

21 July 2015

Original: English*

**Twenty-fifth Meeting of Heads of National
Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa**

Algiers, 14-18 September 2015

Item 3 of the provisional agenda**

**Current situation with respect to subregional and regional
cooperation in countering drug trafficking****Current situation with respect to subregional and regional
cooperation in countering drug trafficking****I. Introduction**

1. Since the Twenty-fourth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa, held in Addis Ababa from 15 to 19 September 2014, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has continued to formulate and implement programmes to address problems related to drugs and organized crime in Africa.

II. Africa-wide initiatives

2. Drug and human trafficking, organized crime and the illicit trafficking of firearms continue to affect the economic and social development in many parts of Africa. This situation is further exacerbated by factors including wars and intra-state conflicts, the revolutions in North Africa, weaknesses in the social and criminal justice system, corruption, limited opportunities for youth, and disparity in income levels, which provides ample opportunity for organized crime syndicates' activities in the region. Moreover, over the past few years, Africa has increasingly been used by the international drug-trafficking networks to trans-ship and stockpile illicit drugs on a large scale. These illegal organizations prove to be very flexible and creative in their production and distribution processes. Moreover, as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General on the threat of terrorists benefiting from transnational organized crime (S/2015/366), there are growing concerns, in

* Available only in Arabic, English and French, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.

** UNODC/HONLAF/25/1.



particular, regarding possible links between organized crime and terrorism on the African continent, in view of the potential to affect the promotion of peace and stability across the region.

3. UNODC has continued to support the implementation of the African Union (AU) Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention 2013-2017. UNODC participated in the Sixth Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Drug Control held in Addis Ababa from 6 to 8 October 2014. The conference was entitled “Drugs Kills but Bad Policies Kill More — Scaling Up Balanced and Integrated Responses Towards Drug Control in Africa” and one of its objectives was to assess progress made in implementing the AU Plan of Action. In this context, UNODC delivered training on developing drug policies and demand reduction strategies to policy makers from different AU countries. On the occasion of the First Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control at the AU Conference, held in Addis Ababa from 13 to 17 April 2015, UNODC formulated recommendations to Member States on how to optimize drug use prevention and drug dependence treatment and care activities. UNODC has been providing technical assistance to AU countries in the areas covered by the AU Action Plan, as described in detail in the following sections.

4. UNODC has continued to support regional coordination efforts in the context of the preparation of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem, which will be held in New York from 19 to 21 April 2016. In particular, UNODC has started to organize a series of seven regional dialogues on drug policy and HIV. The first three regional meetings will take place in Africa, respectively in Dakar in September 2015, in Rabat in October 2015 and in Nairobi by the end of 2015. During each meeting, representatives from the drug control agencies of ten countries and from six regional or national civil society organizations will be invited to share best practices and agree on priority issues to be addressed during the special session.

III. West Africa

5. In West Africa, an alarmingly increasing trend in cannabis cultivation scale in terms of acreage and packaging processes has been observed. In July 2014, the Malian police seized 790 kg of cannabis herb from Ghana, which transited through Burkina Faso. A few months later, the same police services made another seizure of 60 kg of the same cannabis herb on a plantation in Southern Mali.

6. Criminals from Nigeria continue to traffic cannabis mainly to China (in particular, Guangzhou), as confirmed by seizures made at the Lagos International Airport. The joint airport interdiction task force (JAITF) of Lagos seized a total of 94.31 kg of cannabis in 2014 and a total of 90.91 kg of cannabis since the beginning of 2015, which were destined for China, as well as 64.47 kg, which were supposed to be transported to the United Arab Emirates. Furthermore, in 2014, 98 kg of cannabis destined for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland were seized by the JAITF working at Kotoko International Airport in Accra.

7. On 14 May 2015, the French army seized 1.5 tons of cannabis resin and a cache of weapons after stopping a convoy of militants in the north-eastern desert in

the Niger. Militants in two pickup trucks opened fire on French and Nigerian forces after refusing to stop at a checkpoint and three individuals were arrested and handed over to the Niger's Armed Forces.

8. Since 2014, few seizures of heroin in West Africa have taken place. In 2014, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency of Nigeria (NDLEA) seized 51.01 kg of heroin in 10 seizures; in 6 of those cases, the heroin had originated in Pakistan and was entering Nigeria, while in the other 4, the heroin was leaving Nigeria, destined for China, Italy and Spain. In 2014, 35 kg of heroin were seized by the Accra JAITF and 42 kg by the Lagos JAITF. It is also important to note that the drug was intercepted as a result of the identification of air passenger couriers (who transported the drug by swallowing it or by concealing it in luggage) or in air cargo.

9. Cocaine trafficking remains a major concern for West Africa. The main modes of transport have evolved an increasing use of air assets (including couriers and parcels), a trend likely due to the increased number of flights between South America and West Africa.

10. According to the "Illicit drug seizures with Relation to European Airports" (IDEAS) database, between January 2014 and the end of February 2015, there were 14 cocaine-related arrests at European airports in connection with flights originating from West and Central Africa, and a total of approximately 21 kg of cocaine was seized. According to the same data, all the couriers were Nigerian nationals, with 11 of 14 couriers arrested having departed from Nigeria and 65 per cent of these having departed from the Abuja airport. The remainder departed from Benin and Cameroon.

11. Data provided by NDLEA on drug interceptions at Lagos Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) indicate that out of 59 seizures of cocaine made in 2014, 61 per cent, totalling 100 kg, were made on inward-bound flights. Most of these flights originated from Brazil with the majority transiting Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Morocco. With regard to outward flights, 13 per cent were destined for other African countries, 22 per cent — for Asia (mostly China), and 65 per cent — for Europe. The total amount of cocaine seized in 2014 at MMIA was around 120 kg.

12. Togolese authorities seized around 268 kg of cocaine in 2014. Since the commencement of direct flights between Brazil (São Paulo) and Togo, the volume of cocaine seized at the Gnassingbé Eyadéma International Airport in Lomé increased by 630 per cent compared to the same period in 2013 and reached some 221 kg in 2014. In 2014, out of 32 cocaine seizures made at the airport in Lomé, and originating from Brazil, 25 per cent were destined for Nigeria, 22 per cent — for Benin, 16 per cent — for Togo and 13 per cent — for Guinea-Bissau.

13. Seizures reported at seaports since January 2014 tend to show that this mode of transportation remains in use by cocaine traffickers. In particular, 56 kg of cocaine was hidden in a container on a vessel originating in Suriname, seized at the port of Cotonou in August 2014; and 33 kg of cocaine were hidden in a container seized at the port of Lomé, originating in Brazil.

14. Cabo Verde continues to serve as a hub for transnational organized crime groups involved in cocaine trafficking, as indicated by the seizure of 521 kg of cocaine in November 2014 by the Cabo Verdean judiciary police off the coast of the

island of São Vicente during an operation called “Perla Negra” (“Black Pearl”). In this connection, Cabo Verdean authorities arrested three individuals, all nationals of Spain, who were part of the crew of the yacht, three Spanish citizens residing in São Vicente, as well as one Cuban national and one Swedish national. On 15 January 2015, the Spanish navy intercepted 1,500 kg of cocaine in the Atlantic waters, 80 miles west of Cabo Verde and arrested nine individuals. The drugs were hidden in a boat and destined for the Canary Islands, Spain. In another operation, in May 2015, the Spanish police intercepted a fishing vessel with 1.8 metric tons of cocaine on board, which was sailing 800 nautical miles from the Canary Islands. During the operation, the police arrested three Cape Verdean nationals and one Netherlands citizen who were on board. Following the seizures of 1,500 kg of cocaine in 2012 in Cabo Verde in an operation called “Lancha Voadora” (“Speed Boat”), the criminal group that was proven to own the drugs was led by both a criminal organization composed of Cabo Verdeans based in the Netherlands and an organization of nationals of Cabo Verde and the Netherlands based in Europe. These incidents suggest that Cabo Verdeans appear to play major roles in drug trafficking activities, which use the islands as a hub.

15. Ghana appears to be an important transit country for Latin American cocaine bound for Europe. On 4 March 2015, near Santa Cruz (Plurinational State of Bolivia), the Bolivian authorities and the British National Crime Agency made a seizure of 5,800 kg of cocaine, one of the largest recorded cocaine seizures linked to West Africa. Based on the road map of the container, the drugs were destined for Burkina Faso via the Port of Tema, Ghana, although the Ghanaian authorities believe the drugs were supposed to be repackaged and shipped to Europe from Ghana. Reportedly, the container’s road map was aimed at deceiving authorities. According to Bolivian court documents, the drugs were concealed in 840 sacks of fertilizer. In relation to this seizure, in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, a citizen of Ecuador was arrested, as were three Ghanaians in Ghana, who have since been released on bail. In November 2014, a drug courier coming from Ghana was arrested in London with 12.5 kg of cocaine. Officials of the Kotoka International Airport in Accra were tried in Ghana for complicity, but were subsequently released. In January 2015, two Ghanaians, one of them a former officer of the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority in Ghana, were arrested in the Plurinational State of Bolivia for attempting to facilitate the shipment of 5,880 kg of cocaine from the Plurinational State of Bolivia to Burkina Faso.

16. In April 2015, a court in the Gambia charged one of the country’s leading import firms and seven of its employees with drug trafficking after 45 kg of cocaine were discovered in a sugar shipment from Brazil one month earlier. A similar modus operandi and mode of concealment were used to ship cocaine from Brazil to Guinea in June 2015. Around 81 kg of cocaine were contained in three bags hidden in a container of sugar bags, transported by a vessel registered under the flag of the Marshall Islands, sailing from Brazil and transiting Grenada and the Gambia. Four members of the crew of the vessel were arrested.

17. Tramadol is an analgesic opioid that is not under international control and which is often prescribed after surgery. According to experts, the use of Tramadol has greatly increased, especially in the Sahel region. In 2014, more than 43.578 kg of Tramadol was seized in the Joint Port Control Unit (JPCU) of Cotonou and Tema, while 13.612 kg of Tramadol 200 mg (overdose and counterfeit) was seized in the

JPCU of Cotonou on 4 February 2015. The product came from India and was destined for the Niger.

18. Since January 2014, increased evidence of use and production of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) has been found in West Africa. During the reporting period, the Nigerian authorities dismantled an illegal factory used for the production of methamphetamine in 2014 and two others in May 2015, all in Anambra State. In addition, since January 2015, the Nigerian authorities effected four seizures totalling approximately 92 kg at the international airport of Lagos, Muhamad Murtala International Airport (MMIA). Three of these seizures were of minimal amounts which, combined, totalled roughly 1 kg. However, the remaining seizure is noteworthy for its size, the audacity of its courier and the organization behind the shipment. According to Nigeria's Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the drugs were carried by a religious pastor who was also a member of a notorious drug syndicate operating in Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa. The pastor was transporting 83 kg of ephedrine, which were intercepted by NDLEA — the precursor as well as methamphetamine were destined for South Africa. Moreover, 50 kg of ephedrine, destined for Mozambique, were intercepted by NDLEA in February 2015. In 2014, NDLEA seized about 110 kg of methamphetamine at MMIA, mainly destined for South Africa, and Malaysia.

19. For the first time, countries such as Senegal have reported major seizures of ATS. Senegalese authorities seized 30 kg of methamphetamine at Kidira near the Mali border on 27 January 2015, followed by an additional 82 kg on 2 February 2015. Worth mentioning is that 41 kg of ATS were seized at Kidira border by the Senegalese Customs in December 2013. In each of these three cases, the drugs departed the Malian capital of Bamako before reaching Senegal, which suggests the existence of methamphetamine laboratories in the region of Bamako.

20. Official data provided by the Indian Ministry of Finance indicate that around 8.7 tons of ephedrine were officially exported to Nigeria in 2014 and 3.5 tons between January and May 2015, for legitimate purposes. Some ephedrine and pseudoephedrine imported to Nigeria may be diverted from the intended legitimate purpose by criminal groups for use in illicit methamphetamine production.

21. In October 2013, UNODC commenced the implementation of activities within the framework of the "UNODC Contribution to the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel" aimed at contributing to the security and governance pillars of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel 2013-2017, which was developed pursuant to Security Council resolution 2056 (2012). The programme's objectives are to support the development of accessible, efficient and accountable criminal justice systems in the Sahel, in order to effectively combat illicit trafficking, drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism in the region. Since then, the UNODC Sahel Programme has implemented over 120 activities and reached over 3,300 direct beneficiaries, mainly in the fields of border control, anti-corruption, money-laundering, anti-human trafficking, terrorism prevention and firearms control.

22. In close coordination with the office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, UNODC continues implementation of activities in the framework to the Integrated Strategy coordination mechanisms, and in particular to the working groups on security and governance. UNODC also collaborates with

several other United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). UNODC staff in Mali is collocated with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), where cooperation and synergies are ensured in the area of counter-trafficking, terrorism prevention and rule of law efforts.

23. UNODC had supported ECOWAS Member States in establishing the West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors (WACAP) in 2012. Since then, the Network has held four plenary meetings in Côte d'Ivoire, Cabo Verde (November 2013), Burkina Faso (May 2014) and Ghana (March 2015). Just before the fourth plenary in Ghana, a ministerial meeting has been held and the Network's charter and regulations have been adopted and signed by the member States' Ministers of Justice. Nine national training programmes at national levels were also organized for the magistrates and judicial police officers on internal cooperation in criminal matters. The Network brings together prosecutors and central authorities to exchange ideas, experiences and best practices and participate in joint training. Members also benefit from training and experience shared by experts from the United States of America and France. There are marked improvements in the handling of requests for international cooperation by countries participating in the Network, both among themselves as well as with countries outside the subregion.

24. The Global Container Control Programme (CCP), which is implemented jointly by UNODC and WCO, currently has project sites in Africa, Central and South America, as well as Central Asia and South Asia. The core of this initiative is the establishment of inter-agency Joint Port Control Units (JPCUs), including customs, police and other structures such as gendarmerie and drug law enforcement agency. The teams are trained in risk analysis and profiling, advanced specific trainings, as well as container inspection. They are also supported with a range of equipment and technology, including the software Container COMM, which is a secure message system allowing container control units around the world to exchange information and intelligence in real time. In 2013, 281 kg of cocaine in Ghana and 127 kg of heroin in Benin were seized by CCP-trained units, showing the continued success of the Programme in terms of actual seizures. A further 33 kg of cocaine was seized in January 2014 by the CCP-trained unit in Togo. The strategy for 2014-2015 is: (a) to increase the level of mentoring support to the existing units in Senegal, Ghana, Togo and Benin; (b) to promote information-sharing and cooperation between West Africa and source countries through planned operations; (c) to deliver specialized training in areas of particular concern e.g. precursor control; (d) to make significant strides in launching the Programme in the Port of Abidjan; and (e) to explore the opportunities to expand the Programme into other key ports in West Africa such as Lagos, Conakry and Monrovia, as well as Douala and Pointe Noire in Central Africa. The discussions to implement a Joint Port Control Unit in one of the dry ports of Bamako are under way. UNODC will ensure its activities are coordinated with those of other donors and technical assistance partners.

25. UNODC continued providing technical assistance to various ECOWAS Member States through its Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and Terrorism Financing (GPML), which is aimed at strengthening their anti-money-laundering and counter-terrorism financing (AML/CFT) systems. As of

2015, GPML initiated a major train-the-trainer programme on financial investigations, aimed at identifying a cluster of law enforcement practitioners who will be able to replicate a standard training package on financial investigation techniques. The Programme is implemented in partnership with relevant training institutions (Police, Gendarmerie, Revenue Authorities, Judiciary, etc.) and with the Financial Intelligence Unit of the beneficiary countries. While the Programme has been completed in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, it will be implemented in Ghana and Benin later in 2015 and in Mali, the Niger, Nigeria and Togo in the course of 2016.

26. In addition, GPML has been furthering the establishment of the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for West Africa (ARIN-WA), based on the model of CARIN and other regional ARIN-type bodies. ARIN-WA held its first meeting in Accra, Ghana, in November 2014. The GIABA ad-hoc Ministerial Committee Meeting, held in Yamoussoukro on 23 May 2015, formally endorsed the initiative and its Operational Guide. While fostering asset recovery efforts and best practices on seizure, confiscation and management of proceeds of crime, ARIN-WA also aims at contributing to the sharing of operational information between its focal points, and between ARIN-WA and other regional networks. To this effect, ARIN-WA members have been participating in some meetings of other regional networks, including the RRAG (Red de Recuperación de Activos de GAFILAT), in Asunción, May 2015, and CARIN (meeting of ARIN Secretariats, The Hague, June 2015).

27. In response to the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, three United Nations agencies, namely UNODC, UNOWA/Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), activities continue to be implemented in the framework of West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI), which targets for the time being five post-conflict countries in West Africa: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. The backbone of the project is the establishment and full operationalization of the Transnational Crime Units (TCUs) in the implementing countries and the enhancement of the regional cooperation. WACI implementation in Sierra Leone and Liberia is more advanced in comparison to the other three implementing countries.

28. The Transnational Organized Crime Unit (TOCU) in Sierra Leone, which currently is composed of 55 staff members from various law enforcement authorities (LEAs), is fully functional and operational. Its overall operational capacity and capability has been strengthened through logistic and operational support, a series of on-the-job specialized training courses, as well as support for the ground case investigation/operation practices. Based on the figures provided by TOCU, since its establishment in 2010, the unit investigated 391 cases, with 229 persons prosecuted for involvement in organized crimes. The total number of seizures attributed to the work of TOCU amounted 46.86 tons of cannabis, 142 kg of cocaine and 3 kg of heroin. TOCU Sierra Leone has participated in several international investigations on transnational organized crimes and conducted joint operations in partnership with TOCU Liberia. In April 2014, the National Security Council approved TOCU to become its subcommittee, which resulted in the full integration of TOCU in the Sierra Leone security architecture and inclusion into the national annual budget.

29. The Transnational Organized Crime Unit (TOCU) in Liberia, which currently is composed of 27 staff members from various LEAs, is also fully functional and operational. A comprehensive package of capacity-building activities has been

delivered, along with logistic and operational support. Since its establishment in 2011, TOCU Liberia participated in the investigation of 39 complex criminal cases, with persons prosecuted for involvement in organized crime and seized 250 kg of cannabis, 4,900 grams of heroin and 1,486 grams of cocaine. TOCU Liberia has participated in several regional investigations on transnational organized crimes and conducted joint operations in partnership with TOCU Sierra Leone.

30. The Transnational Organized Crime Unit (TOCU) in Guinea-Bissau, which currently is composed of 20 staff members from various LEAs, is almost fully functional and operational. A comprehensive package of specialized police training was delivered to the unit, along with logistic and operational support. Due to the political situation in the country, the project implementation was suspended from April 2012 until September 2013. Even if the political situation was instable and despite very limited financial resources, the TOCU Guinea-Bissau conducted several police operations, in partnership with the Judiciary Police, resulting in the investigation of 41 cases of drug trafficking, with 54 persons prosecuted and a quantity of 31.13 kg of cocaine and 216.96 kg of marijuana seized.

31. For Côte d'Ivoire, the WACI partners supported the finalization of the decree establishing the Transnational Crime Unit (TCU) in the country, which was approved by the national authorities on November 2014. At present, UNODC is working closely with UNOCI partners and the national authorities toward establishing the TCU in the country (to be in the build-up phase).

32. Because of the Ebola crisis, no progress was achieved in Guinea since the assessment mission conducted by the WACI partners in mid-2012. The assessment report was endorsed by the national authorities and WACI implementation shall start, once funds are available and the Ebola situation solved.

33. The European Commission-funded initiative Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP), implemented by UNODC in cooperation with World Customs Organization and INTERPOL, has proven to be successful in the beneficiary countries where it operates through improving national inter-service cooperation, raising professional skills of law enforcement authorities and assisting to make vulnerable countries less attractive to drug trafficking organizations. In the framework of AIRCOP, 13 joint airport interdiction task forces (JAITFs) have now become fully operational in Africa: Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon (Yaoundé and Douala), Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. In 2014, 197 seizures were made, with a total of 479.41 kg of cocaine, 77 kg of heroin, 104.91 kg of methamphetamine and 218.90 kg of cannabis. Two hundred and thirty people have been arrested. The establishment of the JAITF in Guinea-Bissau is ongoing and it is expected to be fully operational in September 2015. In Guinea, the project is suspended in accordance with European Council Decision 2012/665/CFSP amending Council Decision 2010/638/CFSP. With the participation of European countries, a tighter network for enhanced surveillance of traffic from the cocaine production zones to the destination zones via the transit countries was made possible. Annual meetings and steering committees continue to increase synergy between partners and beneficiaries about the implementation and achievement of goals.

34. In January 2015, UNODC started the implementation of the project "Support to the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking, organized crime

related to it and drug abuse in West Africa”. UNODC provided technical assistance to ECOWAS in preparing a revised Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa for the period 2016-2020. Among others, UNODC supported ECOWAS through its participation in the 10th Meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Drug Coordinating Committee (IMDCC) of ECOWAS Member States held in January 2014 in Cotonou.

35. In 2014, with the technical and financial support of UNODC, seven health facilities in the subregion have received support for renovation and medical equipment in order to provide drug treatment and care services: National Institute for Public Health (INSP) and the Psychiatric Center of Yamoussokrou in Côte d’Ivoire, the Teaching University Fann of Dakar in Senegal, the “Emergency” Unit of Treatment (USUT) in the National Center for Psychiatry and Association St Camille de Lellis, Center of Avrankou in Benin, the District Hospital of Sokodé in Togo, the specialized centre for treatment of addiction.

36. In the framework of the Joint UNODC/WHO Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care, the Government of Senegal has increased the availability and accessibility of evidence-based drug dependence treatment and care services by setting up the “Centre de Prise en Charge Intégrée des Addictions de Dakar” (CEPIAD) inaugurated in December 2014. UNODC resources complemented funding from other partners and has helped to establish this drug addiction treatment centre opened in the University Hospital of Dakar, where the first methadone maintenance Programme in West Africa is delivered. In addition to drug dependence treatment services, outreach programmes and HIV and hepatitis infections are being implemented targeting specially injecting drug users.

37. UNODC provided technical assistance to the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime related to it and Drug Abuse in West Africa during the 10th Meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Drug Coordinating Committee (IMDCC) of ECOWAS Member States held in January 2014 in Cotonou (Benin). The support of UNODC has helped to identify emerging challenges, and to propose ways of accelerating the implementation of the plan. The gaps identified and emerging challenges will form the basis of the formulation of the 2015 to 2020 Drug Action Plan. UNODC has also started the process of developing the second Integrated Regional Programme for West Africa for 2016-2020, which will support and complement the ECOWAS Plan of Action and focus on the nexus between organized crime and terrorism, which has been affecting the region.

IV. Central Africa

38. At present, UNODC activities in Central Africa are severely limited by the lack of resources. However, potential for programmatic initiatives in Central Africa include strengthening maritime security and curbing illicit trafficking in the Sahel. The geographical positioning of Central Africa close to the Gulf of Guinea and the Sahel region puts the region at risk of being exploited by criminal groups involved in drug trafficking by land, sea and air. For various reasons, it has not been possible to realize an in-depth assessment of the drug trafficking threats and routes impacting the region. In the framework of the AIRCOP Project, two new JAITFs were recently

established in Cameroon, in Yaoundé and Douala International airports, where the main recent seizures of cocaine took place (in 2011, there were around 15 kg of cocaine seized at Douala airport and in 2013, the volume of seizure of cocaine reached 27 kg).

39. Concerning maritime crime, following Security Council resolutions 2018 (2011) and 2039 (2012), UNODC has been mapping the national abilities of all Gulf of Guinea coastal States, through intelligence and in-depth reports. Through its Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), UNODC developed a strategic framework to the enhancing of regional capacities to tackle piracy and armed robbery against vessels, the UNODC Strategy in Relation to Piracy, Armed Robbery Against Vessels and Maritime Crime in the Gulf of Guinea Region.

40. Efforts to mobilize funding are ongoing. UNODC is in contact with the United Nations Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and has started supporting the Government of Gabon in its efforts against wildlife crime. In this connection, UNODC and ECCAS have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Libreville on 16 January 2015 to enhance their cooperation, particularly in the fight against wildlife and forest crime.

V. Southern Africa

41. UNODC concluded a research project in Southern Africa as part of the broader “Afghan Opiate Trade Programme” in 2014/2015. Opiate use prevalence in Southern Africa is 0.2-0.4 per cent of the adult population. Large shipments of heroin from South-West Asia, across the Indian Ocean, have become more apparent (based on seizures), while such movements had been suspected for decades. Dhows are used for trafficking opiates along this so-called “southern route”, and increases in law enforcement may have pushed some of the trade from South-West Asia to further south to South Africa and Mozambique from Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania. UNODC work to date in the region has focused on treatment for people who use drugs, including in prisons, and targeting illicit financial flows and money-laundering.

42. UNODC continued to support the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network of Southern Africa (ARINSA) in 2014/2015, which is modelled on the Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network, and supports proceeds of crime/asset forfeiture practitioners’ network, as well as facilitates information requests for international and regional mutual legal assistance. In 2014, ARINSA brought together investigators from Asia and Africa including Southern Africa to Botswana to network and exchange information on wild life and forestry crime (WLFC). A follow-up meeting was held in January 2015 in Thailand and its objective was to enhance cooperation between African and Asian States in countering WLFC. Since July 2014, ARINSA has built national capacity of 474 judges, magistrates, prosecutors and investigators on asset forfeiture, money-laundering and WLFC using their national legislations from the following countries: Malawi, Namibia, United Republic of Tanzania (Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar), Lesotho, Kenya, Botswana, Uganda and Swaziland.

43. UNODC produced Asset Management Manuals, as well as legislative reviews for the introduction of non-conviction based forfeiture for Botswana and Namibia. A

website has been established for use by the ARINSA network. It consists of an open area, as well as a secure platform for exchanging information, and an e-learning platform. The website has been upgraded and, amongst others, it now includes the Wildlife and Timber Platform.

44. In April 2014, as part of the UNODC-WHO Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care, the UNODC Regional Office for Southern Africa, in cooperation with the Department of Mental Health in Mozambique, conducted a five-day training course on Volumes A-D of the UNODC TreatNet Training Package for 32 practitioners working with drug treatment in Maputo.

VI. East Africa

45. There is a continuing trend of organized criminal groups trafficking large amounts of heroin across the Indian Ocean, on a route from the Makran Coast to Eastern Africa. In April 2014, there was a record heroin seizure on the Indian Ocean by the Combined Maritime Forces (1,032 kg), from a dhow en route from Pakistan to the United Republic of Tanzania. In 2014, both Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, with international assistance, seized heroin trafficking vessels in territorial waters, allowing for the arrest of those on board and the possibility of legal action/court proceedings. The majority of heroin trafficked into East Africa is for onwards shipment, as the quantities seized far exceed estimated local user demand. South Africa is reportedly a major destination for such onward shipment.

46. The UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), together with littoral and island states of East Africa and the Indian Ocean region, established the Indian Ocean Forum on Maritime Crime (IOFMC). The counter-narcotics pillar of IOFMC has developed law enforcement and prosecutor networks to enhance regional cooperation to combat drug trafficking in the maritime domain.

47. As heroin usage is becoming an identified problem in many coastal locations, due to the aforementioned trafficking route from South-West Asia, UNODC is working with Kenyan counterparts to increase treatment programmes and services. As spillover from these developing transnational flows risks further growing the user market, including along land routes to interior and western Kenya, more of these services will be required. Regarding drug dependence treatment, UNODC worked to enhance the skills of Government officials and civil society organizations (CSOs) through capacity-building opportunities in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania. The Governments and CSOs in Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania also accessed HIV prevention capacity-building opportunities.

48. In 2014, UNODC continued to work on comprehensively addressing HIV/AIDS and drug use prevention, treatment, care and support as it relates to people who use and people who are injecting drugs (PWU/ID) as well as people in prison settings. In this context, UNODC started the implementation of a programme that aims to reduce morbidity and mortality among PWU/ID in Kenya. Through this four-year project, the aim is to: (a) address policies, strategies, coordination and guidelines to increase PWU/ID access to evidence-based interventions; (b) increase access to comprehensive PWU/ID package of HIV prevention, care and support in coastal regions; (c) address policy and community support for HIV interventions for

PWU/ID; and (d) improve capacity to monitor and evaluate PWU/ID service provision programmes.

49. UNODC will commence the second phase of its Regional Programme for East Africa in 2016 (through 2019), “Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security”. Drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, illicit financial flows and the use of transport networks for trafficking, including maritime crime, will be priority areas under the Countering Transnational Organized Crime and Trafficking pillar.

VII. North Africa

50. More than four years after the start of the Arab Spring, the political and security situation in 2014 across much of the Middle East and North Africa remains unstable or in transition. The deteriorating security situation in Libya led to the evacuation of United Nations international staff. However, the UNODC Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa (ROMENA) remained actively engaged in the region, including in Libya, by delocalizing activities. The Regional Programme on Drug Control, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Reform in the Arab States 2011-2015 concluded its penultimate year of implementation and Member States of the Arab League requested the development of a new Regional Programme for the period 2016-2021 during the third meeting of the Regional Programme Steering and Follow-Up Committee held in Cairo in December 2014. The findings of the in-depth evaluation of the Regional Programme concluded in July 2015 also advocate for and highlight the importance of the continuation of UNODC engagement in the region.

51. During the Cairo meeting, the participating Member States expressed their deep concern over the growth of illicit trafficking, organized crime, corruption and terrorism in the region. The political instability caused by armed conflicts led to the deterioration of the capacity of several States in the region to exert effective control over their borders, and their territories have been exploited by traffickers seeking to profit from lucrative drug markets in the affected countries. Of major concern was that proceeds of illicit drug trafficking may be used for the financing of terrorist activities. Data for 2014 have not been compiled yet; however, based on significant seizures reported so far, it is apparent that illicit drug trafficking in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has continued to increase in 2014, following an upward trend that started three years ago.

52. Data available for 2014 show a significant increase in cocaine seizures in the MENA region. Major seizures in 2014 in the region already account for more than what was intercepted in the entire region during the period 2010-2013. Cocaine seized in Morocco was shipped directly from Brazil via commercial flights and destined to West Africa. Other cocaine shipments were concealed in maritime containers. North Africa was typically used as a transit hub for cocaine going through West Africa en route from South America to Europe. However, seizures in 2014 indicate transit from the North African region to West Africa. Whether these seizures are rip-offs, meaning that they were supposed to be collected in the transit country, but traffickers failed to do so or traffickers intended to find new routes into Europe, is still unknown.

53. Heroin seizures, which experienced a significant increase in several countries of the MENA region in 2013, declined again in 2014. One exception was Egypt, which witnessed an increase, with 613 kg of heroin seized in 2014, compared to 260 kg in 2013 and 75 kg in 2012.

54. Seizures of cannabis resin also declined in 2014 in Morocco (from 137 tons in 2012 to 70 tons in 2014), Egypt (from 84 tons in 2013 to 54 tons in 2014) and Algeria (from 211 tons in 2013 to 182 tons in 2014). The overall decrease in cannabis resin seizures in North Africa does not necessarily mean a decrease in production and consumption, and could be attributed to a reduced focus on illicit drugs by the national authorities (e.g. to re-focus on counter-terrorism) and weak law enforcement agency capabilities. Egyptian authorities resumed eradication campaigns targeting cannabis and poppy cultivation sites, eradicating 344.7 hectares of cannabis and 306.5 hectares of poppy.

55. Data on amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) are not yet available for 2014. Tramadol, a prescription opioid, continues to raise concerns in North African countries. However, according to the Egyptian authorities, seizures of Tramadol declined dramatically (from 435 million tablets in 2012 to 157 million in 2014) after legislation was amended in 2013 and Tramadol marked as a controlled substance. Egypt also amended its Narcotic Drug Law 182 of 1960 to include a new psychoactive substance, such as synthetic cannabinoid, known on the Egyptian market as Voodoo or Spice. In Libya, by contrast, the abuse of Tramadol seems to have increased. In addition, psychoactive medication and opioid substitution drugs, such as Subutex, are reportedly abused in North African countries.

56. Information on the cultivation, consumption, production, manufacture and trafficking of narcotic drugs in the MENA region remains very limited. Several countries in the region produced reports on drug trafficking (not UNODC-supported) and provided input to the UNODC World Drug Report. However, in 2014, ROMENA noticed increased challenges in collecting relevant and reliable data. There is also a lack of information-sharing mechanisms in the region.

57. Despite the scarcity of available and reliable data on drug trafficking and drug consumption and challenges in collecting such data, UNODC made substantial efforts to improve information collection as well as cooperation and information-sharing among the countries of the region. Two assessments on criminal investigation and data collection, as well as on forensic services, were conducted in Tunisia. The resulting documents are seen as the first comprehensive and accurate description of the country's needs in the field of criminal investigations and data collection. In addition, ROMENA remained engaged with Arab counter-narcotics authorities to collect seizure data and provide advice on information analysis. To provide baseline data for analyses and the development of responses to drug use in Arab countries, ROMENA conducted several studies. Among them was a feasibility study in Egypt on Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST) with the objectives to develop an operational model, obtain support from key decision-makers through national task forces, and move forward to pilot OST in the communities concerned. A population size estimation study of three key affected populations in Egypt (female sex workers, men who have sex with men, and people who inject drugs) started in 2014 and is currently under way.

58. With regard to regional and interregional cooperation to combat illicit drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, improvements were recorded in 2014. UNODC co-organized regional conferences to discuss practices and mechanisms related to international cooperation in criminal matters to combat terrorism and organized crime. Other activities resulted in an increased awareness of the benefits of cooperating with the private sector in the area of precursor control. Continuous advocacy for the UNODC Container Control Programme, which is being implemented jointly with the World Customs Organization (WCO), paved the way for the start of its implementation in Morocco. In Egypt, a first activity on countering illicit cross-border trafficking took place in November 2014. As a result, ROMENA will start a land border control programme focusing on strengthening the borders between Egypt, Libya and the Sudan in 2015. In parallel, the extension of AIRCOP, a joint project with Interpol and WCO to combat illicit trafficking by air and the travel of dangerous individuals, is foreseen in the MENA region at the end of 2015.

59. ROMENA also conducted several activities throughout the region on drug prevention, treatment and care, including on OST and a needle and syringe exchange programme in Morocco. In December 2014, ROMENA received the agreement of Egypt to start a pilot OST programme. Tunisia was supported in the development of a drug strategy. A variety of capacity-building trainings to increase and improve the coverage and services for drug dependence treatment and care were conducted across the region, including Egypt and Morocco, in the course of 2014. In addition, UNODC provided technical support to Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, South Sudan and the Sudan in the fields of regulations and policies for the provision of controlled medication and the prevention of their diversion and abuse. This included support to the development of standard MoUs for public-private cooperation in preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals. UNODC also significantly contributed to the improvement of harm reduction services in Egypt. In this regard, 528 drug users who visited the two drop-in centres supported by UNODC in Alexandria and Luxor received counselling on prevention, treatment and care of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B and C, adverse consequences of drug use, symptoms of sexually transmissible diseases, HIV voluntary testing, tuberculosis, and drug treatment.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

60. On the basis of common and shared responsibility, countries in Africa should continue to take action against illicit drug trafficking and organized crime through balanced and comprehensive responses. The transnational dimension of drug trafficking and organized crime underlines the need to strengthen regional cooperation in this regard. The main areas for enhanced cooperation should include increasing information exchange within the region, tackling financial flows linked to drug trafficking, as well as preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals that are used to manufacture drugs.

61. In the light of the foregoing, the meeting could consider the following:

(a) Enhance collaboration and cooperation to prevent the diversion of chemical precursors as a key measure for reducing drug supply;

(b) Continue to strengthen regional cooperation among law-enforcement and intelligence agencies to effectively combat drug trafficking and associated money-laundering;

(c) Urgently consider creating national units to investigate and prosecute cross-border crimes, and in particular establishing or strengthening TOCUs in West and East Africa, as well as foster regional cooperation among law-enforcement and intelligence agencies to effectively combat drug trafficking and associated money-laundering;

(d) Continue to strengthen the timely exchange of information and best practices at the bilateral, regional and international levels, as well as strengthen joint operations and coordination, including in the area of preventive measures;

(e) Consider developing a sustainable system of collecting and sharing valid and reliable data on drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse;

(f) Further improve national capacity to investigate and prosecute major drug trafficking-related laundering schemes;

(g) Develop information-sharing mechanisms between law enforcement agencies working on reducing the supply of drugs, with government agencies and civil society organizations working on drug demand reduction;

(h) Improve national and regional cooperation to manage the import and production of precursor chemicals, as well as prevent their diversion into the illicit economy;

(i) Improve national and regional cooperation to reduce the illegal trade in and smuggling of wildlife products and stolen goods, particularly where clear linkages exist between those activities and drug trafficking;

(j) Promote regional cooperation in the area of border control, including at maritime ports of entry and remote sea borders;

(k) Combine drug trafficking repression strategies with crime and violence prevention programmes, focusing on the local level and on the most vulnerable groups, including women, young people and migrants;

(l) Develop regional strategies to counter drug trafficking that envision the linkages with other forms of organized crime, such as trafficking of firearms and persons, for a better-integrated response to the problem;

(m) Promote a balanced approach to drug control that also includes effective and sustainable drug demand reduction through prevention of drug use, drug-dependence treatment and rehabilitation;

(n) Increase investment in South-South cooperation programmes, with a view to strengthening national law enforcement in fragile and post-conflict countries and achieving sustainable results;

(o) Emphasize, at the national level, the need to address the growing problems of drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse, and to strengthen political commitment including the allocation of adequate resources by Member States in this regard;

(p) Call on UNODC to continue supporting countries undergoing political transitions in the field of criminal justice in general and the law enforcement sector in particular;

(q) Encourage Governments to continue their financial and technical support to the UNODC Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP) so as to support the establishment of new operational joint airport interdiction task force (JAITF) units and the ongoing professional development of established operations;

(r) Encourage airport-based law enforcement agencies, where they have not already done so, to open a dialogue with the joint airport interdiction task force units formed under the AIRCOP initiative, to commence information-sharing and to build professional networks that will in turn support more effective operational responses against trafficking;

(s) Encourage Governments to support initiatives that facilitate close operational cooperation in information-sharing (such as Advanced Passenger Information (API) Passenger Name Record);

(t) Invite States in the region to conduct national studies and assessments on drug-related issues and to work with UNODC in this regard, including on related capacity-building and information-gathering and analysis;

(u) Express support for the development and/or expansion of information-sharing mechanisms among law enforcement agencies and for regional border control initiatives to curb illicit trafficking, transnational organized crime and terrorism;

(v) Encourage Governments to adopt and expand the global Container Control Programme (CCP) and the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP) in the Middle East and North Africa region;

(w) Invite Governments to place increased emphasis on the dismantling of drug trafficking networks as a strategic approach in order to move beyond the seizures of drugs and arrests of low-level operatives;

(x) Urge Governments to strengthen national drug treatment systems and provide evidence-based voluntary services;

(y) Encourage Governments to increase community-based programmes and services that assist in preventing drug use and its negative effects, including an increase in the offer of specialized treatment and rehabilitation centres;

(z) Urge Governments to implement the Arab Initiative to Protect Youth from Drugs;

(aa) Invite Governments and other relevant stakeholders to continue awareness-raising campaigns, including the development of evidence-based, unified manuals and protocols for drug treatment and harm reduction services;

(bb) Invite States to develop or review alternative development initiatives and other crops as alternatives to narcotic plants.