 13 October 2008, statements were made by the President of Honduras and by the representative of the Executive Director and Regional Representative for Mexico and Central America of UNODC. Also participating in the opening meeting were the President of the Supreme Court, the Presidential Commissioner on Drugs, the Deputy Public Prosecutor and the Deputy Attorney-General of Honduras.

40. The Eighteenth Meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Seventeenth Meeting of HONLEA, the Executive Secretary of the National Council for the Control of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of Ecuador. Upon being elected, the Chairperson of the Eighteenth Meeting, the Executive Secretary of the National Council against Drug Trafficking of Honduras, also addressed the participants.

B. Attendance

41. The following States members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean were represented: Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Haiti, Honduras, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama, Peru, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

42. The Russian Federation was represented by an observer.

43. The Permanent Central American Commission for the Eradication of the Illicit Production, Traffic, Consumption and Use of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, INTERPOL, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, the United

Nations Population Fund and the Department of Safety and Security of the Secretariat were represented by observers.

44. UNODC served as the secretariat of the Meeting.

C. Election of officers

45. At its 1st meeting, on 13 October 2008, the Meeting elected the following officers by acclamation:

<i>Chairperson:</i>	Mirna Andino (Honduras)
<i>First Vice-Chairperson:</i>	Edylberto José Molina Molina (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela)
<i>Second Vice-Chairperson:</i>	Miguel Ángel Pérez Martín (Cuba)
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	Carlton Wilson (Jamaica)

D. Adoption of the agenda

46. At its 1st meeting, on 13 October 2008, the Eighteenth Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Major regional drug trafficking trends and countermeasures.
4. Implementation, by States in the region, of the recommendations adopted by the Seventeenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.
5. Consideration of topics by working groups:
 - (a) The region's response to trafficking in cocaine;
 - (b) Strengthening information exchange and operational cooperation at the inter-agency, cross-border and regional levels;
 - (c) Demand reduction: law enforcement's role in supporting effective policies.
6. Organization of the Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.
7. Other business.
8. Adoption of the report of the Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.

E. Documentation

47. The documents before the Eighteenth Meeting are listed in the annex to the present report.

VIII. Closure of the Meeting

48. The Chairperson of the Eighteenth Meeting made a closing statement.

Annex

List of documents before the Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean

<i>Document number</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Title or description</i>
UNODC/HONLAC/2008/1	2	Provisional agenda, including annotations and provisional timetable
UNODC/HONLAC/2008/2	3	Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation
UNODC/HONLAC/2008/3	4	Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Seventeenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean
UNODC/HONLAC/2008/4	6	Organization of the Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean
UNODC/HONLAC/2008/L.1 and Add.1-4	8	Draft report
UNODC/HONLAC/2008/CRP.1	3	Statistics on drug trafficking trends in the Americas and worldwide
UNODC/HONLAC/2007/CRP.2-13	3	Country reports