



United States Department of State  
*Bureau of International Narcotics  
and Law Enforcement Affairs*

# **International Narcotics Control Strategy Report**

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**Volume I**

**Drug and Chemical  
Control**

**March 2022**



United States Department of State  
*Bureau of International Narcotics  
and Law Enforcement Affairs*

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## Common Abbreviations

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
AFRICOM	U.S. Military Command for Africa
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATS	Amphetamine-Type Stimulants
CARICC	Central Asia Regional Information Coordination Center
CARSI	Central America Regional Security Initiative
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
CBSI	Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
DARE	Drug Abuse Resistance Education
DEA	U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	U.S. Department of Justice
DTO	Drug Trafficking Organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
ICE	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
ILEA	International Law Enforcement Academy
INCB	International Narcotics Control Board
INCSR	International Narcotics Control Strategy Report
INL	U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
JIATF-S	Joint Interagency Task Force South
JIATF-W	Joint Interagency Task Force West
MAOC-N	Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre-Narcotics
MLAT	Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NIDA	National Institute of Drug Abuse
OAS	Organization of American States
OAS/CICAD	Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission
ONDCP	Office of National Drug Control Policy
NPS	New Psychoactive Substances
SELEC	Southeast European Law Enforcement Center
SIU	Special Investigative Unit
SOUTHCOM	U.S. Military Command for the Caribbean, Central and South America
TOC	Transnational Organized Crime
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNCAC	United Nations Convention against Corruption
UNTOC	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

USCG	U.S. Coast Guard
UTC	Universal Treatment Curriculum for Substance Use Disorders
WACSI	West Africa Cooperative Security Initiative
Ha	Hectare
HCL	Hydrochloride (cocaine)
Kg	Kilogram
MT	Metric Ton

## **International Agreements**

1988 UN Drug Convention – United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)

UN Single Drug Convention – United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol)

UN Psychotropic Substances Convention – United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971)

UNCAC – UN Convention against Corruption (2003)

UNTOC – UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) and its supplementing protocols:

Trafficking in Persons Protocol – Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

Migrant Smuggling Protocol – Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

Firearms Protocol – Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

## Parties to UN Conventions

(with dates ratified/acceded)

As of 4 November, 2021

<i>Country</i>	<i>Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime</i>	<i>1988 UN Drug Convention</i>	<i>Convention Against Corruption</i>
1. Afghanistan	24 September 2003	14 February 1992	25 August 2008
2. Albania	21 August 2002	27 June 2001	25 May 2006
3. Algeria	7 October 2002	9 May 1995	25 August 2004
4. Andorra	22 September 2011	23 July 1999	
5. Angola	1 April 2013	26 October 2005	29 August 2006
6. Antigua and Barbuda	24 July 2002	5 April 1993	21 June 2006
7. Argentina	19 November 2002	28 June 1993	28 August 2006
8. Armenia	1 July 2003	13 September 1993	8 March 2007
9. Australia	27 May 2004	16 November 1992	7 December 2005
10. Austria	23 September 2004	11 July 1997	11 January 2006
11. Azerbaijan	30 October 2003	22 September 1993	1 November 2005
12. Bahamas	26 September 2008	30 January 1989	10 January 2008
13. Bahrain	7 June 2004	7 February 1990	5 October 2010
14. Bangladesh	13 July 2011	11 October 1990	27 February 2007
15. Barbados	11 November 2014	15 October 1992	
16. Belarus	25 June 2003	15 October 1990	17 February 2005
17. Belgium	11 August 2004	25 October 1995	25 September 2008
18. Belize	26 September 2003	24 July 1996	12 December 2016
19. Benin	30 August 2004	23 May 1997	14 October 2004
20. Bhutan		27 August 1990	21 September 2016
21. Bolivia	10 October 2005	20 August 1990	5 December 2005
22. Bosnia and Herzegovina	24 April 2002	1 September 1993	26 October 2006
23. Botswana	29 August 2002	13 August 1996	27 June 2011
24. Brazil	29 January 2004	17 July 1991	15 June 2005
25. Brunei Darussalam	25 March 2008	12 November 1993	2 December 2008
26. Bulgaria	5 December 2001	24 September 1992	20 September 2006
27. Burkina Faso	15 May 2002	2 June 1992	10 October 2006
28. Burundi	24 May 2012	18 February 1993	10 March 2006



29. Cambodia	12 December 2005	7 July 2005	5 September 2007
30. Cameroon	6 February 2006	28 October 1991	6 February 2006
31. Canada	13 May 2002	05 July 1990	2 October 2007
32. Cape Verde	15 July 2004	8 May 1995	23 April 2008
33. Central African Republic	14 September 2004	15 October 2001	6 October 2006
34. Chad	18 August 2009	9 June 1995	26 June 2018
35. Chile	29 November 2004	13 March 1990	13 September 2006
36. China	23 September 2003	25 October 1989	13 January 2006
37. Colombia	4 August 2004	10 June 1994	27 October 2006
38. Comoros	25 September 2003	1 March 2000	11 October 2012
39. Congo		3 March 2004	13 July 2006
40. Cook Islands	4 March 2004	22 February 2005	17 October 2011
41. Costa Rica	24 July 2003	8 February 1991	21 March 2007
42. Cote d'Ivoire	25 October 2012	25 November 1991	25 October 2012
43. Croatia	24 January 2003	26 July 1993	24 April 2005
44. Cuba	9 February 2007	12 June 1996	9 February 2007
45. Cyprus	22 April 2003	25 May 1990	23 February 2009
46. Czech Republic	24 September 2013	30 December 1993	29 November 2013
47. Democratic People's Republic of Korea	17 June 2016	19 March 2007	
48. Democratic Republic of the Congo	28 October 2005	28 October 2005	23 September 2010
49. Denmark	30 September 2003	19 December 1991	26 December 2006
50. Djibouti	20 April 2005	22 February 2001	20 April 2005
51. Dominica	17 May 2013	30 June 1993	28 May 2010
52. Dominican Republic	26 October 2006	21 September 1993	26 October 2006
53. Ecuador	17 September 2002	23 March 1990	15 September 2005
54. Egypt	5 March 2004	15 March 1991	25 February 2005
55. El Salvador	18 March 2004	21 May 1993	1 July 2004
56. Equatorial Guinea	7 February 2003		30 May 2018
57. Eritrea	25 September 2014	30 January 2002	
58. Eswatini	24 September 2012	3 October 1995	24 September 2012
59. Estonia	10 February 2003	12 July 2000	12 April 2010
60. Ethiopia	23 July 2007	11 October 1994	26 November 2007
61. European Union	21 May 2004	31 December 1990	12 November 2008
62. Fiji	19 September 2017	25 March 1993	14 May 2008
63. Finland	10 February 2004	15 February 1994	20 June 2006

64. France	29 October 2002	31 December 1990	11 July 2005
65. Gabon	15 December 2004	10 July 2006	1 October 2007
66. Gambia	5 May 2003	23 April 1996	8 July 2015
67. Georgia	5 September 2006	8 January 1998	4 November 2008
68. Germany	14 June 2006	30 November 1993	12 November 2014
69. Ghana	21 August 2012	10 April 1990	27 June 2007
70. Greece	11 January 2011	28 January 1992	17 September 2008
71. Grenada	21 May 2004	10 December 1990	1 April 2015
72. Guatemala	25 September 2003	28 February 1991	3 November 2006
73. Guinea	9 November 2004	27 December 1990	29 May 2013
74. Guinea-Bissau	10 September 2007	27 October 1995	10 September 2007
75. Guyana	14 September 2004	19 March 1993	16 April 2008
76. Haiti	19 April 2011	18 September 1995	14 September 2009
77. Holy See	25 January 2012	25 January 2012	19 September 2016
78. Honduras	2 December 2003	11 December 1991	23 May 2005
79. Hungary	22 December 2006	15 November 1996	19 April 2005
80. Iceland	13 May 2010	2 September 1997	1 March 2011
81. India	5 May 2011	27 March 1990	9 May 2011
82. Indonesia	20 April 2009	23 February 1999	19 September 2006
83. Iran		7 December 1992	20 April 2009
84. Iraq	17 March 2008	22 July 1998	17 March 2008
85. Ireland	17 June 2010	3 September 1996	9 November 2011
86. Israel	27 December 2006	20 May 2002	4 February 2009
87. Italy	2 August 2006	31 December 1990	5 October 2009
88. Jamaica	29 September 2003	29 December 1995	5 March 2008
89. Japan	11 July 2017	12 June 1992	11 July 2017
90. Jordan	22 May 2009	16 April 1990	24 February 2005
91. Kazakhstan	31 July 2008	29 April 1997	18 June 2008
92. Kenya	16 June 2004	19 October 1992	9 December 2003
93. Korea, Republic of	5 November 2015	28 December 1998	27 March 2008
94. Kiribati	15 September 2005		27 September 2013
95. Kuwait	12 May 2006	3 November 2000	16 February 2007
96. Kyrgyz Republic	2 October 2003	7 October 1994	16 September 2005
97. Lao Peoples Democratic Republic	26 September 2003	1 October 2004	25 September 2009
98. Latvia	7 December 2001	24 February 1994	4 January 2006
99. Lebanon	5 October 2005	11 March 1996	22 April 2009

100. Lesotho	24 September 2003	28 March 1995	16 September 2005
101. Liberia	22 September 2004	16 September 2005	16 September 2005
102. Libya	18 June 2004	22 July 1996	7 June 2005
103. Liechtenstein	20 February 2008	9 March 2007	8 July 2010
104. Lithuania	9 May 2002	8 June 1998	21 December 2006
105. Luxembourg	12 May 2008	29 April 1992	6 November 2007
106. Macedonia, Former Yugoslav Rep.	12 January 2005	13 October 1993	13 April 2007
107. Madagascar	15 September 2005	12 March 1991	22 September 2004
108. Malawi	17 March 2005	12 October 1995	4 December 2007
109. Malaysia	24 September 2004	11 May 1993	24 September 2008
110. Maldives	4 February 2013	7 September 2000	22 March 2007
111. Mali	12 April 2002	31 October 1995	18 April 2008
112. Malta	24 September 2003	28 February 1996	11 April 2008
113. Marshall Islands	15 June 2011	5 November 2010	17 November 2011
114. Mauritania	22 July 2005	1 July 1993	25 October 2006
115. Mauritius	21 April 2003	6 March 2001	15 December 2004
116. Mexico	4 March 2003	11 April 1990	20 July 2004
117. Micronesia, Federal States of	24 May 2004	6 July 2004	21 March 2012
118. Moldova	16 September 2005	15 February 1995	1 October 2007
119. Monaco	5 June 2001	23 April 1991	
120. Mongolia	27 June 2008	25 June 2003	11 January 2006
121. Montenegro	23 October 2006	23 October 2006	23 October 2006
122. Morocco	19 September 2002	28 October 1992	9 May 2007
123. Mozambique	20 September 2006	8 June 1998	9 April 2008
124. Myanmar (Burma)	30 March 2004	11 June 1991	20 December 2012
125. Namibia	16 August 2002	6 March 2009	3 August 2004
126. Nauru	12 July 2012	12 July 2012	12 July 2012
127. Nepal	23 December 2011	24 July 1991	31 March 2011
128. Netherlands	26 May 2004	8 September 1993	31 October 2006
129. New Zealand	19 July 2002	16 December 1998	1 December 2015
130. Nicaragua	9 September 2002	4 May 1990	15 February 2006
131. Niger	30 September 2004	10 November 1992	11 August 2008
132. Nigeria	28 June 2001	1 November 1989	14 December 2004
133. Niue	16 July 2012	16 July 2012	3 October 2017
134. Norway	23 September 2003	14 November 1994	29 June 2006

135. Oman	13 May 2005	15 March 1991	9 January 2014
136. Pakistan	13 January 2010	25 October 1991	31 August 2007
137. Palau	13 May 2019	14 August 2019	24 March 2009
138. Panama	18 August 2004	13 January 1994	23 September 2005
139. Papua New Guinea			16 July 2007
140. Paraguay	22 September 2004	23 August 1990	1 June 2005
141. Peru	23 January 2002	16 January 1992	16 November 2004
142. Philippines	28 May 2002	7 June 1996	8 November 2006
143. Poland	12 November 2001	26 May 1994	15 September 2006
144. Portugal	10 May 2004	3 December 1991	28 September 2007
145. Qatar	10 March 2008	4 May 1990	30 January 2007
146. Romania	4 December 2002	21 January 1993	2 November 2004
147. Russia	26 May 2004	17 December 1990	9 May 2006
148. Rwanda	26 September 2003	13 May 2002	4 October 2006
149. St. Kitts and Nevis	21 May 2004	19 April 1995	
150. St. Lucia	16 July 2013	21 August 1995	25 November 2011
151. St. Vincent and the Grenadines	29 October 2010	17 May 1994	
152. Samoa	17 December 2014	19 August 2005	18 April 2018
153. San Marino	20 July 2010	10 October 2000	
154. Sao Tome and Principe	12 April 2006	20 June 1996	12 April 2006
155. Saudi Arabia	18 January 2005	9 January 1992	29 April 2013
156. Senegal	27 September 2003	27 November 1989	16 November 2005
157. Serbia	6 September 2001	12 March 2001	20 December 2005
158. Seychelles	22 April 2003	27 February 1992	16 March 2006
159. Sierra Leone	12 August 2014	6 June 1994	30 September 2004
160. Singapore	28 August 2007	23 October 1997	6 November 2009
161. Slovakia	3 December 2003	28 May 1993	1 June 2006
162. Slovenia	21 May 2004	6 July 1992	1 April 2008
163. Solomon Islands			6 January 2012
164. Somalia			11 August 2021
165. South Africa	20 February 2004	14 December 1998	22 November 2004
166. South Sudan			23 January 2015
167. Spain	1 March 2002	13 August 1990	19 June 2006
168. Sri Lanka	22 September 2006	6 June 1991	31 March 2004
169. Sudan	10 December 2004	19 November 1993	5 September 2014
170. Suriname	25 May 2007	28 October 1992	

171. Sweden	30 April 2004	22 July 1991	25 September 2007
172. Switzerland	27 October 2006	14 September 2005	24 September 2009
173. Syria	8 April 2009	3 September 1991	
174. Tajikistan	8 July 2002	6 May 1996	25 September 2006
175. Thailand	17 October 2013	3 May 2002	1 March 2011
176. Tanzania	24 May 2006	17 April 1996	25 May 2005
177. Timor-Leste	9 November 2009	3 June 2014	27 March 2009
178. Togo	2 July 2004	1 August 1990	6 July 2005
179. Tonga	3 October 2014	29 April 1996	6 February 2020
180. Trinidad and Tobago	6 November 2007	17 February 1995	31 May 2006
181. Tunisia	19 July 2003	20 September 1990	23 September 2008
182. Turkey	25 March 2003	2 April 1996	9 November 2006
183. Turkmenistan	28 March 2005	21 February 1996	28 March 2005
184. Tuvalu			4 September 2015
185. UAE	7 May 2007	12 April 1990	22 February 2006
186. Uganda	9 March 2005	20 August 1990	9 September 2004
187. Ukraine	21 May 2004	28 August 1991	2 December 2009
188. United Kingdom	9 February 2006	28 June 1991	9 February 2006
189. United States	3 November 2005	20 February 1990	30 October 2006
190. Uruguay	4 March 2005	10 March 1995	10 January 2007
191. Uzbekistan	9 December 2003	24 August 1995	29 July 2008
192. Vanuatu	4 January 2006	26 January 2006	12 July 2011
193. Venezuela	13 May 2002	16 July 1991	2 February 2009
194. Vietnam	8 June 2012	4 November 1997	19 August 2009
195. Yemen	8 February 2010	25 March 1996	7 November 2005
196. Zambia	24 April 2005	28 May 1993	7 December 2007
197. Zimbabwe	12 December 2007	30 July 1993	8 March 2007

\*Not included on this list is the “State of Palestine,” which, according to the United Nations, has purportedly acceded to the UN Convention against Corruption (2014), to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2015), and to the 1988 UN Drug Convention (December 29, 2017). The Government of the United States of America notified the United Nations, in its capacity as depositary for these Conventions, that it does not believe the “State of Palestine” qualifies as a sovereign state and does not recognize it as such. Therefore, the Government of the United States of America believes that the “State of Palestine” is not qualified to accede to the Conventions and does not believe that it is in a treaty relationship with the “State of Palestine” under the Conventions.

**INTRODUCTION**

## Overview

Multiple and overlapping political, public health, and law enforcement challenges resulted in a mixed picture for global drug control in 2021. While addressing drug trafficking and abuse is always a formidable task, the intensity of these combined factors in 2021 was unprecedented.

For the third year in a row the loss of life from drug overdoses in the United States reached devastating record highs, with over 91,000 deaths in 2020 and over 100,000 in the 12-month period ending in April 2021, according to preliminary figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These figures represent 30 percent and 28.5 percent increases over the previous year, respectively. The deadly synthetic drug fentanyl was responsible for more than 60 percent of overdose deaths, although deaths from methamphetamine, cocaine, and prescription pain medication also increased.

The COVID-19 pandemic had an outsized impact for a second year on both public health overall and efforts to curb drug trafficking. The pandemic altered trafficking routes, law enforcement responses, and government resources intended for counterdrug operations. And, while COVID-19 resulted in a staggering number of American deaths, fentanyl overdoses have remained the leading cause of death for Americans aged 18 to 45 since 2020.

Synthetic opioids remain the foremost drug-related threat to the United States. The extreme potency of these opioids ensures that the profit margin to traffickers is huge, even for small amounts. In contrast to the plant-based drugs used to produce cocaine and heroin, synthetic opioids are inexpensive to produce, can be manufactured anywhere without having to construct elaborate labs or processing facilities, and are easy to conceal and transport in small amounts simply by mail. Further, because the chemicals used to produce illicit fentanyl still have legal uses, it is very difficult to control their diversion.

Illicit drug production, trafficking, and consumption remained ongoing challenges in every region in 2021. The Western Hemisphere remains a top concern for the United States. Coca cultivation in Colombia and Peru again reached record levels. Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia are the first, second, and third largest cocaine source countries in the world, continuing an established trend. However, despite the continued effects of COVID-19, compounded by competing priorities for security forces, Colombia met its coca eradication goal of 130,000 hectares in 2020. Colombia also eradicated 103,000 hectares in 2021. In addition, record or greatly increased numbers of seizures took place, including by Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and the Dominican Republic. Furthermore, Colombia continues to be a regional leader in counterdrug efforts, notably in its training of other countries' security and counterdrug forces and in operations like the Colombian-led maritime interdiction "Orion" campaign.

In September 2021, the United States determined that Bolivia and Venezuela once again failed demonstrably to uphold their obligations under international drug control agreements – determinations that have been made since 2008 for Bolivia and 2005 for Venezuela. In Bolivia, this was largely due to the government's failure to sufficiently control its legal coca market, although the government took some steps on coca eradication and drug seizures. In Venezuela, the regime of Nicolas Maduro failed to take any meaningful action to combat the illicit drug

trade. The United States granted national interest waivers in both countries that allow certain foreign assistance that is vital for U.S. interests, including democracy assistance, to continue.

Mexico and the United States have a shared responsibility to disrupt the drug threat. Mexican criminal organizations have a significant global presence, including in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and most of the heroin, methamphetamine, and fentanyl and its analogues consumed in the United States originates in Mexico. Mexico is also a major transit country for cocaine from South America to the United States and a destination for fentanyl precursors originating mainly from the People's Republic of China (PRC). Notably, while Mexican fentanyl production has soared, fentanyl seizures by Mexican authorities have as well, increasing 525 percent in the three-year period 2019-2021, compared to 2016-2018.

Almost all countries in the hemisphere are committed partners of the United States, but all lack sustained government presence in the remote regions where drug traffickers commonly operate. Most lack sufficient resources with which to tackle the illicit drug trade and grapple with systemic impediments in justice and law enforcement institutions, corruption, and insufficient coordination between investigative and prosecutorial authorities. In addition, many Western Hemisphere countries were hit hard by the pandemic. Peru has had the highest global rate of COVID-19 deaths of any country, which has challenged implementation of counternarcotics efforts. Going forward, Colombia will need to expand state presence to reduce criminal activity, maintain robust coca eradication and drug interdiction operations, and provide strong support for crop substitution, while Peru should focus eradication in high-yield regions. Both countries should continue supporting rural development programs to provide alternatives to coca cultivation. The Andean cocaine trade has also had an outsized negative effect on neighboring Central America, contributing to drug trafficking, other crime, and instability in that region.

The rapid shift in fentanyl production from the PRC to Mexico reflects another extremely worrying trend: the ability of transnational criminal organizations to rapidly adapt to changing circumstances and the truly global reach of the drug trafficking trade. In addition to Mexican criminal organizations establishing a foothold in China, cocaine originating in South America is trafficked to virtually every other region on earth; Nigerian traffickers have expanded their worldwide reach; the cocaine markets in Europe and Asia have exploded; and precursor chemicals from the PRC and India are diverted to all parts of the globe. Captagon production and trafficking throughout the Middle East has also increased dramatically, which potentially benefits hostile actors such as Hezbollah and the Assad regime in Syria.

The dramatically altered political landscapes in Afghanistan and Burma potentially created additional conditions that could lead to further drug control challenges. The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan raised concerns that the Central Asia region, already a significant drug transit zone, could see an increase in Afghan heroin production and trafficking. Additionally, Afghan-sourced methamphetamine has increasing potential to exacerbate Afghanistan's illicit drug market, as it is a lucrative alternative to heroin. Afghan methamphetamine flows along the already established heroin trafficking routes, contributing to the high rate of distribution and consumption in the region. Instability exacerbated by the February 2021 coup in Burma could incentivize a resurgence in poppy cultivation and accelerate the production and trafficking of



synthetic narcotics — particularly methamphetamine — whose effects are reverberating in Asia and Oceania. Burma remains a top producer of methamphetamine and illicit opium poppy.

Despite the evolving challenges countries faced in addressing the illicit drug trade in 2021, there continues to be robust international cooperation and willingness on the part of governments to seek solutions. On the multilateral front, the United States will continue to lead and provide funding for international efforts to confront the complex challenges of synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances. These include the U.S.-funded UN Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs, which provides practical guidance to the international community aimed at implementing comprehensive solutions to the threats posed by synthetic drugs, bringing together over 230 cross-cutting resources and tools from across the UN system. In 2021, it had over 14,000 registered users from 185 countries and territories. Two new U.S.-funded modules on "Treatment and Care" and "Cybercrime" were added, bringing the platform to a total of nine interactive modules which are now available in five languages. With U.S. support, the International Narcotics Control Board expanded its activities to disrupt illicit synthetic drug trafficking networks by providing training, increasing private sector coordination, and enhancing global participation in its data sharing platforms and multilateral operations.

The United States also continued efforts in 2021 to advance private sector engagement to address emerging drug trafficking modalities that rely on tools of modern trade to facilitate their illicit business model. In 2021, the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) hosted its third annual event to highlight the importance of private sector cooperation. The 2021 Webinar Week on Public-Private Partnerships to Counter Drug Challenges attracted a global audience of 600 to 900 participants each day and over 2,300 participants throughout the week. Webinar Week marked a milestone in INL's efforts to increase private sector engagement in confronting drug challenges, and INL amplified the importance of private sector engagement in multilateral forums, including the Roma-Lyon Group and the Drug Abuse Control Commission of the Organization of American States.

Finally, expanding drug demand reduction efforts will prove critical in addressing both the drug trade overall and the public health crisis of illicit drugs. While substance use disorders are major public health threats that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated, they are preventable and treatable diseases with success rates on par with other chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease. The United States is committed to promoting recovery-oriented drug policies based on international standards to assure the quality of drug treatment services; supporting drug data collection and analysis to respond effectively to changing trends; and providing technical assistance to countries to develop and improve public health policies and interventions aimed at reducing drug use. Key to reducing demand is also a supply reduction strategy that reduces availability of illicit substances and their proceeds. These drugs have a broad impact on society, fueling transnational organized crime, corruption, insurgency, and other activities that undermine governance and economic and social development. For a counternarcotics approach to achieve success, a comprehensive range of evidence-based supply and demand reduction measures are necessary, along with strategies that include both incentives and disincentives. The United States will continue to work with partner countries, the multilateral system, and the private sector to accomplish these goals and to target criminal organizations, address corruption, and strengthen the rule of law.

## Legislative Basis for the INCSR

The Department of State's 2022 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR) is one of several annual reports on foreign policy and foreign assistance that the United States Congress has mandated. The March 2022 report covers calendar year 2021 and includes two volumes: Volume I, Drug and Chemical Control, and Volume II, Money Laundering.

A number of statutory provisions provide reporting requirements for the INCSR. The broad requirements are set forth in section 489 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended ("FAA," 22 U.S.C. § 2291) which requires, among other things, reporting on countries designated by the President as major illicit drug producing or drug transit countries (the "Majors List") and on countries that have received foreign assistance under Sec. 489. Sections 481(d)(2) and 484(c) of the FAA and section 804 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, set forth additional matters to be addressed in the report on a range of narcotics control actions.

**The Majors List:** The INCSR serves as one of the factual bases for the designations in the President's annual report to Congress of the major drug transit or major illicit drug-producing countries. This requirement of a majors list was initially included in section 591 of the Kenneth M. Ludden Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2002 (P.L. 107-115) (the "FOAA"). It was made permanent by section 706 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (P.L. 107-228) (the "FRAA"). That section requires that the President submit an annual report no later than September 15 of each year that identifies each country determined by the President to be a major drug transit country or major illicit drug-producing country.

The President's report must also identify any country on the majors list that has "failed demonstrably . . . to make substantial efforts" during the previous 12 months to adhere to international counternarcotics agreements and to take certain counternarcotics measures set forth in U.S. law. U.S. assistance under the current foreign operations appropriations act may not be provided to any country designated as having "failed demonstrably" unless the President determines that the provision of such assistance is vital to U.S. national interests or that the country, at any time after the President's initial report to Congress, has made "substantial efforts" to comply with the counternarcotics conditions in the legislation. This prohibition does not affect humanitarian, counternarcotics, and certain other types of assistance that are authorized to be provided notwithstanding any other provision of law.

**Precursor Chemicals:** The INCSR was expanded in 2007 to include reporting on the five countries that export the largest amounts of methamphetamine precursor chemicals and the five countries importing the largest amounts of these chemicals. This requirement was set forth in the Combat Methamphetamine Enforcement Act (CMEA) (the USA Patriot Improvement and Reauthorization Act 2005, Title VII, P.L. 109-177), amending sections 489 and 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act (22 USC 2291h and 2291), section 722. This reporting includes efforts to control methamphetamine precursor chemicals and estimates of legitimate demand for them, prepared by most parties to the 1988 UN Drug Convention and submitted to the International Narcotics Control Board. The CMEA requires a Presidential determination by March 1 of each

year on whether the five countries that legally exported and the five countries that legally imported the largest amount of precursor chemicals (under FAA section 490) have cooperated with the United States to prevent these substances from being used to produce methamphetamine or have taken adequate steps on their own to achieve full compliance with the 1988 UN Drug Control Convention. This determination may be exercised by the Secretary of State pursuant to Executive Order 12163 and by the Deputy Secretary of State pursuant to State Department Delegation of Authority 245-2.

**FAA and UN Drug Convention:** The FAA requires a report on the extent to which each country or entity that received assistance under chapter 8 of Part I of the Foreign Assistance Act in the past two fiscal years has "met the goals and objectives of the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances ('Drug Convention')." Although the Drug Convention does not list specific goals and objectives, it does set forth a number of obligations that the parties agree to undertake. Generally speaking, it requires the parties to take legal measures to outlaw and punish all forms of illicit drug production, trafficking, and drug money laundering; to control chemicals that can be used to process illicit drugs; and to cooperate in international efforts to these ends. The relevant statute (FAA sec. 489) specifies actions by foreign countries on the following issues as relevant to evaluating performance under the 1988 UN Drug Convention: illicit cultivation, production, distribution, sale, transport and financing, and money laundering, asset seizure, extradition, mutual legal assistance, law enforcement and transit cooperation, precursor chemical control, and demand reduction.

In attempting to evaluate whether countries and certain entities are meeting the goals and objectives of the Drug Convention, the Department has used the best information it has available. The 2022 INCSR covers countries that range from major drug producing and drug-transit countries, where drug control is a critical element of national policy, to small countries or entities where drug-related issues or the capacity to deal with them are minimal. As a result, the reports vary in the extent of their coverage. Comprehensive reports are provided for significant drug-control countries for which considerable information is available. Where only limited information is available for smaller countries or entities, reports include whatever data the responsible U.S. embassy could provide.

The country chapters report upon actions taken – including plans, programs, and, where applicable, timetables – toward fulfillment of Drug Convention obligations. Reports often include discussion of foreign legal and regulatory structures. However, while the Department strives to provide accurate information, this report should not be used as the basis for determining legal rights or obligations under U.S. or foreign law.

Some countries and other entities are not yet parties to the Drug Convention; some do not have status in the United Nations and cannot become parties. We have nonetheless considered actions taken by these countries or entities in areas covered by the Convention as well as plans (if any) for becoming parties and for aligning their legislation with the Convention's requirements. Other countries have taken reservations, declarations, or understandings to the Convention or other relevant treaties; these are generally not detailed in this report. For some of the smallest countries or entities that have not been designated by the President as major illicit drug

producing or major drug-transit countries, the Department has insufficient information to make a judgment as to whether the goals and objectives of the Convention are being met.

Unless otherwise noted in the relevant country chapters, the Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) considers all countries and other entities with which the United States has bilateral narcotics agreements to be meeting the goals and objectives of those agreements.

Information concerning counternarcotics assistance is provided, pursuant to section 489(b) of the FAA, in the section entitled "U.S. Government Assistance."

**Fentanyl and U.S. Government-Supported Units (New in 2022):** The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2022, Public Law 117-81, was signed into law on December 27, 2021, with sections 5102 and 6610 providing for additional reporting in the INCSR.

Section 5102 provides for a "separate section that contains an identification of all United States Government-supported units funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and any Bureau-funded operations by such units in which United States law enforcement personnel have been physically present."

Section 6610 of the NDAA requires the INCSR to identify the countries, to the extent feasible, that are the most significant sources of illicit fentanyl and fentanyl analogues significantly affecting the United States during the preceding calendar year. This reporting must also include (in summary), whether each of these countries cooperated with the United States to prevent export of fentanyl and its analogues to the United States; has and uses scheduling or other procedures for illicit drugs similar to the procedures under U.S. law set forth in 21 U.S.C. 811 et seq.; is taking steps to prosecute individuals involved in the illicit manufacture or distribution of controlled substance analogues as defined under specified U.S. law; and requires registration of tableting and encapsulating machines or other measures similar in effect to those set forth in specified U.S. regulations and has not made good faith efforts to improve regulation of such machines.

Due to the time that will be required to collect the required information from overseas missions, it will not be possible to include reporting pursuant to NDAA Sections 5102 and 6610 in the INCSR that will be delivered to Congress on March 1, 2022. The Department of State will, however, supplement this report as soon as possible as well as include this information in future INCSRs.

## Demand Reduction

Drug demand reduction (DDR), which focuses on treatment for and prevention of illicit drug use, is a foreign policy tool for addressing the interconnected threats of drugs, crime, and violence. Effective demand reduction efforts promote a comprehensive, balanced approach to substance use disorders. United States drug policy priorities support key drug demand reduction policies including expanding access to evidence-based treatment; supporting evidence-based prevention efforts to reduce youth substance use; advancing recovery-ready workplaces and expanding the addiction workforce; and expanding access to recovery support services, among other counternarcotics policy efforts. The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) works closely with international partners to develop and execute capacity building and training activities for service providers in drug prevention, treatment, and recovery. INL also promotes the sharing of critical information and evidence-based studies.

Recognizing that substance use disorder is a major public health threat that the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified, that drug use is a preventable and treatable disease, and that the drug trade threatens country stability, many countries are requesting U.S.-supported technical assistance to improve and develop effective policies aimed at reducing drug use. The INL drug demand reduction program has three strategic components: (1) promote the adoption of recovery-oriented and evidence-based drug policies and internationally recognized standards, (2) support drug data collection and conduct analysis to assure the quality of drug treatment services, and (3) implement programs that effectively prevent and reduce drug use disorders. To achieve these objectives, INL supports the following:

- Developing professional networks of drug prevention, treatment, and recovery educators and practitioners by providing training, mentoring, and credentialing based on evidence-based practices;
- Development of drug-free community coalitions internationally, involving law enforcement and public/private social institutions, aimed at preventing drug use and its consequences;
- Research, development, and outcome-based evaluation efforts to determine the effectiveness of drug prevention and treatment programs.

Significant completed and ongoing INL-funded demand reduction projects for 2021 include:

**Universal Curriculum Training and Credentialing:** Through international organizations such as the Colombo Plan (CP), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the Organization of American States (OAS), INL supports efforts to strengthen the ability of the drug demand reduction workforce to provide drug prevention, treatment, and recovery services through intensive trainings and credentialing examinations at the national level. These trainings help prevent the initiation of drug use, improve treatment outcomes, and lower relapse rates, thus

generating greater confidence in drug demand reduction and treatment systems. Through 2021, the Universal Curriculum has been trained and used in 89 countries.<sup>1</sup>

**Universal Treatment Curriculum (UTC):** INL’s treatment curriculum, based on the International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders developed by UNODC and the World Health Organization, consists of eight basic and 14 advanced courses that provide knowledge and skills development for treatment professionals. In 2021, many of INL’s UTC courses were virtual trainings due to COVID-19 constraints. In order to institutionalize the online training approach, INL advanced the development of an online training platform using the UTC. As of December 2021, three UTC self-led online courses were launched globally on the Health-e-Knowledge website with four more courses to be completed in 2022.

The self-led online UTC will vastly increase the use of best practices for treating those with substance use disorders. In addition, the UTC course on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity (SOGI) was adapted to an online platform. In 2021, INL and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) signed a cooperation agreement to promote intersectoral cooperation between health agencies, drug commissions, and other relevant government actors and non-governmental organizations. The new project intends to advance the planning and implementation of health care treatment for people with substance use disorder (SUD). As a result of the UTC trainings and credentialing program, there are now 1924 credentialed professionals worldwide, 114 tested in 2021.

**Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC):** INL’s UPC consists of two series, one for managers of prevention programs and one for practitioners. These training programs are based on the UNODC Standards for Drug Use Prevention, offering innovative evidence-based approaches to substance use prevention in a variety of settings such as family, school, workplace, media, and the community. To greatly expand training opportunities for substance use prevention professionals around the world, nine courses in the UPC Managers and Supervisors series were adapted for an online platform in 2021. An evaluation of the impact of school-based prevention programs, undertaken with INL’s support in collaboration with the Cayetano Heredia University in Lima, Peru, has been completed and validates the efficacy of these approaches. In December 2021, INL launched an International Certified Addiction Professional - Prevention examination that certifies prevention professionals upon completion of UPC training.

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<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, The Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Burkina Faso, Burma, Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cote d’Ivoire, Chile, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, The Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Liberia, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Niger, Panamá, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, The Philippines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

**Alternatives to Incarceration:** The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Drugs (UNGASS) Outcome Document and the U.S.-sponsored resolution in the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 2016 called on countries to support alternatives to incarceration and proportionate sentencing, especially for drug dependent, nonviolent offenders. Alternatives to incarceration – including an emphasis on gaining access to drug treatment and care – can occur before an arrest, at an initial court hearing, within the jail, at re-entry, and through community corrections such as probation. In 2018, INL supported the development of training for policymakers and agency heads from both the public health sector and criminal justice sector to discuss critical areas of need related to alternatives to incarceration. The course was pilot tested in Jamaica in 2018 and Guyana in 2019, and INL trained global trainers from November 2020 until April 2021 virtually.

Through the Organization of American States’ Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (OAS/CICAD), INL piloted a new Case Care Management course in Trinidad and Tobago in March 2020 and virtually for Jamaica in the summer of 2020, to assist countries in establishing systems of collaboration between public health and criminal justice systems. In 2021, UNODC trained the ATI Policymakers course in Kenya resulting in the government’s interest to pilot alternative to incarceration programming to reduce recidivism. Trinidad and Tobago launched a case management system in their probation offices in September 2021, with CICAD support through INL funding. In 2022, INL intends to continue its support of creating ATI systems with partnering countries in Latin America and Africa.

**The International Consortium of Universities for Drug Demand Reduction (ICUDDR):** The ICUDDR is a network of universities working together to promote academic programs in addiction studies (drug prevention and treatment), to further the dissemination of evidence-based practices, and to develop the drug demand reduction workforce. ICUDDR membership grew to 289 universities in 75 countries. With INL support, in 2020-21 ICUDDR has joined with the Colombo Plan to create eight centers of excellence – International Technology Transfer Centers - - to strengthen support for improving drug demand reduction institutions worldwide.

**The International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP):** ISSUP is a global professional society for those that work in substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery. This year ISSUP passed the benchmark of over 20,000 members worldwide with over 30 national chapters. ISSUP supports professionals to provide training and share knowledge of evidence-based treatment practices through webinars, online training events, and web forum.

**Drug-Free Communities:** INL assists civil society and grassroots organizations to form and sustain effective local-level anti-drug coalitions aimed at preventing substance use disorders in their communities. INL support has resulted in the establishment of over 300 active coalitions consisting of over 11,000 volunteers in 28 countries around the world.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Albania, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Cape Verde, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Mauritius, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, South Africa, Tajikistan, Togo, Uganda, and Uruguay.

**Drug Demand Reduction Evaluation:** Building on previous outcome evaluations of individual demand reduction programs, INL will formally launch in 2022 a comprehensive evaluation of the collective impact of INL's drug use prevention, treatment, and recovery programming on drug consumption and drug related-crime trends for a city-wide population. This evaluation, the most comprehensive study of demand reduction interventions to date, will be conducted in partnership with the Government of Colombia in the city of Pereira. Throughout 2021, INL supported development of research methodologies and the design of a baseline survey; programming is anticipated to begin in 2022.



## Major Illicit Drug Producing, Drug-Transit, Significant Source, and Precursor Chemical Countries

Section 489(a)(3) of the FAA requires the INCSR to identify:

- (A) major illicit drug producing and major drug-transit countries;
- (B) major sources of precursor chemicals used in the production of illicit narcotics; or
- (C) major money laundering countries.

Major illicit drug producing and major drug-transit countries, and major sources of precursor chemicals used in the production of illicit narcotics, are identified below. Major money laundering countries are identified in Volume II of the INCSR.

### Major Illicit Drug Producing and Major Drug-Transit Countries

A major illicit drug producing country is one in which:

- (A) 1,000 hectares or more of illicit opium poppy is cultivated or harvested during a year;
- (B) 1,000 hectares or more of illicit coca is cultivated or harvested during a year; or
- (C) 5,000 hectares or more of illicit cannabis is cultivated or harvested during a year, unless the President determines that such illicit cannabis production does not significantly affect the United States. [FAA § 481(e)(2)]

A major drug-transit country is one:

- (A) that is a significant direct source of illicit narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances significantly affecting the United States; or
- (B) through which are transported such drugs or substances. [FAA § 481(e)(5)]

The following major illicit drug producing and/or drug-transit countries were identified and notified to Congress by the President on September 16, 2020, consistent with section 706(1) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228):

**Afghanistan, The Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Burma, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Laos, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela.**

Of these 22 countries, **Bolivia and Venezuela** were designated by the President as having “failed demonstrably” during the previous 12 months to adhere to their obligations under international counternarcotics agreements and take the measures set forth in section 489(a)(1) of the FAA. The President determined, however, in accordance with provisions of Section 706(3)(A) of the FRAA, that continued support for bilateral programs in both countries, including for democracy assistance, is vital to the national interests of the United States.

**Major Precursor Chemical Source Countries**

The following countries and jurisdictions have been identified to be major sources of precursor or essential chemicals used in the production of illicit narcotics:

**Afghanistan, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, India, Republic of Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela.**

Information is provided pursuant to section 489 of the FAA in the section entitled "Chemical Controls."

## Presidential Determination

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 15, 2021

**Presidential Determination No. 2021-13**

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: Presidential Determination on Major Drug Transit or Major Illicit Drug Producing Countries for Fiscal Year 2022

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 706(1) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107–228) (FRAA), I hereby identify the following countries as major drug transit or major illicit drug producing countries: Afghanistan, The Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Burma, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Laos, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela.

A country's presence on the foregoing list is neither a reflection of its government's counterdrug efforts nor level of cooperation with the United States. Consistent with the statutory definition of a major drug transit or major illicit drug producing country set forth in section 481(e)(2) and (5) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (Public Law 87–195) (FAA), the reason countries are placed on the list is the combination of geographic, commercial, and economic factors that allow drugs to be transited or produced, even if a government has engaged in robust and diligent narcotics control and law enforcement measures.

Pursuant to section 706(2)(A) of the FRAA, I hereby designate Bolivia and Venezuela as having failed demonstrably to make substantial efforts during the previous 12 months to both adhere to their obligations under international counternarcotics agreements and to take the measures required by section 489(a)(1) of the FAA. Included with this determination are justifications for the designations of Bolivia and Venezuela, as required by section 706(2)(B) of the FRAA. I have also determined, in accordance with provisions of section 706(3)(A) of the FRAA, that United States programs that support Bolivia and Venezuela are vital to the national interests of the United States.

The ongoing drug addiction and overdose epidemic in the United States is one of the foremost public health priorities of my Administration, and addressing this epidemic will require both new domestic investments and greater cooperation with foreign partners to target illicit drug suppliers and the criminal organizations that profit from them. While creating our first year drug policy priorities, my Administration outlined a strategy that includes expanding access to prevention, treatment, evidence-based harm reduction, and recovery support services in order to curb the drug addiction and overdose epidemic. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 is an investment

in these priorities, committing nearly \$4 billion to support behavioral health and substance use disorder programs.

My Administration's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget request itemizes \$10.7 billion to support research, prevention, treatment, evidence-based harm reduction, and recovery support services, with targeted investments to meet the needs of populations at greatest risk for overdose and substance use disorder. The Budget request also includes significant investments to reduce the supply of illicit drugs originating from beyond our borders.

The United States is committed to working together with the countries of the Western Hemisphere as neighbors and partners to meet our shared challenges of drug trafficking and use. My Administration will seek to expand cooperation with key partners, such as Mexico and Colombia, to shape a collective and comprehensive response and expand efforts to address the production and trafficking of dangerous synthetic drugs that are responsible for many of our overdose deaths, particularly fentanyl, fentanyl analogues, and methamphetamine. In Mexico, we must continue to work together to intensify efforts to dismantle transnational criminal organizations and their networks, increase prosecutions of criminal leaders and facilitators, and strengthen efforts to seize illicit assets. In Bolivia, I encourage the government to take additional steps to safeguard the country's licit coca markets from criminal exploitation and reduce illicit coca cultivation that continues to exceed legal limits under Bolivia's domestic laws for medicinal and traditional use. In addition, the United States will look to expand cooperation with China, India, and other chemical source countries in order to disrupt the global flow of synthetic drugs and their precursor chemicals.

You are authorized and directed to submit this designation, with the Bolivia and Venezuela memoranda of justification, under section 706 of the FRAA, to the Congress, and to publish this determination in the Federal Register.

/S/

*Joseph R. Biden*

# Methodology for U.S. Government Estimates of Illegal Drug Production

## Introduction

Illicit drug crops are grown, refined into illegal drugs, trafficked, and sold on the street by criminal enterprises that attempt to conceal every step of the process. Accurate estimates of such criminal activity are difficult to produce. The estimates of illicit drug production presented in the INCSR represent the United States government's best effort to assess the current dimensions of the international drug problem. They are based on agricultural surveys conducted with satellite imagery and scientific studies of crop yields and the likely efficiency of typical illicit refining labs. As we do every year, we publish these estimates with an important caveat: they are *estimates*. While we must express our estimates as numbers, these numbers should not be seen as precise figures. Rather, they represent the midpoint of a band of statistical probability that gets wider as additional variables are introduced and as we move from cultivation to harvest to final refined drug.

As needed, the United States government revises its estimate process and occasionally the estimates themselves, in light of field research and technological advancements. The clandestine, violent nature of the illegal drug trade makes field research difficult. Geography is also an impediment, as the harsh terrain on which many drugs are cultivated is not always easily accessible. This is particularly relevant given the tremendous geographic areas that must be covered and the difficulty of collecting reliable information over diverse and treacherous terrain. Weather can affect our ability to gather data, particularly in the Andes, where cloud cover can be a major problem.

Improved technologies and analytical techniques may also lead us to produce revisions to United States government estimates of potential drug production. This is typical of annualized figures for most other areas of statistical tracking that must be revised year to year. When possible, we apply these new techniques to previous years' data and adjust appropriately, but often, especially in the case of new technologies, we can only apply them prospectively. These illicit drug statistics represent the current state of the art. As new information and technology becomes applicable, the accuracy of the estimates will improve.

## Cultivation Estimates

The United States government conserves limited personnel and technical resources by employing sample survey methodologies to estimate illicit crop cultivation and concentrating survey efforts on areas with strategic amounts of illegal cultivation or areas most *likely* to have illicit crop cultivation. Each year, analysts review a variety of datasets – including eradication data, seizure data, law enforcement investigations information, previous field locations, and other information – to determine areas likely to have illegal cultivation, and revise and update the search area, if necessary. They then survey and estimate cultivation in new areas using proven statistical techniques.

The resulting estimates meet the U.S. government’s need for an annual estimate of illicit crop cultivation for each country. They also help with eradication, interdiction, and other law enforcement operations. As part of the effort to provide accurate and comprehensive assessments, the areas surveyed are often expanded and modified, so direct comparison with previous year estimates is sometimes not possible.

### **Production Estimates**

Illicit crop productivity depends on a number of factors. Changes in weather, farming techniques, soil fertility, and disease prevalence can produce widely varying yields from year to year and place to place. Some illicit drug crop areas are not easily accessible to the U.S. government, which can make scientific information difficult to obtain. However, we continually strive to improve our drug production estimates. The relative productivity of poppy crops in some cases can be estimated using imagery, and our confidence in coca leaf yield continues to improve as a result of field studies conducted in Latin America. Coca fields which are less than 18 months of age (“new fields”) produce much less leaf than mature fields. In Colombia, for example, fields on average get their first small harvest at six months of age; in Bolivia and Peru, fields are usually first harvested at 12 months of age. The U.S. government estimates include the proportion of new fields detected each year and adjust leaf production accordingly.

### **Processing Estimates**

The wide variation in processing efficiency achieved by narcotics producers complicates the task of accurately assessing the quantity of cocaine or heroin that could be refined from a crop. Differences in the origin and quality of the raw material and chemicals used, the technical processing method employed, the size and sophistication of laboratories, the skill and experience of local workers and chemists, and decisions made in response to enforcement pressures all affect production.

The U.S. government estimates for coca leaf, cocaine, marijuana, opium, and heroin production are *potential* estimates; that is, it is assumed that all of the coca, cannabis, and poppy grown is harvested and processed into illicit drugs. This is a reasonable assumption for coca leaf in Colombia. In Bolivia and Peru, however, the U.S. government potential cocaine production estimates do not remove for coca leaf locally chewed and used in products such as coca tea. In Southwest and Southeast Asia and Latin America, it is not unrealistic to assume that virtually all poppy is harvested for opium gum, but substantial amounts of Asian opium are consumed or stored rather than being processed into heroin; the proportion of this opium ultimately processed into heroin is unknown.

### **Other International Estimates**

The United States helps fund estimates done by the United Nations in some countries. These estimates use different methodologies from the U.S. government assessments and utilize a mix of imagery and ground-based observations. The UN estimates are often used to help determine the response of the international donor community to specific countries or regions.

There have been some efforts for the U.S. government and the UN to understand each other's methodologies with the goal of improving both sets of estimates. These efforts are ongoing.

This report also includes data on drug production, trafficking, seizures, and consumption that come from host governments or non-governmental organizations. Such data is attributed to the source organization, especially when we cannot independently verify it.

## Worldwide Potential Illicit Drug Production 2011-2019

(All figures in metric tons)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Opium*</b>									
Afghanistan	4,300	5,500	6,300	4,100	5,800	9,140	5,550	6,700	6,290
Burma		795	900		834			390	
Colombia			20	24			14		
Guatemala	4	6	14	6	7	5	4	1.3	
Laos					91				
Mexico	220	225	360	598	685	944	903	661	501
Pakistan	28	220	105	29	52				
<b>Potential Pure Heroin</b>									
Afghanistan	510	650	740	480	680	1,070	652	788	740
Burma		76	85		79			37	
Colombia			3	3			1.8		
Guatemala	.5	.7	2	.7	.8	.6	.5	.2	
Laos					9				
Mexico	26	26	42	70	81	111	106	78	59
Pakistan	3	26	12	3	6				
<b>Total Potential L. America Heroin Production</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Total Potential Worldwide Heroin Production</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>799</b>
<b>Potential Pure Cocaine</b>									
Bolivia	174	188	236	268	284	246	251	301	312
Colombia	263	279	353	564	775	906	869	918	1,010
Peru	388	460	409	445	462	481	527	649	810
<b>Total Potential Pure Cocaine</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>1,277</b>	<b>1,521</b>	<b>1,633</b>	<b>1,647</b>	<b>1,868</b>	<b>2,132</b>
<b>Potential Export-Quality Cocaine</b>									
Bolivia	203	240	316	321	333	285	276	328	337
Colombia	339	366	460	748	993	1,068	1,010	1,086	1,190
Peru	500	555	506	552	532	533	568	706	877
<b>Total Potential Export-Quality Cocaine</b>	<b>1,042</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>1,282</b>	<b>1,621</b>	<b>1,859</b>	<b>1,886</b>	<b>1,854</b>	<b>2,120</b>	<b>2,404</b>



Notes:

Cocaine production figures are continually revised based on new field data.

Estimates may not add to totals due to rounding.

Opium production is reported at zero percent moisture.

Some Asian opium is consumed and not processed into heroin.

Opium production in Afghanistan for 2018 was recalculated to use province-level yield data where available. The same method was used for opium production in 2019. The previously reported estimate for opium production in Afghanistan in 2018 was 5,330 metric tons.

Estimates for Afghanistan in 2020 were conducted for the top six poppy-growing provinces in 2020 and the remaining province totals were projected from 2020 UN estimates. Opium yields for 2020 were also based on the UN's previous ground data and comparative imagery analysis.

## Worldwide Illicit Drug Crop Cultivation 2012-2020

(All figures in hectares)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Poppy</b>									
Afghanistan	180,000	198,000	211,000	201,000	207,000	329,000	221,000	160,000	215,000
Burma		51,000	52,000		44,800			20,200	
Colombia			800	1,100			663		
Guatemala	220	310	640	260	310	232	187	59	
Laos					4,200				
Mexico	10,500	11,000	17,000	28,000	32,000	44,100	41,800	30,400	23,200
Pakistan	755	4,300	2,800	930	1,400				
<b>Coca</b>									
Bolivia	25,000	27,000	35,000	36,500	37,500	31,000	32,900	42,200	39,400
Colombia	78,000	80,500	112,000	159,000	188,000	209,000	208,000	212,000	245,000
Peru	50,500	59,500	46,500	53,000	44,000	49,800	52,100	72,000	88,200
<b>Total Coca</b>	<b>153,500</b>	<b>167,000</b>	<b>193,500</b>	<b>248,500</b>	<b>269,500</b>	<b>289,800</b>	<b>293,000</b>	326,200	372,600
<b>Cannabis</b>									
Mexico	11,500	13,000	11,000		11,500				

Notes:

Estimates may not add to totals due to rounding. Some estimates for 2019 were not available at the time of this report.

Guatemala poppy cultivation: 2012 survey limited to fall season in San Marcos and Huehuetenango only.

Laos poppy cultivation: Estimates for 2016 are for Phongsali only.

Pakistan poppy cultivation:

- 2012 estimates are for Bara River Valley in Khyber Agency only.
- 2013, 2015, and 2016 estimates include the Bara River Valley, Mohmand and Bajaur Agencies, and selected areas in Balochistan.
- 2014 estimate includes the Bara River Valley and areas in Balochistan.

**U.S. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE**

## U.S. Department of State FY2021-2022 Budget Counternarcotics Program Area

\$ in thousands for all items	FY 2021 653(a)	FY 2022 Request
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 420,276.00	\$ 406,812.00
<b>Africa</b>	\$ 2,286.00	\$ 850.00
Liberia	\$ 1,286.00	\$ 850.00
<b>State Africa Regional</b>	\$ 1,000.00	\$
<b>East Asia and Pacific</b>	\$ 3,362.00	\$ 2,805.00
Burma	\$ 1,300.00	\$
Indonesia	\$ 950.00	\$ 875.00
Laos	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Philippines	\$ 612.00	\$ 430.00
Vietnam	\$	\$ 1000.00
<b>South and Central Asia</b>	\$ 38,717.00	\$ 27,997.00
Afghanistan	\$ 29,200.00	\$ 21,200.00
Kazakhstan	\$ 367.00	\$ 367.00
Pakistan	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Tajikistan	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Uzbekistan	\$ 500.00	\$ 200.00
<b>Central Asia Regional</b>	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,230.00
<b>Western Hemisphere</b>	\$ 255,886.00	\$ 251,635.00
Colombia	\$ 143,140.00	\$ 132,500.00
Mexico	\$ 35,665.00	\$ 22,000.00
Peru	\$ 35,940.00	\$ 43,685.00
<b>State Central America Regional</b>	\$	\$ 45,500.00
<i>of which, CARSI</i>	\$	\$ 45,500.00
<b>State Western Hemisphere Regional (WHA)</b>	\$ 41,141.00	\$ 7,950.00
<i>of which, CARSI</i>	\$ 28,100.00	\$
<i>of which, CBSI</i>	\$ 13,041.00	\$ 6,450.00
<i>of which, other</i>	\$	\$ 1,500.00
<b>INL - International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs</b>	\$ 118,650.00	\$ 123,525.00
<b>INL - CFSP, Critical Flight Safety Program</b>	\$ 18,000.00	\$
<b>INL - Demand Reduction</b>	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
<b>INL - Drug Supply Reduction</b>	\$ 17,000.00	\$ 17,000.00
<b>INL - Global Crime and Drugs Policy</b>	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 3,100.00
<b>INL - Inter-regional Aviation Support</b>	\$ 47,250.00	\$ 28,400.00
<b>INL - Program Development and Support</b>	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 60,025.00
<b>Other Funding Total</b>	\$ 1,375.00	\$
<b>To Be Programmed</b>	\$ 1,375.00	\$

## International Training

### **Bilateral and Regional Training as Component of Broader Foreign Assistance**

Most of the counternarcotics assistance programs managed and funded by the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) include training and capacity-building components aimed at improving the skills and capacity of host country law enforcement personnel on counter drug matters. These program elements both strengthen rule of law capacity overall and enhance cooperation between U.S. and foreign law enforcement officials on counterdrug matters.

By placing professional training and capacity building at the center of INL's assistance programs – rather than solely providing assistance in the form of equipment or infrastructure - INL aims to catalyze and sustain long-term organizational change. INL's overarching goal is to help develop law enforcement institutions in host countries so they can effectively confront new threats with minimal or no U.S. assistance. Building our partners' capacity is an evolving challenge, as drug traffickers develop more sophisticated means to evade detection, disruption of criminal networks, and seizures of illicit drugs before they reach the United States. To be effective, training should always align with the host government's priorities, legal context, and criminal justice system; target identified performance gaps; and be accompanied by non-training efforts that will enable on-the-job application and performance, such as relevant policies and procedures, necessary equipment, and leadership support.

The United States continuously seeks to promote burden-sharing with its allies in the provision of training, as well ensure that the respective efforts are directed toward common goals. U.S.-supported training can take a number of forms, including as part of a bilateral assistance program in a partner country; as part of regional training with international participants from multiple countries; or as part of International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEAs). Some of these programs work closely with international organizations, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Some are implemented by U.S. law enforcement organizations, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the U.S. Coast Guard. Others draw trainers from host country partners that have themselves been the recipient of U.S.-funded programs, to train other law enforcement forces in their region.

The latter model is one of the most promising for several reasons: trainers are already conversant with the regional culture and language; they likely have experienced common region-specific challenges in addressing illicit drugs; and both trainers and trained staff gain valuable regional contacts. Further, teaching others not only instills a sense of leadership and pride in the trainers, but also fosters better thematic understanding and problem-solving skills, thus building capacity on both sides. A successful example of this model is the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security Cooperation (USCAP). The program was created in 2013 to address and combat the detrimental regional effects of narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime by drawing on Colombia's growing expertise in countering these threats. In its first year, USCAP supported fewer than 30 activities; to date, it has supported over 1,955 activities implemented by the Colombian National Police and Colombian Navy and has trained over

26,998 police officers in the region – 7,212 during the global pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Twelve police forces from Mexico to Argentina currently participate in the plan.

### **International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEAs)**

International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEAs) funded by the United States are academies in which U.S. law enforcement experts train criminal justice sector officials from participating countries in both general law enforcement topics and specialized topics for mid- to senior-level managers in combatting transnational organized crime (TOC), including counternarcotics, anticorruption, cybercrime, and border control matters as well as promoting human rights and ensuring the rule of law.

The core objectives of the ILEAs are to foster partnerships with other countries in important regions of the world and build the capacity of foreign criminal justice partners of the United States to stop crime before it impacts the United States. These academies are an important part of the interagency U.S. effort to combat transnational criminal organizations. The Department of State coordinates with law enforcement components from the U.S. Departments of Justice, Homeland Security, Interior, Energy, Commerce, and Treasury, as well as with state and local partners and foreign government counterparts, to implement the ILEA program.

Since its inception in 1995, the ILEA program has grown to six facilities in Botswana, El Salvador, Ghana, Hungary, Thailand, and the United States (New Mexico). It has provided training to more than 70,000 students from over 100 countries in Africa, Europe, Asia, and Latin America. The ILEA program hosts approximately 160 courses per year and delivers a combination of in-person and, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual trainings. Training at the five overseas academies includes leadership and specialized skill development and tactics in law enforcement areas to combat TOC. The ILEA in Roswell, New Mexico, also provides symposiums for senior and executive level personnel to develop leadership skills and address critical policy areas.

The ILEA trainings have resulted in an extensive network of alumni who exchange information with their regional and U.S. counterparts while combating TOC. Many ILEA graduates have become leaders and decisionmakers in their respective law enforcement organizations. ILEA graduates have ongoing access to the ILEA Alumni Portal, which connects users with one another and with U.S. law enforcement instructors through blogs, networking events, resources, and discussion boards. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ILEA program pivoted to virtual training and engagements in 2020 and, through a combination of virtual and in-person trainings, trained over 3,900 individuals in 2021.

**Africa.** ILEA Gaborone (Botswana) opened in 2001 and the Regional Training Center (RTC) in Accra (Ghana) opened in 2012. ILEA Gaborone and RTC Accra deliver specialized courses for police and other criminal justice officials in Africa to boost their capacity to work with U.S. and regional counterparts. These courses concentrate on methods and techniques in a variety of subjects, such as anticorruption, financial crimes, border security, crime scene investigations, explosives, trafficking in persons, narcotics, and wildlife, gender-based violence, and community policing.

**Asia.** ILEA Bangkok (Thailand), which was established in 1998, focuses on enhancing regional cooperation against transnational crime threats in Southeast Asia with member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). ILEA Bangkok's specialized courses focus on anticorruption, cybercrime, and trafficking in persons, narcotics, and wildlife.

**Europe.** ILEA Budapest (Hungary) was the first ILEA, established in 1995. It offers courses on regional threats including anticorruption, organized crime, cybercrime, financial crimes, women in law enforcement, and specialized training for judges and prosecutors.

**Global.** ILEA Roswell (New Mexico) opened in September 2001. It hosts senior officials and policy makers including top prosecutors, judges, police commanders and lawmakers to discuss ways to achieve effective criminal justice systems. These delegates are at the senior levels of leadership and decision making in their countries and are positioned to implement substantive changes to the criminal justice systems upon their return. ILEA Roswell draws senior and executive level officials from all participating ILEA countries.

**Latin America and the Caribbean.** ILEA San Salvador (El Salvador) opened in 2005. It offers courses on anti-gang efforts, human rights, counternarcotics, border security, and financial crimes.

## Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

The mission of the DEA is to enforce the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States. As part of this mission, DEA seeks to bring to justice the criminal organizations and principal members of drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) based in the United States or foreign nations involved in the cultivation, manufacture, or distribution of controlled substances, as well as the money laundering of illicit finances derived from drug trafficking.

To achieve this mission, 10 percent of DEA's Special Agent and Intelligence Analyst work force is permanently assigned overseas at 93 DEA foreign offices located in 70 countries. DEA's foreign offices are conduits of actionable and strategic information, intelligence, and evidence to law enforcement and prosecutorial components in the United States and vice versa. In this manner, DEA can identify, target, and dismantle the entire global spectrum of many DTOs. DEA foreign offices are tasked with four principal missions:

- Conduct bilateral and multilateral **investigations** with host country law enforcement partners;
- Coordinate counternarcotic **intelligence** gathering with host governments;
- Implement **training** programs for host country police and prosecutor agencies;
- Support the advancement and **development** of host country drug law enforcement institutions.

The emphasis placed on each objective is determined by the host nation's unique circumstances as they relate to their drug trafficking threat, infrastructure, and law enforcement capabilities. DEA has very successful Non-Sensitive Investigative Unit (Non-SIU) and Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU) Programs, which other agencies consider model programs. These programs receive funding from the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL). DEA works side by side with host nation counterparts to develop relevant training, promote intelligence sharing, conduct bilateral investigations, and support joint counter-drug operations. The vast majority of DEA foreign efforts and resources are dedicated to conducting international drug and drug money laundering investigations. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, there were 13 active Interagency Agreements (IAAs) under which INL provided funding support to capacity building, training, and equipping of DEA's host nation counterparts. One of these programs includes DEA's partnership with INL for critical support to develop a vetted unit from Tanzanian police forces, collaborating with a strong counterdrug partner in Africa.

**International Training:** DEA's International Training Office (TRI) has provided training, mentoring, and capacity building for our international partners for over 25 years. TRI is comprised of four dedicated Mobile Training Teams, which provide training on an annual basis. All DEA international training programs have as a major objective the building of regional working relationships between countries. In FY 2020, travel restrictions due to COVID-19 resulted in classes being postponed during the period March to October. However, despite COVID-19 restrictions, in FY21 TRI successfully conducted 39 courses overseas, training over 1,178 foreign law enforcement counterparts from various countries. Courses were conducted at the Department of State's International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEAs) in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Central America, as well as other host nation training facilities around the world. For



the first time, 16 virtual training courses were also supported and conducted for foreign counterparts.

**International Drug Enforcement Conference (IDEC) - Strengthening International**

**Relations:** IDEC was established in 1983 to institutionalize regional cooperation of drug law enforcement officials from countries in the Western Hemisphere. Over the years IDEC has evolved into an important global forum where the highest-ranking agency leaders and prosecutors from approximately 125 countries gather to develop a cooperative vision and establish strategies for combating DTOs. Participants build, balance, and integrate the tools of law enforcement to combat these criminal networks and develop a framework for international cooperation to protect all our citizens from the violence, harm, and exploitation resulting from drug trafficking and commensurate threats to national security. IDEC initiatives have demonstrated that a multilateral enforcement approach has a cumulative effect, as member nations increasingly coordinate their law enforcement efforts to investigate and prosecute major DTOs and their leaders and to seize and block their assets. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, DEA management elected to cancel the annual IDEC in both 2020 and 2021.

**The Special Testing and Research Laboratory's Programs:** The Heroin and Cocaine Signature Programs (HSP/CSP) at the DEA Special Testing and Research Laboratory (STRL) determine the geographic origins of heroin and cocaine seizure samples. In addition, the laboratory maintains a Methamphetamine Profiling Program (MPP) that determines the synthetic routes and precursor chemicals employed in producing methamphetamine. The classification schemes for these programs were developed using authentic samples collected from drug source countries worldwide, as well as drug processing laboratories in those countries. By collaborating with partner nations, numerous such "authentic" are submitted annually to the laboratory from the DEA foreign offices. Currently, the laboratory classifies several thousand drug exhibits seized within the United States and abroad annually.

The Signature and Profiling Programs provide the counterdrug intelligence community with science-based heroin and cocaine source data and intelligence information regarding methamphetamine synthesis. The HSP, CSP, and the MPP are crucial tools to investigate and support strategic intelligence regarding illicit production, trafficking, and availability of these three high profile drugs in the United States and foreign countries. Over the past several years, the laboratory has established a robust Emerging Trends Program to analyze new psychoactive substances for enforcement and intelligence purposes. This group has identified over 400 synthetic cannabinoids, substituted cathinone's, opioids and powerful hallucinogenic compounds that have come into the drug market.

To assist with addressing the opioid crisis in the United States, STRL developed and implemented a Fentanyl Profiling Program (FPP). Through an in-depth analysis, including quantitation, impurity profiling, isotopic characterization, and occluded solvents analysis, the FPP provides science-based forensic intelligence for the counterdrug intelligence/enforcement community and U.S. policymakers. FPP-derived information includes determination of the synthetic pathway for fentanyl and related compounds, as well as precursor types. The current focus of this program is geared toward determining the milligrams of fentanyl and fentanyl-related compounds contained in seized tablets.

**DEA Operations Division/Office of Financial Investigations:** The mission of the Financial Investigations Section (ODF) is to augment all DEA domestic and foreign money laundering/threat finance investigations. ODF provides assistance, expertise, and support to identify, document, and prosecute drug-money laundering organizations operating globally. It builds capacity among federal, state, local, and international law enforcement counterparts and interacts with the financial services industry in money laundering/threat finance investigations. Through DEA's foreign offices, ODF facilitates cooperation between countries, resulting in the identification and prosecution of money laundering organizations operating as part of or on behalf of transnational criminal organizations and the seizure of assets and denial of revenue globally.

ODF regularly briefs United States government officials, domestic and international law enforcement counterparts, and financial related agencies/institutions on the latest money laundering techniques and trends. Additionally, ODF conducts training for domestic DEA field offices and DEA's host country counterparts in foreign locations to share ideas and promote effective techniques in anti-money laundering efforts. Since 2020, due to COVID-19 restrictions, ODF participated in and led virtual strategy sessions focused on investigative case coordination, which were previously held in person.

DEA has prioritized having a financial component to investigations by making it a key component of Priority Target Operations, the Domestic Cartel Initiative, and Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force investigations. DEA has approximately 20 dedicated financial investigative teams across DEA's domestic offices, as well as approximately 3 foreign-based DEA teams in Mexico, Peru, and Colombia.

## United States Coast Guard (USCG)

The USCG plays a crucial role in the Department of Homeland Security to support the National Drug Control Strategy and reduce the availability of illicit drugs in the United States. The USCG is the lead U.S. federal agency for drug interdiction on the high seas. The USCG closely partners with the U.S. Navy and partner nations, supplemented with embarked USCG Law Enforcement Detachments, to patrol the maritime approaches to the U.S. and interdict suspected illicit drug smuggling vessels.

The USCG deploys cutters, boats, and aircraft in a layered approach to combat drug cartels as they transport illicit drugs from the source zone, through the Western Hemisphere Transit Zone, and into the United States. This approach confronts the threat beyond our land borders on the high seas where traffickers are most exposed and illicit drug shipments are most vulnerable to interdiction by law enforcement.

In the transit zone, the USCG is the primary maritime interdiction entity for U.S. Southern Command. The Joint Interagency Task Force – South (JIATF-South), a sub-unified command under U.S. Southern Command, leads the Department of Defense’s (DOD) statutory responsibility for detection and monitoring of illicit drugs bound for the United States by air or sea. The USCG, Customs and Border Protection, DOD, and partner nations provide fixed-wing maritime patrol aircraft that provide sophisticated intelligence capabilities to facilitate U.S. and partner nation maritime interdiction efforts. The USCG’s most capable interdiction platforms include flight deck-equipped cutters with armed helicopters, pursuit boats, and USCG Law Enforcement Detachments embarked on U.S. Navy and partner nation ships (e.g., Royal Dutch Navy and Royal British Navy).

### **Counternarcotics Operations:**

Suspected illicit drug trafficking vessels are principally detected through interagency intelligence and investigations. Actionable intelligence combined with persistent air and maritime surveillance are essential to maximize interdiction success. In collaboration with the Departments of State and Justice, the USCG maintains more than 40 counterdrug bilateral agreements and operational procedures with partner nations throughout the world, the majority in the Western Hemisphere. These agreements enhance the USCG’s effectiveness in working with partner nations by enabling its personnel to board suspect illicit trafficking vessels on the high seas, the littoral areas, and partner nation territorial seas when appropriate, and deter and disrupt maritime illicit trafficking in the transit zone.

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic presented new challenges to counternarcotics operations; however, the USCG worked through enhanced crew protection protocols and refined boarding procedures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 while conducting operations. Separately, partner nation maritime drug interdiction capabilities continue to grow, enabling independent operations in the transit zone. These operations resulted in increasing interdiction successes, and in Fiscal Year 2020 partner nation interdictions accounted for more than 62% of all cocaine removals.

**International Cooperative Efforts:**

In 2021, USCG personnel were permanently assigned overseas as USCG Liaison Officers, Defense Attachés, USCG Section Chief (Mexico), Maritime Advisors, and detailees to Support to Interdiction and Prosecution (CG-SIP) teams to enhance interoperability, boost regional security assistance programs, increase intelligence collection and dissemination, and strengthen prosecutorial support for maritime drug trafficking cases.

The USCG, with support from the Department of State, hosts two annual multilateral summits: the Multilateral Maritime Interdiction and Prosecution Summit in the Caribbean and the Multilateral Maritime Counter Drug Summit in Central and South America. These summits bring together professionals from operational and legal communities to enhance regional awareness of illicit trafficking threats, advance multinational cooperation, and discuss judicial/prosecutorial challenges, including information sharing, training, and logistics to improve counter-drug performance outcomes. To counter transatlantic drug flows and other illicit maritime activity, including piracy, weapons trafficking, and illegal fishing, the USCG works with U.S. Africa Command to expand maritime training and combined operations with West African countries through the African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership.

**International Training and Technical Assistance:**

The USCG's Security Assistance Program offers resident training programs, mobile training teams (MTTs), and technical assistance to partner nation maritime services around the world to enhance their interdiction capacity.

In Fiscal Year 2021, the USCG deployed 48 MTTs to 15 countries, training 625 students. Through the USCG's international resident training program, 152 international students from 44 countries graduated from 24 different resident courses at USCG training installations. The Coast Guard's international training program supplements geographic combatant commanders' theater security cooperation objectives, while deepening the USCG's partnerships with foreign nations combatting shared maritime security challenges.

The Technical Assistance Field Team, a joint initiative between the USCG and the U.S. Southern Command, is a team of nine Coast Guard engineers and logisticians whose purpose is to professionalize and improve the operational readiness of 13 Caribbean maritime forces through technical assistance visits.

The CG-SIP program, established in collaboration with the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, consists of two USCG Investigative Service special agents. This team provides maritime counterdrug and prosecutorial support and coordinates law enforcement activities between the Coast Guard, U.S. Embassy Country Team in the Dominican Republic, geographic combatant commanders, and JIATF-South. This program looks to expand and provide similar support to other countries receiving assistance under the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative.

**Operational Highlights:**

In July 2021, the Coast Guard Cutter JAMES interdicted a go-fast vessel approximately 93 nautical miles south of Isla Jicarita, Panama. The embarked helicopter deployed warning shots and disabling fire to stop the non-compliant vessel in order to conduct a law enforcement boarding. The master of the vessel claimed the vessel was registered in Colombia, at which point the U.S. enacted the U.S.-Colombia bilateral agreement to verify the vessel's nationality and board and search the vessel. Colombia confirmed the registry of the vessel and authorized a law enforcement boarding. The boarding resulted in the seizure of 1,305 kilograms of cocaine and the detention of three suspects. The suspects, and representative sample of cocaine, were transferred to Colombia for prosecution. This case is an example of the strong partnership between the USCG and the Colombian Navy working together to counter illicit trafficking at sea and prosecute suspects. The U.S.-Colombian bilateral agreement is the most frequently enacted and effective bilateral agreement used by the USCG in the transit zone.

Campaign ORION is a periodic, multi-national counter-narcotics operation led by the Colombian Navy (COLNAV). To date, COLNAV successfully led seven ORION operations, and are currently leading an eighth, integrating multi-national capabilities across the maritime, air, and land domains targeting key drug trafficking routes, including the transit zone. Operation ORION VII included participation from 38 countries, 104 surface ships, 222 interceptor/patrol vessels, and 27 maritime patrol aircraft. The 45-day operation led to more than 116 metric tons of cocaine interdicted, resulting in over \$5 billion in lost profits for transnational criminal organizations. The U.S. supports Campaign ORION with personnel and assets from the USCG, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection, Homeland Security Investigations, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the National Maritime Intelligence Integration Office. COLNAV's successes in leading ORION demonstrate the return on United States investment in enriching our strategic partners to combat shared maritime security threats.

## U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), a component of the Department of Homeland Security, is the nation's first line of defense against the introduction of dangerous drugs from foreign sources. CBP processes all goods, vehicles, and people entering and exiting the United States and is charged with passport control and agriculture inspections in order to provide comprehensive, seamless border control services.

CBP officers, Border Patrol agents, and Air & Marine interdiction agents are charged with identification and prevention of terrorist travel to the United States and interception of illicit drugs and other contraband, improperly classified merchandise, unlicensed technology and material, weapons, ammunition, fugitives, undocumented immigrants, and unreported currency at America's 328 international ports of entry (POEs), 135 US Border Patrol Stations and 5 Substations, and 74 Air and Marine Operations Branches and Units.

**Office of Field Operations (OFO)** carries out CBP's complex border security mission at POEs. It secures and expedites international trade and travel, and stops illicit travel, trade, and smuggling attempts by means of data analysis, partnerships with trade stakeholders to secure the supply chain, non-intrusive inspection equipment, canine teams, and trained CBP officers. Continued challenges include growth in international trade and travel, expanding mission requirements, and facility demands.

**United States Border Patrol (USBP)** agents are responsible for securing the 8,000 miles of land and coastal border between the POEs against drug smugglers, other criminals, potential terrorists, and persons seeking to avoid inspection at the POEs. CBP operates 35 permanent and 140 tactical immigration checkpoints nationwide. While their primary purpose is to inspect vehicular traffic for persons seeking to enter the United States without authorization, agents often encounter violators of other federal laws. USBP uses experienced agents, canine teams, technology, and shipper-CBP partnerships to detect threats and apprehend criminals. Agents also patrol frequent entry points for the smuggling of drugs and people into the United States.

**Air and Marine Operations (AMO)** addresses security threats through aviation and maritime law enforcement expertise. It has over 70 locations, with over 240 aircraft and over 300 maritime vessels covering from Maine to Florida, Washington to California, Northern and Southern borders, and an approximately 42-million-square-mile area which includes more than 40 nations and the Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, and seaboard approaches to the United States.

**AMO Foreign Operations:** AMO is increasing its collaboration with CBP International Affairs, CBP Attaches, and other international partners to strengthen its ability to counter transnational crime. It conducts operations, training, program assessments, and capacity building in collaboration with U.S. partners throughout the world. In the source and transit zones, AMO has collaborated with the Departments of State and Defense to develop initiatives that build aviation and maritime capacity of partner nations in Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

**AMO National Airspace Security Operations (NASO):** NASO regularly schedules airborne operations using surveillance aircraft in the 42 million square miles of Caribbean and Eastern Pacific Ocean known as the source and transit zone. It coordinates with the Information Analysis Center, Air and Marine Operations Center, Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) South, and international partners who cooperate in combating transnational organized crime.

**Office of International Affairs:** CBP's Office of International Affairs (INA) works with other U.S. government agencies and foreign government partners to share information and intelligence and promote CBP international programs. Its programs promote anti-terrorism, global border security, nonproliferation, export controls, and building partner capacity. INA strengthens bilateral and multilateral relationships via informal and formal agreements and joint efforts that facilitate legitimate trade and travel. INA supports CBP's operational offices by helping to increase foreign partners' border security capacities and by programs that identify high-risk travelers and cargo, non-citizens that pose potential national security risks, and joint programs.

**Port of Entry Interdiction Training:** The approach to border interdiction varies with border environments, i.e., land, seaport, rail, and airport. In addition to training at POEs, CBP also provides training in techniques used by smugglers who attempt to smuggle contraband across lightly patrolled border areas rather than at official POEs.

**International Bulk Currency Smuggling Training:** Bulk currency smuggling training assists foreign government enforcement personnel in identifying techniques used by bulk currency smugglers. It also helps international partners develop programs to counter this crime, potentially resulting in seizures of millions of dollars from the proceeds of crime.

**Overseas Enforcement Training:** The curriculum for Overseas Enforcement Training includes Border Enforcement Training; Supply Chain Security; Detection, Interdiction and Investigation; Concealment Methods; Bulk Currency Smuggling; False and Fraudulent Documents; Train-the-Trainer; Anti-Corruption; Targeting and Risk Management; Hazardous Materials; and X-ray Systems. These courses include both basic training and refresher training/mentoring abroad for graduates of training at U.S. port facilities.

**CBP Attachés, Representatives and Advisors, and Special Customs Programs:** CBP Attachés and Advisors are specialists that help bring countries into alignment with U.S. priorities. Attachés are posted in U.S. Embassies and Consulates where they advise mission leadership on CBP programs and capabilities. In 2021, CBP had 27 Attachés and 24 partner-funded Advisors in 31 countries. The activities of Attachés include exchanging information with foreign counterparts to improve the effectiveness of law enforcement activity; negotiating international agreements (e.g., Customs Mutual Assistance Agreements); promoting initiatives to deter and dismantle transnational criminal organizations; advocating the benefits of integrated border management and developing relationships to facilitate legitimate international trade and travel; and educating stakeholders about CBP's many international programs such as the Container Security Initiative (CSI), Immigration Advisory Programs (IAP), Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (CTPAT), and various trade and capacity building programs.

**CBP USBP Foreign Operations Division:** This division deploys personnel to expand its global footprint and improve relationships and partnerships with foreign counterparts.

**Customs Mutual Assistance Agreements:** In consultation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), CBP leads negotiations of Customs Mutual Assistance Agreements (CMAAs) with foreign governments. CMAAs provide for mutual assistance in the enforcement of customs-related laws, primarily by exchanging information that facilitates the enforcement of those laws, and provide a basis for the development of subsequent cooperation arrangements. As of calendar year 2021, the United States has 71 CMAAs signed and entered into force.

**Office of Field Operations, National Canine Enforcement Program:** The National Canine Enforcement Program (NCEP) provides technical expertise on using dogs in customs environments to detect fentanyl, dangerous narcotics, currency, concealed humans, and firearms. It assesses canine programs and works with the World Customs Organization and the U.S. Department of State to identify global partners that would benefit from canine fentanyl detection capability. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NCP shared canine health information with the World Customs Organization and other global partners.

**Preclearance Field Office:** Preclearance operations enhance aviation security by stationing CBP personnel overseas to inspect travelers prior to boarding U.S.-bound flights from foreign airports. They conduct the same immigration, customs, and agriculture inspections of international air travelers typically performed upon arrival in the United States. This added security layer provides an opportunity to detect and stop threats early in the process. This physical law enforcement presence overseas serves as a visible deterrent to those looking to conduct illicit activities within the United States before they set foot on U.S. soil.

**National Targeting Center:** The National Targeting Center (NTC) collaborates with international partners to identify, disrupt, and manage cargo and passenger risks through information sharing and joint targeting operations in accordance with memoranda of understanding and CMAAs. The Center hosts and works with participating foreign agencies and other U.S. government agencies to detect and disrupt terrorism, threats to national security and public safety, and transnational criminal activity including drug smuggling and trafficking. It also provides training and technical assistance in risk assessment to foreign Customs, Immigration, and other border enforcement agencies.

**Department of Defense Preclearance:** The Customs Border Clearance Agent (CBCA) program is designed to permit cargo consigned to the care of Department of Defense (DOD), as well as returning military personnel, to be pre-cleared for import/entry into the United States. DOD personnel that have been trained by CBP officers accomplish these pre-clearance inspections. CBCA personnel conduct Customs and Agricultural inspections and certify personnel and cargo have met all CBP and USDA entry requirements, as well as Defense Travel Regulations, prior to departing to the United States. Inspections are conducted at 28 locations in seven foreign countries throughout the Middle East. CBP officers also provide technical assistance and annual site inspections/certifications at these DOD preclearance facilities.



**Immigration Advisory Program:** The Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) Division within the Office of Field Operations (OFO) works in 19 sites around the globe. The first model, the IAP Division, engages with air carriers at foreign airports to prevent terrorists and other high-risk passengers from boarding U.S.-bound flights. OFO's Joint Security Program (JSP), a component and second model of the IAP Division, identifies high-risk air travelers and contraband arriving and departing the host country. Since 2014, a third model has deployed Police Liaison Officers to foreign partner law enforcement agencies and U.S. embassies to enhance information exchange related to terrorist and criminal travel threats. The IAP Division operates in foreign countries in an advisory role, while also serving as a training and capacity building partner to the host country, industry stakeholders, and other CBP components.

**U.S. Border Patrol Special Operations Headquarters Central America Advisory Support and Training:** Special Operations Headquarters (SOH) coordinates with USBP Foreign Operations Division and CBP/International Affairs in developing strategy and policy regarding overseas operations. It supports USBP vetted interdiction units in Central American countries to dismantle criminal networks involved in smuggling drugs and other contraband. In coordination with interagency partners, SOH provides advisors to Central American governments on border security strategy and information sharing on air passengers, including through biometric data.

**U.S. Border Patrol Support to the Biometric Identification Transnational Migration Alert Program (BITMAP):** BITMAP is a host country-led initiative in which DHS/Homeland Security Investigations and USBP train and equip foreign counterparts to collect biometric and biographic data on persons posing potential national security risks, gang members, and other persons of interest identified by the host country. Foreign partners share this data with ICE and CBP to enhance U.S. efforts to target criminal networks. It is used to identify illicit pathways and emerging trends among criminal organizations; associate derogatory information with individuals; and identify known or suspected terrorists, criminals, and other persons of interest.

**Office of Field Operations (OFO) Special Response Team (SRT):** The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and CBP use the SRT to support CBP international initiatives, including International Affairs International Training and Assistance Division (ITAD); CBP Advisors and Special Customs' Programs; CBP Pre-Clearance; Immigration Advisory Program/ Joint Security Program (IAP/JSP); and various other special mission requests. SRT supports capacity building in host nation institutions by providing advanced tactical enforcement training; Threat and Vulnerability Assessments in host countries prior to deployment; and conducts Site Surveys identifying vulnerabilities in host country border enforcement capabilities and infrastructure to identify capacity building needs. SRT also provides training to CBP employees prior to deployment to foreign assignments.

**CHEMICAL CONTROLS**

## Introduction

It is both critically important and extremely challenging to prevent criminals from gaining access to the chemicals needed to produce illicit drugs. Chemicals are essential ingredients in the production of synthetic drugs like methamphetamine and fentanyl, as well as refining agents for processing coca and opium poppy into cocaine and heroin. Preventing diversion of these chemicals is one of the most difficult challenges to reducing illicit drugs, in large part because almost all precursor chemicals have legitimate commercial and medical uses in addition to their illicit uses. Strong national efforts to control the production, transport, sale, storage, and disposal of these substances, together with robust international coordination between governments and with private industry, are essential. The challenge has taken on more urgency due to the explosion of synthetic opioids and the synthetic drug analogues known as new psychoactive substances (NPS).

The use of chemicals to isolate and refine traditional plant-based drugs, such as cocaine and morphine (the latter of which is used to produce heroin) has not changed significantly over the years. In contrast, the chemicals used as key ingredients of synthetic opioids and NPS are constantly evolving as criminals shift production methods and chemical sources to evade drug controls and tailor products to meet consumer demand. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has identified over 1,000 NPS and estimates the number of fentanyl analogues alone to number in the thousands.

While it is important to prevent criminal access both to the “traditional” chemicals used to produce plant-based drugs and those used in the production of synthetic opioids and NPS, the latter are by far the greater challenge. Synthetic drugs can be manufactured virtually anywhere from sophisticated laboratories to basements; thus, the chemical supply chains that feed production of these drugs are extremely diverse and difficult to monitor. Sustained cooperation and expanded information sharing both within and between national governments are critical to keep pace with the ever-changing landscape. In light of the enormous increase in production of synthetic opioids and NPS, this report includes a separate section on synthetic drugs, while this chapter on Chemical Control reports more broadly on countries/governments with important chemical industries or that are key destination or transit countries for precursor chemicals.

## The International Framework

The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (UN Drug Convention) is the legal framework for international cooperation to prevent precursor chemical diversion. Article 12 requires UN member states that are party to the convention to monitor their international trade in the 30 chemicals listed in Tables I and II of the Convention. These chemicals have legitimate industrial uses, and the tables are updated regularly. Under the treaty, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) has a special responsibility to monitor governments' control over precursors used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, and to assist them in preventing the illicit diversion of those chemicals. State parties are required to share information with one another and with the INCB on their international transactions involving these chemicals to identify and prevent diversion for illicit purposes.

Article 12, Sections 8 and 9 of the Convention require licensing or similar control of all persons and enterprises involved in the manufacture and distribution of listed chemicals.

**Commission on Narcotic Drugs.** The United Nations (UN) Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) is the treaty body designated in the Convention with responsibility for deciding whether substances shall be included in the 1988 tables and is the entity within the UN system with primary responsibility for international drug control policy. Resolutions adopted by the CND provide additional guidance to state parties, including on best practices to implement their obligations.

In 2017, the CND took the significant step of requiring all state parties to the 1988 UN Drug Convention to control two of the key precursor chemicals used to produce fentanyl: 4-anilino-N-phenethylpiperidine (ANPP) and N-phenethyl-4-piperidone (NPP). This scheduling decision has reduced the ability of illicit drug manufacturers to obtain these chemicals, which in turn has led some criminals to adjust production methods, including the use of alternative chemicals more widely available for commercial purposes and not controlled under the UN system. Illicit drug manufacturers have also turned increasingly to the use of so-called “pre-precursors” and “designer” precursors (chemicals intentionally produced to use in manufacturing scheduled precursors), using more advanced processing techniques. The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) has identified these trends as major concerns; they are addressed more fully in this report’s section on synthetic drugs.

In 2021 the CND placed international controls on 8 new psychoactive substances, extending the scope of control outlined in the Drug Conventions to those substances.

**International Narcotics Control Board.** The INCB is an independent, treaty-based body responsible for assisting states in their efforts to achieve the aims of the three UN drug control treaties. Under the Drug Convention, the INCB has a special responsibility to monitor governments' control over precursors used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, and to assist them in preventing the illicit diversion of those chemicals. State parties are required to share information with one another and with the INCB on their international transactions involving these chemicals to identify and prevent diversion for illicit purposes. Article 12, Sections 8 and 9 of the Convention require licensing or similar control of all persons and enterprises involved in the manufacture and distribution of listed chemicals.

The INCB plays a critical role in preventing the illicit diversion of precursor chemicals. Under the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the INCB is specifically responsible for assessing precursors (substances used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances), and to make recommendations on monitoring measures to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The Board’s assessment as to scientific matters is determinative, but the Commission also considers other relevant factors in deciding appropriate measures to adopt. Decisions of the Commission are binding on parties to the 1988 Convention, which, with 191 parties, is nearly universal in its application. The United States provides funding to the INCB to monitor the measures called for in the UN conventions, and to improve detection and tracking of chemicals subject to diversion. Most recently, the United States has provided funding to support Project GRIDS (Global Rapid Response to

Dangerous Substances), which uses real-time platforms to exchange operational information as well as providing practical tools to enhance international cooperation.

The INCB has implemented several instruments to address the challenges of precursor chemicals:

- The Pre-Export Notification Online system (PEN Online) is an online database system that enables the exchange of information between member states on the import and export of chemicals required for the manufacture of illicit drugs. It is the only global system for monitoring international legitimate trade in precursor chemicals controlled under the 1988 UN Convention and provides importing state authorities with an early alert system to verify the legitimacy of pre-export chemical shipments. Using data conveyed by PEN Online, authorities may stop suspect shipments, or, in some cases, arrange controlled deliveries. Since the PEN Online system was first launched in March 2006, 166 governments have registered to use it. Almost 35,000 pre-export notifications were submitted using the PEN Online system in 2021.
- The Precursors Incident Communication System (PICS) is another INCB tool that facilitates real-time communication exchange among law enforcement officials worldwide. The secure online system supports intelligence sharing on seizure incidents involving precursor chemicals (including clandestine laboratories) and facilitates direct coordination and collaboration among national authorities to advance investigations on chemical trafficking. PICS also helps to provide authorities with information on newly emerging precursors. Preliminary data indicates that in 2021, there were more than 300 incidents communicated through PICS. As of December 2021, there was a total of more than 3,400 incidents communicated through PICS since its launch. Those incidents involved about 50 different countries and territories. The system has more than 600 registered users from 127 countries and territories, representing more than 300 agencies.
- The International Special Surveillance List (ISSL) is an INCB mechanism that tracks chemicals not regulated by the 1988 Convention but for which substantial evidence exists of their use in illicit drug manufacture. The CND has urged governments to make wider use of ISSL and take voluntary measures to apply greater oversight of the supply chain of chemicals listed by it.
- In 2021, the INCB hosted expert and Member State consultations to develop a list of options for global action that governments can use to address the challenge of non-scheduled chemicals and designer precursors used in the illicit manufacture of drugs. The paper includes recommendations for action including legislative measures, investigative tools, and industry engagement. This initiative builds on a conference room paper submitted by the International Narcotics Control Board to the 63<sup>rd</sup> CND in 2020, titled “Options to address the proliferation of non-scheduled chemicals, including designer precursors – contribution to a wider policy dialogue.”

In addition to PEN Online, PICS, and ISSL, the INCB coordinates multinational law enforcement task forces to monitor and intercept diverted chemicals used to illicitly

manufacture drugs, specifically synthetic drugs (Project Prism), heroin and cocaine (Project Cohesion), and NPS (Project Ion). These ongoing mechanisms facilitate coordination between international law enforcement authorities for coordinating targeted, time-bound intelligence-gathering operations.

**Regional Bodies.** The regulatory framework codified by the United Nations does not exist in isolation. Regional bodies, such as the European Union and the Organization of American States (OAS) actively work in partnership with the United States on multilateral chemical control initiatives, including the implementation of CND resolutions. The OAS Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and its Group of Experts on Chemical Substances and Pharmaceutical Products works to advance voluntary cooperation to prevent the diversion and criminal misuse of non-controlled chemicals, and in 2019 published model guidelines to serve as a regional roadmap for addressing this challenge.

### **Major Chemical Source Countries and Territories**

This section reports on countries with large chemical manufacturing industries that have significant trade with drug-producing regions and those with significant chemical commerce susceptible to diversion domestically for smuggling into drug-producing countries. Designation as a major chemical source country does not indicate a lack of adequate chemical control legislation or the ability to enforce it. Rather, it recognizes that the volume of chemical trade with drug-producing regions, or proximity to them, makes these countries the sources of the greatest quantities of chemicals liable to diversion.

#### **Afghanistan**

Inadequate border security and weak enforcement capacity hamper control of precursor chemicals in Afghanistan. Both acetic anhydride (used in the production of heroin) and ammonium nitrate are illegal in Afghanistan. Hydrochloric acid, acetone, and sulfuric acid are controlled substances and subject to seizure for other reasons, such as customs violations. Prior to August 15, 2021, the United States supported UNODC programming geared toward developing border control units in Kabul and at key ports of entry on Afghanistan's borders with Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Iran, as well as a specialized unit devoted to combating the precursor problem. The U.S. government's support for Afghan border control units has ended, but it is reviewing potential assistance in border regions, pending the outcome of overall policy reviews.

#### **Belgium**

Belgian laws regulate the production and use of many chemicals required for illegal drug production, effectively muting the production by Belgium's robust chemical industry of chemical precursors to synthetic drugs. Belgium controls all substances listed in the 1988 UN Convention Against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and has imposed controls on additional substances listed in European Union regulations. Belgium enforces strong reporting requirements for the import and export of precursor chemicals (for example, bulk pseudoephedrine/ephedrine, safrole oil, acetic anhydride, and benzyl methyl ketone), although Belgian authorities state that

importers get around these restrictions with creative labelling. The Belgian Federal Police and Belgian Customs & Excise have the lead roles in enforcing these controls. Shipments of pharmaceutical preparations (medication in tablet form) are only controlled on a regulatory level by the Belgian Ministry of Safety and Public Health.

Belgium has traditionally served as a transit point for precursor chemicals from China and India that are destined for clandestine synthetic drug laboratories in the Netherlands, Belgium, and elsewhere. Annual data for seizures after 2019 were not available at the time of publication. The most prevalent precursor chemical seized in 2019 was acetic anhydride; in 2018 it was piperonyl methyl ketone (PMK or MDP2P). Belgian authorities readily admit that, due to the huge influx of cocaine through the Port of Antwerp, the targeting and interdiction of precursor chemicals has not been a priority in recent years.

### **Belize**

There was no increase in identification or location of precursor chemicals in 2021, according to the Belize National Forensics Science Lab. Encounters of these chemicals are rare; there are few seizures by law enforcement. In 2020, the Cabinet amended the Misuse of Drugs Act to add precursors for fentanyl and precursors for amphetamine-type stimulants to the second schedule of the Act. INL and DEA participated in the multi-agency Belize Pharmaceutical Task Force, the entity charged with proposing legislation to impact the use of illicit drugs in Belize. The Task Force is currently revising the Precursor Control Bill with the aim of increasing the scope of precursor investigations. It is also working to include additional precursor chemicals, including regulatory controls, in the current legal framework. In 2021, the Government of Belize improved its process of analysis and reporting, to include statistical and non-statistical methods as well as reporting of gross weight for suspected controlled substances. The Cabinet approved a study for the creation of a national DNA Lab, which would provide forensics capabilities for drug investigations.

### **Bolivia**

Bolivia's Controlled Substances Law, enacted in 2017, regulates precursor chemicals in coordination with the International Narcotics Control Board. Precursor chemicals for processing cocaine are diverted through black market channels into Bolivia. According to the Chemical Substances Investigations Group (GISUQ) of the Bolivian counterdrug police (FELCN), most of these chemicals come from Brazil, Argentina, and Chile.

The GISUQ is charged with locating and interdicting chemicals used in the traditional cocaine process, such as sulfuric acid, hydrochloric acid, and gasoline. It coordinates activities with the Special Force for the Fight against Narcotics Trafficking and the Vice Minister of Social Defense and Controlled Substances, which administers and licenses the commercialization and transport of controlled substances listed under Bolivian domestic law. The 2017 Controlled Substances Law provides that violation of controlled substances can result in penal action against all participants and provides the legal framework for GISUQ, in coordination with other agencies, to add or eliminate chemical substances controlled under Bolivian law.

In addition to serving as a transit country for illicit drug shipments, Bolivia is also a source country for coca and cocaine processing. The number of labs in Bolivia that process Peruvian and Bolivian coca base into cocaine has significantly increased over the last nine years. The most common chemicals seized as contraband are those typically found in drug factories (where coca base is prepared) and cocaine labs (where coca base is transformed into cocaine HCl). The most common chemicals found in cocaine factories and labs are sulfuric acid; hydrochloric acid; sodium carbonate; caustic soda; potassium permanganate and ethyl ether; phenacetin; sodium metabisulfite; activated carbon; ethyl acetate; and levamisole. Bolivia added the last five products as controlled substances under its law in 2019, and GISUQ believes they are alternative chemicals that drug producers use to avoid law enforcement controls. No additional products have been added to the list since 2019. Traffickers use activated carbon to deodorize and discolor water and other liquids, and phenacetin, a highly toxic analgesic, is used to increase the volume of cocaine.

The Bolivian government does not have control regimes for ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. The GISUQ, however, coordinates with the Ministry of Health to supervise and interdict illegal commercialization of methamphetamine. In September 2016, the Ministry of Health created the State Agency of Medicines and Health Technologies to regulate the use and commercialization of synthetic drugs.

In the first nine months of 2021 the GISUQ seized 484.1 metric tons of solid substances and 715,328 liters of liquid precursor chemicals.

## **Brazil**

Brazil is one of the world's top 10 chemical producing countries. It licenses, controls, and inspects precursor chemicals, including potassium permanganate and acetic anhydride, in conformity with its obligations under the 1988 UN Drug Control Convention.

Brazil's Federal Police (PF) Chemical Division controls and monitors 146 chemical products in conjunction with 27 regional divisions and 97 resident offices. The Chemical Division is composed of two units: the Chemical Control Division, subordinate to the Executive Directorate, and the Criminal Investigations Unit under the Organized Crime Division. Both divisions routinely coordinate and share information when conducting administrative inspections and criminal investigations.

The Brazilian National Health Regulatory Agency (ANVISA) oversees precursor chemicals used in the pharmaceutical industry, including 4-anilino-N-phenethylpiperidine (ANPP) and N-Phenethyl-4-piperidinone (NPP), which are on the list of controlled chemical substances, but are not banned.

Regulatory guidelines require chemical handlers to be registered and licensed to conduct activities such as manufacturing, importing, exporting, storing, transporting, and distributing chemicals. The PF uses a National Computerized System of Chemical Control to monitor all chemical movements in the country. It requires all companies to register all precursor chemical



activity, including monthly reports for all chemical related movements and existing chemical inventories.

Brazil reports to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) its annual estimates of legitimate requirements for ephedrine and pseudoephedrine for quantities above 10 grams, and P-2-P in any amount using the INCB's Pre-Export Notification (PEN) Online system. The PF routinely uses PEN Online in cases of international trade and in coordination with UN member states to alert importing countries with details of an export transaction.

### **Burma**

While Burma's porous borders, political instability, conflict, and COVID-19 pandemic all make it difficult to accurately quantify, there was evidence Burma's illicit production and export of synthetic drugs continued increasing in 2021. Burma does not have a major chemical industry and does not manufacture the ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or other precursors used in synthetic drug manufacturing. The UNODC has tracked and senior public officials acknowledge the increasing inflows of illegally diverted and trafficked precursor chemicals from China.

The Supervision Committee for the Control of Precursor Chemicals, which functions under the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC), monitors the possession, use, sale, production, and transportation of chemical precursors. Burma is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention but has not instituted laws to meet all UN chemical control provisions. Burma officially monitors the sale or import of 38 identified precursor chemicals. Importers of licit chemicals must use the CCDAC pre-import notification system. Retailers must apply to CCDAC for approval to transport chemicals across and within Burma. Authorities face challenges in controlling illicit import and diversion of precursor chemicals, including sophisticated trafficking networks, porous borders, corruption, and conflict areas.

Burma has deployed interdiction equipment to several major checkpoints. DED reported major precursor seizures from January to December 2021, including 48,620 kilograms (kg) of sodium cyanide, 74,434 kg of ammonium nitrate, 9,355 kg of caffeine powder, 28,260 liters of methanol, and 42,960 kg of ethyl acetate, among others.

The United States funds UNODC to strengthen response to precursor chemicals diversion and trafficking. The United States also supports efforts to establish a coordinated, regional response to precursor chemical diversion and trafficking that include Burma.

### **Canada**

Canada has a large chemical industry and maintains strong legislation and regulatory controls over the industry. Nevertheless, diversion of chemicals by organized criminal groups for the purpose of illicit drug production remains a problem. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police established a National Chemical Precursor Diversion Program to address the issue. In addition, Canada's Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA), Narcotics Control Regulations (NCR), Benzodiazepines and Other Targeted Substances Regulations (BTSR), Precursor Control Regulations (PCR), and other regulations provide a legislative framework for the control of

substances and chemical precursors. While the CDSA prohibits certain activities involving precursors, the PCR authorizes the legitimate manufacture, distribution, import and export of these chemicals. Health Canada submits an annual report to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) with respect to its obligations under the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 (1988 Convention).

Scheduling of precursors under the CDSA and its regulations provides law enforcement agencies the authority to act against illicit activities. The PCR authorizes Health Canada to communicate information it collects to law enforcement agencies, border control officers, foreign competent authorities, and the INCB. As a State Party to the 1988 Convention, Canada is obligated to impose controls on substances in response to decisions of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Regulatory amendments made to the NCR and PCR in May 2019 gave the government greater control over precursor chemicals, derivatives, analogues, and salts of derivatives and analogues, to help combat the illegal production and distribution of fentanyl and amphetamines, such as methamphetamine and MDMA.

In July 2021, CBSA seized 1,500 kilograms of 4-Piperidone, a precursor chemical essential to the production of fentanyl, from a marine container that was declared as household goods.

## China

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has implemented a licensing regime for the production, sale, and transport of drug precursor chemicals. However, without properly staffed and adequately equipped oversight over the PRC's massive chemical industry, which includes approximately 160,000 chemical companies, illicit drug manufacturers directly source or divert chemicals that facilitate drug hubs in Mexico and Burma. The National Narcotics Control Commission (NNCC) is the agency with primary responsibility for drug precursor chemical control. The PRC maintains a list of controlled precursor chemicals called the "Catalogue of Precursor Chemicals," which currently includes 32 drug precursor chemicals. This catalogue includes potassium permanganate (a precursor for cocaine), acetic anhydride (heroin), and ephedrine and pseudoephedrine (methamphetamine).

U.S. law enforcement recognizes the diversion of drug precursors to illicit manufacture as a significant problem in China. U.S. law enforcement reports that the most common diversion tactic used by traffickers is the intentional mislabeling of shipments containing precursors. Perpetrators caught mislabeling precursor shipments often face only civil penalties and small fines rather than criminal charges. The challenge of preventing precursor diversion is further exacerbated by the PRC's inability to effectively screen the high volume of goods being exported via land, air, and sea. Traffickers also skirt chemical control laws by selling and distributing chemicals that are not yet regulated by the PRC but are chemical avenues to the production of fentanyl and methamphetamine, including on e-commerce platforms. According to U.S. seizure data, after fentanyl "direct" precursors NPP and 4-ANPP were controlled in China, China-based traffickers shifted to sending not yet controlled chemicals to Mexico (such as 4-AP) that are one step earlier in the chemical process for making fentanyl, so-called "indirect precursors" or "pre-precursors."

The PRC in 2018 controlled 32 new substances, and in 2019 controlled fentanyl as a class. In 2020 the PRC was encouraged by the United States to ensure parity in controlled chemical regulations, specifically by scheduling 4-AP, an often-used precursor chemical for the manufacture of fentanyl. The General Office of the State Council listed six substances to its chemical precursors list, effective September 20, 2021. Four of the substances are Category II chemicals and two are Category III. Two of the substances, MAPA and APAA are precursors to methamphetamine, added as Category II chemicals. The additional Category II chemicals scheduled are PMK glycidic acid and PMK glycidate, with Benzyl cyanide and Gamma-butyrolactone being added as Category III chemicals.

Individuals are not often prosecuted in the PRC for the manufacturing of controlled substances. Once a substance is controlled, to avoid harsh sentences associated with drug trafficking that include capital punishment, the market quickly moves to manufacture and sell non-controlled substances that are used to make synthetic opioids. The PRC has not taken effective measures to combat mislabeling used to traffic synthetic opioid precursors, or to regulate pill presses in China that continue to fuel the United States' domestic opioid crisis.

## **Colombia**

Diversion of precursor chemicals is a serious problem in Colombia that the government is working to address. The Colombian government has tightened controls on coca-processing chemicals, though traffickers are able to import them illicitly into Colombia and have built illicit labs to produce some precursors. Seizures increased during the first nine months of 2021, when the police and military forces seized 23,136 metric tons (MT) of solid precursors and 4,595,950 gallons of liquid precursors. This represents a 47 percent increase in solid precursors and a 15 percent increase for liquid precursors as compared to the same period in 2020.

The Colombian government controls the import and distribution of chemicals needed for processing coca leaves into cocaine, such as sulfuric acid (53,051 gallons seized during the first nine months of 2021), hydrochloric acid (39,066 gallons seized during the same period), potassium permanganate (142 MT seized during the same period), and cement (22,691 MT seized during the same period). The government limits production, distribution, and storage of precursors nationwide and prohibits gasoline and other chemicals in certain zones. Additionally, Colombian companies are not authorized to export ephedrine or pseudoephedrine in bulk form. Colombian law bans the domestic distribution of all pharmaceutical products containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine.

Since 2015, the government has regulated precursor chemicals used for drug production and expanded its enforcement efforts related to these chemicals. In 2015, the government began implementing the Information System for the Control of Substances and Chemical Products (SICOQ), a real time tracking tool that the police and the Ministry of Justice developed to strengthen the control of chemicals and has trained companies in the correct use of chemicals to avoid diversion. As of September, more than 7,214 companies were registered in the SICOQ platform, and 5,182 of those registered companies had valid government-issued authorizations for the legal use of controlled substances and chemical products.

While the Colombian government has strengthened chemical control legislation, traffickers are able to import precursors clandestinely into Colombia. Although chemical companies require government permission to import or export specific chemicals and controlled substances, the police must prove seized chemicals were intended for illicit drug production. Further, to bring U.S. charges against an illicit chemical trafficker, the police must prove that the trafficker had knowledge that the chemicals seized were going to produce drugs that would end up in the United States. Additionally, traffickers and clandestine laboratories recycle controlled chemicals and are increasingly able to replace controlled chemicals with non-controlled chemicals.

The police created a special unit tasked with the interdiction of precursor chemicals. The Colombian Marines increased efforts against precursor chemicals transported via rivers by better covering riverine chokepoints - areas through which traffickers must cross to move controlled chemicals. The United States supports a dedicated enforcement group and a special investigations unit within the police anti-narcotics directorate focused on targeting the criminal organizations involved in supplying chemicals to cocaine labs. Special agents, intelligence analysts, and their Colombian counterparts work in concert with colleagues in Ecuador to interdict these chemicals in transit, thereby denying trafficking organizations, heavily armed criminal groups, and terrorist organizations the financial resources needed to expand, purchase illegal weapons, and commit attacks against the Colombian government and civilians.

### **Costa Rica**

Costa Rica has a stringent licensing process for the importation and distribution of precursor chemicals. In 2010 it also adopted recommendations from the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). Costa Rica has controls for Table I and Table II precursor and essential chemicals as defined by the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

The administration's National Plan on Drugs for 2018-2025 noted the international problem of production and trafficking of chemical precursors. Costa Rica has yet to seize large amounts of the substances compared to elsewhere in the region and has a low volume of imports, however it has a robust registration process and is responsive to requests regarding suspicious shipments of precursors. The Costa Rican Drug Institute has a special unit dedicated to the control and regulation of precursor chemicals, and this unit has broad powers to monitor and respond to illegal activity.

By law, importers and businesses that handle chemical precursors or certain types of prescription drugs are required to submit monthly reports through an online tracking system. Between January and September 2021, there were 2,192 authorized import transactions, licensed to 242 registered importers of chemical precursors. The system tracks the movement of chemical precursors and solvents and generates alerts. Costa Rica received one alert during January-September 2021, and it is currently investigating for possible irregular activity.

### **Ecuador**

Ecuadorian law designates potassium permanganate and acetic anhydride as controlled chemicals. Buying, selling, or importing these chemicals requires the permission of the Ministry

of Government, the primary agency responsible for precursor chemical control in Ecuador. Article 219 of the Criminal Code prohibits the use of precursor chemicals to produce, manufacture, or prepare illicit materials, such as cocaine or heroin, punishable by three to five years in prison.

The police's National Chemical Unit enforces the laws which govern the importation of listed chemicals as well as targets organizations diverting these chemicals to criminal organizations through investigations and intelligence operations. Although the National Chemical Unit is a highly competent entity, its small size and lack of resources hinders its ability to tackle the problem on a large scale.

Ecuador has been importing large quantities of potassium permanganate for at least the past decade. According to the Ministry of Government, during the first 10 months of 2021, Ecuador imported 75.90 metric tons (MT) of potassium permanganate, compared to 20.4 MT in all of 2020. As a controlled chemical, potassium permanganate requires an import license to be imported into the country. Most 2021 imports of potassium permanganate originated from China. During the first 10 months of 2021, Ecuador imported 60.06 MT of acetic anhydride, compared to 49.1 MT imported in 2020. Most 2021 imports of acetic anhydride originated from Mexico. Traffickers also continue to smuggle liquid chemicals, including ether, from Ecuador to Colombia and Peru for cocaine processing.

### **El Salvador**

El Salvador has been regulating psychotropic drugs and other precursor chemicals since 1998 and has established regulations for all controlled substances entering the country. In 2003, to enhance the previous laws the government issued additional regulations for psychotropic drugs and precursor chemicals. These included a description of all illegal drugs and all institutions involved in preventing the use, distribution, and prosecution of drug related crimes. Additionally, the laws indicated that in the first two months of every year, the National Medicine Directorate would publish a list of medications and controlled substances in El Salvador. The list published in February 2021 includes 152 narcotics, 159 psychotropic drugs, 81 substances related to fentanyl with no legitimate use, and 72 precursor chemicals.

Pseudoephedrine has been prohibited in El Salvador since 2009. It cannot be imported or exported without prior approval and authorization from the National Medication Direction. To receive authorization to import or export, a detailed request must be submitted. Further, pharmacies wanting to import or export precursor chemicals or other controlled substances also need authorization from the National Medication Directorate. Each business is required to submit an estimate of what they will import throughout a year and keep records of the controlled substances they have on hand. All controlled substances must be prescribed by authorized medical professionals.

In support of El Salvador, the U.S. government is working with Salvadoran authorities to train them on precursor chemical identification, regulation, destruction, diversion, and safety. This includes an emphasis on monitoring importation through active ports in El Salvador.

## Germany

Germany has long been a leading manufacturer of legal pharmaceuticals and chemicals. Most of the 30 scheduled substances under international control as listed in Tables I and II of the 1988 UN Convention, and other chemicals that can be used for the illicit production of narcotic drugs, are manufactured and/or sold by the German chemical and pharmaceutical industries.

According to the most recent available data from the German Federal Statistical Office, Germany exported 18.8 metric tons (MT) of ephedrine and 278.3 MT of pseudoephedrine in 2020. Germany has taken significant steps to implement the UN's 2017 decision to control the two primary chemicals used to produce illicit fentanyl and fentanyl analogues – 4-anilino-N-phenethylpiperidine (ANPP) and N-Phenethyl-4-piperidinone (NPP). Germany has also taken strong measures to control the export of potassium permanganate (60.3 MT) and acetic anhydride (207.5 MT).

Germany's National Precursor Monitoring Act complies with European Union (EU) regulations. Germany has a highly developed chemical sector, which is tightly controlled through a combination of national and EU regulations, law enforcement action, and voluntary industry compliance. Cooperation among chemical and pharmaceutical producers, vendors, and German authorities is a key element in Germany's chemical control strategy. Germany works closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and is an active participant in chemical control initiatives led by the International Narcotics Control Board, including Project Prism and Project Cohesion. U.S. authorities work closely with Germany's chemical regulatory agency, the Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices, on chemical control issues and exchanges bilateral information to promote transnational chemical control initiatives. German agencies cooperate closely with their U.S. counterparts to identify and stop chemical precursor diversion.

## Guatemala

Guatemala abides by the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and its corresponding list of controlled drug precursors. Under Guatemalan law, the Ministry of Public Health is responsible fulfilling the Convention's guidelines, including oversight on the manufacture and use of precursors, authorizing import quotas, issuing import and export permits, and conducting general supervision and inspection over the commercialization and production of precursors. Guatemalan legislation requires that importers and local purchasers of precursor chemicals are duly registered and authorized, and that they provide a monthly report of quota usage.

The Ministry of Public Health lacks personnel and resources to effectively monitor the import, export, and use of the over 750 registered entities that handle chemical precursors in country. The Ministry of Public Health does not maintain a central database to track and register precursor chemicals, and customs and law enforcement are often unable to verify if shipments of precursor chemicals are legitimate.

In 2021, Guatemalan authorities seized small amounts of methamphetamine - 9.14 kilograms (kg) - and had no recorded seizures of ephedrine. According to records from the Ministry of

Public Health, 225.9 grams of fentanyl were legally imported into the country in 2021, as well as 2,851 kg of potassium permanganate and 48 liters of acetic anhydride. The Ministry of Public Health reported no imports of the fentanyl precursor chemicals ANPP (4-anilino-N-phenethylpiperidine) and NPP (N-Phenethyl-4-piperidinone).

The Ministry of Governance, which has oversight on law enforcement, oversees the incineration of precursor chemicals, which is conducted under the supervision of the Public Ministry (Guatemala's equivalent to the U.S. Department of Justice). With U.S. assistance, Guatemala completed repairs and increased the number of trained technicians to operate a U.S. donated chemical incinerator. As of October 2021, Guatemala destroyed 537 metric tons (MT) of chemical precursors and is on track to exceed the total amount of chemicals incinerated from 2018-2020 (613 MT).

## Honduras

While the Government of Honduras works closely with U.S. authorities to disrupt the importation and diversion of precursor chemicals through Honduras, such diversion continues to be a problem in Honduras. The country has an active commercial sector involved in the manufacture and sale of common precursor chemicals. The United States provides training and other assistance to strengthen Honduran institutions responsible for controlling precursor chemicals, such as the Honduras National Police Anti-Drug and Frontier Police Directorates, the National Port Authority, Public Ministry, and Customs Authority. Authorities seized 244,000 kilograms (kg) of sodium carbonate during the first nine months of 2021 alleged to have been diverted for illicit drug production. In 2020, authorities seized a total of 663,396 kg of calcium oxide and sodium carbonate and in 2019 there were no precursor chemical seizures reported.

Honduran authorities have limited capacity to detect and identify precursor chemicals, and information sharing between government institutions regarding synthetic drug and precursor chemical trafficking is not optimal. The responsibility for the control of precursor chemicals is spread over a variety of agencies, including the Directorate of Investigation and Intelligence (DNII); the Public Ministry's Directorate for the Fight against Drug Trafficking (DLCN); the Anti-Drug Directorate of the HNP; the Ministry of Health; the Agency for Sanitary Regulation (ARSA); the National Interinstitutional Security Force (FUSINA); and the Customs Authority (DARA). The Interagency Technical Board on Chemical Precursors Supply Reduction is the permanent interagency technical working group on drug supply reduction that coordinates the work of these agencies to combat the diversion of precursor chemicals. A lack of proper testing equipment, especially in the largest container port of Puerto Cortes, results in delays that can prevent detainment of a container or other cargo under Honduran customs laws.

The 1989 Law on the Misuse and Illicit Traffic of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances is the current legislation used to prosecute the illicit movement of precursor chemicals. The work of the Precursor Chemical and Synthetic Drug Board to draft a more comprehensive chemical precursor law has not advanced in the past year.

## Hong Kong

Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, is neither a drug manufacturing nor chemical producing economy. With well-developed logistics connectivity to mainland China, one of the world's largest precursor chemical exporters, Hong Kong's chemical trade is mostly in the form of imports and subsequent re-export or transshipments, or for local consumption for medical and industrial uses.

In 2020, the most recent year for which data is available, controlled chemical imports totaled approximately 10,805 metric tons (MT), with approximately 1,278 MT re-exported. Hong Kong supports international efforts to prevent precursor chemical diversion through a combination of effective legislation, strong law enforcement, and close collaboration with the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), other foreign counterparts, and the business community.

The Control of Chemicals (COC) Ordinance, in effect since 1996, is Hong Kong's basic legislation for regulating possession, manufacture, transport, and distribution of controlled chemicals. In June 2021, the COC Order 2021 added methyl alpha-phenylacetoacetate (MAPA) to Schedule 2 of the COC (Cap. 145), while the Hong Kong Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (DDO) Order 2021 added 4F MDMB-BINACA, 5F-AMB-PINACA, 5F-MDMB-PICA, crotonylfentanyl, etizolam, flualprazolam, mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine to the First Schedule of the DDO (Cap. 134).

The COC Ordinance, which establishes a licensing regime over importers, exporters, dealers, traders, manufacturers, and handlers of the designated chemicals, applies equally to imports, exports, and transshipments. Permits for every shipment are mandatory. Government approval for all premises and containers used to store such chemicals is also mandatory. The maximum penalty for illicit chemical trafficking is imprisonment for 15 years and a fine of \$130,000. The Controlled Chemicals Group (CCG) of the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department's Drug Investigations Bureau administers and enforces the Ordinance.

Permit applications to handle controlled chemicals, including those for the partial removal of chemicals while in transit, must be received by the CCG at least 10 days before the proposed date of activity. The CCG uses this interim period to establish the bona fides of a proposed shipment, including through coordination with foreign counterparts via the Pre-Export Notification System. Export permits are only issued upon receipt of "No Objection" letters from competent authorities in importing jurisdictions. While Hong Kong does not control sales of over-the-counter medicines containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, the CCG does investigate reports of possible diversion or parallel trading involving those substances.

Hong Kong supports international actions to prevent illicit chemical diversion but tends to place a relatively lower priority on cases where chemicals transiting Hong Kong are not themselves controlled in the territory. The Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance (Cap. 525), the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance (Cap. 503) and the Drug Trafficking (Recovery of Proceeds) Ordinance (Cap. 405), are three important provisions which provide a legal framework for Hong Kong to pursue drug offenders and confiscate their proceeds at the international level and keep Hong Kong's anti-drug work in step with current international standards.



## India

India's pharmaceutical and chemical industries are responsible for a significant percentage of the global supply of pharmaceuticals, particularly generic drugs. Legislation, regulation, and enforcement have not kept pace with the growth of the industry. Criminal organizations in India have diverted chemical precursors and drugs from licit chemical and pharmaceutical manufacturers for illicit production in clandestine laboratories.

The Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN) is responsible for issuing licenses required for the manufacture of synthetic narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances listed in the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS), as well as import/export authorizations for the movement of precursor chemicals and pharmaceutical drugs. CBN is the central agency authorized to interact with the International Narcotics Control Board and foreign governments in supervising international transactions of regulated substances.

India's Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS) provides the legislative framework to implement precursor chemical control obligations required by the 1988 UN Drug Convention and Article 47 of India's Constitution. The Act codifies the regulation of finished pharmaceutical products as well as chemicals used to manufacture those products. India regulates 19 of the 30 precursor substances scheduled in Tables I and II of the 1988 UN Convention. Of the 19 substances, India's NDPS Act designates five as subject to the most stringent controls under its Schedule A, which includes acetic anhydride, ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, n-acetylanthranilic acid, and anthranilic acid. Schedule B of the NDPS covers controlled substances subject to export restrictions and Schedule C governs controlled substances subject to import restrictions.

In 2018, India added anilino-N-phenethylpiperidine (ANPP) and N-Phenethyl-4-piperidinone (NPP), as controlled substances subject to export controls under the NDPS Act. Potassium permanganate can be exported and imported with a certificate issued by the Narcotics Commissioner of India, under the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). In October 2019, India mandated that sales and distribution of controlled precursors required prior registration with the NCB. India continues to participate in international precursor control initiatives such as the INCB-led Project Cohesion and Project Prism. However, diversion of precursor chemicals from licit producers to illicit brokers remains a challenge. India-based precursor trafficking organizations have been involved in the illicit export and domestic sale of precursor chemicals such as ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, used in the manufacture of methamphetamine.

To avoid Chinese controls on the export of precursors, some entrepreneurs and dealers, including Mexican-based criminal organizations, have shifted to India as a new source for precursor chemicals. Multi-ton consignments of precursor materials from India have been shipped to Africa and Mexico. This trend is expected to continue and expand.

Although the NDPS Act allows India to use emergency scheduling, regulators have not exercised this authority. In 2018, India added tramadol to the NDPS schedules through the regular process, which requires approvals from multiple ministries and Parliament. The NDPS Act also provides

for the control of chemicals used to manufacture controlled substances, but it does not define controlled substance analogues and does not include controls for related equipment. All manufacturing equipment is required to comply with regulations in Schedule M, “Good Manufacturing Practices and Requirements of Premises, Plant, And Equipment for Pharmaceutical Products” of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules 1945. There is no registration requirement for manufacturing equipment, including tableting and encapsulating machines.

### **Indonesia**

Indonesia’s 2009 National Narcotics Law gave the National Narcotics Board (BNN) the authority to monitor narcotics and precursor production at pharmaceutical plants and to conduct investigations and arrests in response to precursor and narcotics violations. The bulk of precursors come in via ocean routes from China, Taiwan, and India; however, Indonesia is not a prime destination for precursors as most illegal drugs are not manufactured in the country. Law enforcement officials have said that sassafras, a main ingredient of MDMA, is the only known precursor exported from Indonesia, with Australia as the destination. There are several laws and regulations regarding the import and export of precursor chemicals. BNN reported that it regularly conducts unannounced inspections of companies that are listed as importers of precursor chemicals. In September 2021, two Iranians were arrested in West Jakarta by Regional Police (Polres Jakbar) for producing crystal meth out of a rented home. According to police, the raw materials were sourced from abroad. The Indonesia Ministry of Health reports annual estimates of its legal domestic narcotics precursors to the International Narcotics Control Board.

### **Republic of Korea**

The Republic of Korea’s industrial capabilities and position as a global logistics hub make it attractive to criminals seeking to obtain and transship precursor chemicals. Precursor chemicals used for the manufacture of illicit drugs, such as acetic anhydride, pseudoephedrine, and ephedrine, are likely imported from the United States, Japan, India, and China and then either resold within South Korea or smuggled into other countries. In 2020, the most recent year for which data is available, South Korea imported approximately 33 metric tons (MT) of ephedrine and 26.3 MT of pseudoephedrine. While acetic anhydride remains the chemical of greatest concern, there are increasing concerns about the use of legal and less monitored chemicals, such as sodium cyanide, to evade authorities and produce illicit drugs such as methamphetamine. South Korea imports acetic anhydride for legitimate use, such as film production, cigarette filters, and other industrial and medical applications. South Korea placed 4-anilino-N-phenethylpiperidine (ANPP) and N-Phenethyl-4-piperidinone (NPP) under regulatory control after the UN’s 2017 decision to control these precursors.

South Korea’s efforts to control diversion of regulated chemical precursors are largely effective. Both the Korea Customs Service and Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS) cooperate with the United States and other international bodies to monitor imports of potassium permanganate and chemicals used to produce amphetamine-type stimulants, and South Korean authorities participate in International Narcotics Control Board-coordinated monitoring and regulating taskforces, including projects Cohesion and Prism. South Korean law enforcement authorities

also cooperate with Southeast Asian nations to verify documents and confirm the identities of importing businesses, including by on-site inspection.

The MFDS is responsible for enforcing a 2011 law requiring manufacturers, importers, and exporters of precursor chemicals to register with the government and renew registration every two years. It also provides training and updates to South Korean businesses to keep them from unknowingly exporting precursor chemicals to fraudulent importers. Smugglers exploit South Korean customs and chemical regulations to hide precursor chemical shipments in containerized cargo shipments. Current regulations, which have different reporting thresholds for different chemicals, could allow smugglers to purchase multiple small quantities from different retail outlets to avoid detection, then combine them for shipment. South Korean authorities work closely with U.S. counterparts to track suspect shipments.

## **Mexico**

Mexican laws regulate the production and use of many chemicals required for illicit drug production. The Mexican Federal Commission for the Protection Against Sanitary Risk (COFEPRIS) is responsible for regulating chemicals. It works with the National Guard, Customs (SAT), and Prosecutor General's Office (FGR) to enforce the law. Mexico controls all chemicals listed in the 1988 UN Convention. Government agencies continue to authorize permits and monitor the importation of controlled precursor chemicals, but this has not significantly deterred local production of synthetic drugs.

Mexico controls six fentanyl precursor chemicals: 4-AP, 4-AP Dihydrochloride, Propionic Anhydride, Propionyl Chloride, NPP, and ANPP. On May 25, 2021, Mexico published a new 14-chemical watchlist to flag these chemicals to government and private sector entities to reduce diversion to TCOs. These controls have forced transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) to seek chemical alternatives, while providing Mexican regulatory and law enforcement agencies a legal basis to seize these substances and file criminal or civil charges against those illegally importing them.

The U.S. government continues to enhance Mexico's capacity to track chemical imports and exports electronically and builds the Mexican Navy's ability to interdict illicit goods and control ports to disrupt the supply chain of precursor chemicals used to make illicit drugs.

The United States cooperates closely with Mexico on synthetic drugs to reduce the supply of illicit opioids in the United States. The U.S. government sponsors training and conferences to promote awareness of synthetic drugs and seizure trends and supports forensic chemistry labs to improve criminal investigations involving synthetic opioids. The United States also assists COFEPRIS in issuing electronic permits and tracking the international import and export of precursor chemicals through the National Drug System (NDS).

Despite controls, transnational criminal organizations stay ahead of scheduling laws by using pre-precursors, and easily available, off-the-shelf products to synthesize precursors and avoid existing regulations.

The Government of Mexico continued to target suspected fentanyl labs, facilities producing fentanyl-laced counterfeit pills (known as pill mills), and fentanyl in transit in 2021. The United States is working with FGR and other agencies, including military units who perform counternarcotics work, to create judicial records of seizures and establish protocols for reporting to a central database.

## **Netherlands**

The Netherlands government has identified the chemicals industry as one of the Dutch economy's nine "top sectors," due to the industry's relative size, economic impact, and expertise. The government has placed significant regulation on this industry, including on precursor chemicals. Additional regulations are working through the Dutch parliament to further strengthen legal requirements and prosecutable offenses with respect to the handling of certain precursor chemicals. According to the National Police of the Netherlands, the number of synthetic drug labs has steadily increased from 59 in 2015 to 108 in 2020. China remains a significant source of precursor chemicals entering the Netherlands. The Dutch government cooperates closely with U.S. authorities to track and disrupt the import of precursor chemicals. The ministries responsible for domestic narcotics issues include the Ministry of Justice and Security and the Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Sport.

The Netherlands has strong legislation and regulatory controls over the industry through the Law for Prevention of the Misuse of Chemicals (WVMC). Law enforcement authorities track domestic shipments and work closely with international partners. The chemical industry is legally obliged to report suspicious transactions. The Financial Investigation Service (FIOD) oversees implementation of the WVMC and has responsibility for law enforcement efforts targeting precursors. Customs officials monitor the production, distribution, and trade of chemicals. The Netherlands has had a memorandum of understanding with China since 2004 concerning chemical precursor investigations. There are chemicals produced in the Netherlands that have both legitimate and illicit uses.

Fentanyl is a List I substance under the Netherlands Opium Act. The prohibition of substances lies with those that are specifically listed on the Opium Act and, as a result, analogues are not fully regulated. However, analogues will soon face regulation following the introduction of a New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) law, expected to come into force 2022. Both potassium permanganate and acetic anhydride are regulated under the WVMC, but the Opium Act can also be applied in the regulation of these substances when used to produce illegal narcotics.

Ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are not typically used for methamphetamine production in the Netherlands. Most methamphetamine is produced using the phenyl-2-propanone, aluminum, methylamine, and mercuric chloride (P2P) method, also known in the Netherlands as the benzyl methyl ketone (BMK) method. Producers in the Netherlands often use pre-precursors to manufacture P2P/BMK. The use of P2P/BMK precursors has evolved as restrictions have tightened, including transitions from alpha-phenoacetyl nitrile (APAAN) to alphaphenylacetoacetamide (APAA) and from methyl alpha-phenylacetoacetate (MAPA) to ethyl alpha-phenylacetoacetate (EAPA).

**Nigeria**

The forensics/chemical monitoring unit of The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) works with the International Narcotic Control Board (INCB) and in collaboration with the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration/Control, which issues permits for precursor imports. NDLEA reports seizures of precursor chemicals to the INCB. No such seizures occurred at courier houses in the first nine months of 2021, though products requiring chemicals were seized, including designer tablets containing fentanyl, tramadol, tapentadol, methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and amphetamine. Fentanyl was identified for the first time in tablets in 2021. NDLEA has plans to implement additional measures to address gaps in monitoring and oversight of precursor chemicals.

**Pakistan**

Pakistan is a destination and transshipment point for diverted shipments of acetic anhydride (AA) and other precursor chemicals used in the production of heroin and amphetamine-type stimulants. Pakistan does not domestically produce industrial-scale quantities of AA or ephedrine, though it has chemical and pharmaceutical industries with a legitimate, albeit modest, production and demand for these substances.

Pakistan enforces a basic precursor control regime as part of its obligations under the UN drug control conventions, covering the import of seven multi-use chemicals: AA; pseudoephedrine; anthranilic acid; acetone; potassium permanganate; methyl-ethyl ketone; and toluene. The Antinarcotics Force (ANF) manages precursor control largely by conducting ground checks on importing businesses, licensing those businesses, and reviewing Pre-Export Notifications (PEN) of those requesting the sale of these substances within Pakistan. Besides ANF, 23 federal and provincial agencies share responsibility for chemical control throughout the country. Per UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs Resolution 49/3, ANF established two review committees to manage the precursor control mechanism: the Committee for Granting Non-Objection Certificates to Companies and Firms for Use of Precursor Chemicals and the Committee for Quota Allocation to Pharmaceutical Companies.

Between January and September 2021, ANF received 118 PENs, approving 97. Significant imports of precursor chemicals likely circumvent the PEN system via mislabeled shipping containers and maritime smuggling along Pakistan's coast. During the first nine months of 2021, ANF seized no precursor chemicals, a significant decrease from 13,590 liters seized in 2020.

In 2021, ANF continues to submit information via the International Narcotics Control Board Precursor Incident Communication System, which distributes real-time information on precursor seizures to law enforcement agencies worldwide.

**Peru**

Peru is a producer and major importer of chemicals essential to cocaine production. Chemicals are principally imported into Peru legally by wholesalers through the Port of Callao and are later diverted for illicit purposes by smaller actors for cocaine production. Peru requires all chemical

sector entities to obtain a license. Peru's authority to regulate the precursor chemicals used in illicit drug production is based on Legislative Decree 1126 and the regulation set forth in Supreme Decree No. 268-2019-EF, which came into effect in January 2020. This decree establishes protocols, sanctions and fines related to the misuse of chemicals.

The National Superintendence of Tax Administration (SUNAT) is the regulatory agency handling all issues related to the chemical industry, but SUNAT does not have law enforcement powers and is limited to investigative activities. SUNAT coordinates with the Peruvian National Police (PNP) to combat the diversion of precursor chemicals. Peruvian authorities reported seizing 19,845 MT of precursor chemicals over the first nine months of 2021 in comparison with 18,247 MT seized in 2020. (Note: Officials revised 2020 chemical seizure numbers significantly after 2021 INCSR reporting due to challenges associated with a nationwide COVID-19 lockdown and border closures.)

The joint SUNAT and PNP Precursor Chemical Unit increased its number of highway checkpoints nationwide from five in 2020 to nine in 2021. Checkpoints are in the Valley of the Rivers Apurimac, Ene and Mantaro (VRAEM), and the Junín, Huánuco, Ica, Ayacucho, Cusco, and Lima regions. Authorities have increased seizures of substitute precursors, such as salt, cement, gasoline, calcium carbonate, sodium chloride, urea, and sulfamic acid.

The Ministry of Health produces official estimates of Peru's International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) licit demand for ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and P-2-P. The Ministry does not have a regulatory or enforcement arm to prevent the diversion of chemicals. Peru classifies fentanyl as a highly controlled narcotic, and the Peruvian pharmaceutical agency (DIGIMED) authorizes all imports and exports, regularly audits its distribution and supply in the country, and establishes strict protocols for filling prescriptions. Demand driven by COVID-19 has increased legal imports of fentanyl.

According to INCB reports, Peru does not have strict controls to prevent the diversion of ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and P-2-P. Indications suggest that ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are entering the country in larger quantities than required by INCB assessments of legitimate commercial requirements.

Peru participates in the INCB's pre-export notification system, though not always comprehensively. In the first half of 2021, Peruvian justice authorities seized 1,546 kg of potassium permanganate. There were no recorded acetic anhydride seizures during the year.

## **Poland**

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) identifies Poland as a drug trafficking transit country and producer of synthetic drugs for Western European markets, especially amphetamine and methamphetamine. Organized crime syndicates control drug manufacturing and distribution, using clandestine laboratories to keep ahead of legal changes.

The 2005 Act on Counteracting Drug Addiction prohibits production, import, and marketing of precursor chemicals in Poland, for which the State Sanitary Inspector heads enforcement. An October 2011 Memorandum of Understanding between the Chief Sanitary Inspector, National Police Commander, Customs Service Chief, and Chief Pharmaceutical Inspector divides chemical control responsibility. Poland's laws on precursor chemical controls also implement United Nations and European Union mandates, including the Act of July 20, 2018 (amending the 2005 Act on Counteracting Drug Addiction and the Act on the State Sanitary Inspection) and the Health Minister's August 21, 2019 regulation on the list of psychotropic substances, intoxicants, and new psychoactive substances.

The State Sanitary Inspector and State Pharmaceutical Inspector lead in implementing drug and chemical controls. The Sanitary Inspector controls category 2 and 3 drug precursors (such as potassium permanganate and acetic anhydride) and supervises manufacturing, importation, and commercial entities that handle them. The State Pharmaceutical Inspector has the same responsibilities for category 1 drug precursors (such as ephedrine and pseudoephedrine). In suspected cases of illegal precursor handling, Chief Inspectors notify the Central Bureau of Investigation Police (CBSP). In 2015, the 2001 Pharmaceutical Law was amended to restrict sale of over-the-counter pharmaceuticals containing psychoactive substances (including pseudoephedrine). The law also requires any manufacturer, importer, or distributor of pharmaceutical substances to be licensed by the State Pharmaceutical Inspector in compliance with EU-Directive 2011/62/EU. Poland enters information into the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) Pre-Export Notification Online system (PEN Online) for all exports and imports of drug precursors.

Polish law enforcement, led by the CBSP and State Sanitary Service, focuses on prevention of illegal production of precursors and pre-precursors. In February 2020, CBSP seized approximately four tons of acetic anhydride (AA) from a warehouse in Lodz. According to the 2019 International Narcotics Control Board Annual Precursors Report, Poland investigated an authorized Polish precursor operator and found it had supplied 70 metric tons of AA to unauthorized companies across the EU between 2017 and 2018.

## **South Africa**

South Africa is a leading regional importer of chemicals used in the production of illicit drugs, particularly synthetic drugs. The South African Police Service has a trained, dedicated clandestine laboratory team, which operates under the South Africa Narcotics Enforcement Bureau (SANEB). From July to September 2021, SANEB conducted operations resulting in seizures of drugs worth more than \$62 million and the arrest of several members of an elaborate syndicate. Most of the products were destined for the international market.

Ephedrine and pseudoephedrine used in South Africa to synthesize methamphetamine largely originate in Nigeria and India. South African authorities periodically report newly identified precursor substances used in illicit drug production to the INCB. South Africa also submits information on seized precursor shipments to the INCB's Precursors Incident Communication System. Controlling and analyzing the trade of precursors is mandated by the South Africa National Drug Policy, which mandates the establishment of computerized inventory control

systems for scheduled chemicals and regulating and monitoring the purchase of medicines containing precursors via a registry system. Such inventory and regulatory measures have not been fully implemented, however.

U.S. law enforcement collaboration with South Africa on investigations is productive but sporadic, and U.S. authorities regularly share information on container shipments suspected of containing possible illicit materials with South African counterparts.

### **Taiwan**

During the first 11 months of 2021, Taiwan had no exports of pseudoephedrine and its salts, compared with 2.47 metric tons (MT) exported in the same period in 2020, according to data from Taiwan Customs. Taiwan also had no exports of ephedrine and its salts during the first 11 months of 2021, compared with the 325 kilograms exported in the same period last year.

The Taiwan Ministry of Economic Affairs Industrial Development Bureau (IDB) imposes strict reporting requirements in tracking the production, distribution, sale, storage, and export/import of 25 precursor chemicals including acetic anhydride and potassium permanganate, according to IDB contacts. As amphetamine-type stimulants and ketamine are more prevalent among illicit drug users in Taiwan, there are few cases involving the use of precursor chemicals such as acetic anhydride and potassium permanganate for heroin and cocaine production. At the end of the third quarter of 2021, approximately 927 companies had reported Category A chemicals-related activities through a web-based reporting system. Taiwan Customs data showed that as of October 2021, 138 Taiwan companies reported trading activities of Category B chemicals.

Taiwan's Food and Drug Administration (TFDA) through the Controlled Drugs Act supervises the trade and use of finished products containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and other chemicals, including by end-users such as hospitals. In 2020 (latest data available), TFDA inspected 9,720 facilities that were involved in the production, sale, and use of drugs subject to the Controlled Drugs Act and found 435 violations, primarily related to administrative errors or failure to keep timely reporting of uses and inventories of medicines containing those chemicals. The violation ratio was 4.48 percent, according to TFDA.

### **Thailand**

Thailand's domestic drug production is relatively limited, and it is not a major source country for drug precursor chemicals, nor are precursor chemicals widely imported into Thailand. Thailand remains a significant transit country and, to a lesser extent, source country for precursor chemicals. According to Thai authorities, most chemicals are imported for legitimate medical or industrial purposes; in reality, however, the true quantity of diverted chemicals is unknown. For exports, Thai chemical companies sometimes do not adequately identify their potential customers and may not be fully aware of the chemical's intended use.

The legal and regulatory framework for preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals is extensive and long-standing, beginning with the Commodity Control Act of 1952. In 2016, Thailand introduced new regulations (Order of the Head of the National Council for Peace and



Order 32/2599, 2016) to monitor the import, export, production, trafficking, and possession of precursors. Pre-export notification is conducted to mitigate diversion. The Precursor Chemical Control Committee, which has been in place since 1993, formulates national strategy on precursor chemical control. Thailand has scheduled all chemicals listed in the 1988 UN Drug Convention, in addition to 20 other precursor chemicals not included under the Convention.

During the first nine months of 2021, there were no precursor chemicals seized in Thailand.

### **United Arab Emirates**

The UAE government oversees the import and export of all internationally recognized chemicals through the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health and Prevention, and customs officials operating under the newly created Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Ports Security. Federal Decree-Law No. 14 of 1995 is the primary legislation for the control of narcotics and psychotropic substances. It was partially amended by Federal-Decree Law No. 8 of 2016. Fentanyl is an illegal substance on the UAE's Schedule 1 list. UAE authorities have conducted seizure operations for illicit fentanyl and its analogues. Acetic anhydride is also a controlled chemical in the UAE and law enforcement agencies have seized shipments transiting the UAE. The UAE regularly identifies precursor chemicals and has a robust law enforcement/regulatory system to limit precursor diversion. The UAE government did not disclose how regularly it updates the Pre-Export Notification (PEN) system.

### **United Kingdom**

Between January 2019 and the present, UK authorities conducted approximately 518 seizures of imported amphetamine precursors and precursor chemicals, totaling around 2.8 metric tons (MT). An uptick in seizures occurred in 2021, in which gamma-butyrolactone (GBL) accounted for 469 of the 518 seizures, and approximately 1.4 MT and 39,600 tablets of the seized chemical. On March 31, 2021, the UK government proposed legislation to reclassify GBL, gamma-hydroxybutyrate, and 1,4-Butanediol from Class C drugs to a Class B drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Class B drugs have stiffer punishments for possession and distribution than Class C drugs. Additionally, GBL and 1,4-Butanediol have been placed under Schedule 1 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 (which governs chemicals for the UK). The regulation will require industrial users to acquire a controlled drug license. The UK has been a leading producer of precursor chemicals but applies a strict regulatory regime to the production and trade of precursor chemicals, including mandatory licensing and reporting obligations. Though drug precursors have legitimate commercial uses, the UK Home Office controls them because they can be used in illicit drug production.

Prior to the UK's exit from the European Union (EU) on January 1, 2021, the UK participated in EU REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization, and Restriction of Chemicals Regulation), the main EU legislation for the regulation of chemicals in the EU. EU REACH requires substances manufactured in or imported to the European Economic Area (EEA) to be registered with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). It then provides a regulatory framework to control or restrict the use of hazardous substances based on those registrations. EU REACH ceased to have effect in Great Britain from January 1, 2021, and as such the UK government put

in place a separate UK REACH regime, which was brought into UK law under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. UK REACH applies to businesses that import, make, sell, or distribute chemicals in Great Britain (GB), whether as raw materials or in their finished state. The UK REACH regime was initially designed to establish a UK-wide market for chemicals applying to all chemical substances manufactured and imported into the UK, with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) established as the UK REACH competent agency, taking over the functions of the ECHA. UK REACH and EU REACH regulations operate independently from each other, and under the Northern Ireland Protocol the EU REACH will continue to apply to Northern Ireland, while UK REACH will regulate the access of substances to the market in Great Britain.

Companies that supply and purchase substances, mixtures, or articles to and from the EU, EEA, Northern Ireland, and other parts of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales), will need to ensure that the relevant duties are met under both pieces of legislation. UK REACH applies to most chemical substances; those used in industrial processes and daily life, as well as in articles such as clothing, furniture, and electrical appliances. UK REACH places the burden of proof on companies, which are required to identify and manage the risks presented by substances they manufacture and market in the UK. Companies must be able to demonstrate how the substance can be used safely, and they must communicate risk management measures to end users.

### **Venezuela**

Due to the Maduro regime's lack of information sharing on drug control issues writ large, the United States has no information to evaluate precursor chemical diversion through the country, or any diversion control efforts under the regime. Some precursor chemicals used to produce cocaine are believed to be trafficked through Venezuela, but the quantity is unknown.

### **Major Exporters and Importers of Pseudoephedrine and Ephedrine (Section 722, Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act (CMEA))**

This section of the INCSR responds to the CMEA's Section 722 requirement to report on the five major importing and exporting countries of the identified methamphetamine precursor chemicals. In meeting these requirements, the Department of State and DEA considered the chemicals involved and the available data on their export, import, worldwide production, and the known legitimate demand. The available data does not address illicit trafficking and production.

Ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are no longer preferred chemicals for methamphetamine production shipped to the United States, since traffickers are increasingly using substitutes or pre-precursors. The phenomenon of substitute chemicals used in methamphetamine production is particularly observed in Mexico, where the nitrostyrene method is used to produce P-2-P, which starts from benzaldehyde and nitroethane, or from the intermediary product 1-phenyl-2-nitropropene, and in Europe, where the method using APAAN, are largely used. Phenylpropanolamine, a third chemical listed in the CMEA, is not a methamphetamine precursor, although it can be used as an amphetamine precursor.

In 2000, the FDA issued warnings concerning significant health risks associated with phenylpropanolamine. As a result, phenylpropanolamine is no longer approved for human consumption. Phenylpropanolamine is still imported for veterinary medicines, and for the conversion to amphetamine for the legitimate manufacture of pharmaceutical products. As phenylpropanolamine is not a methamphetamine precursor chemical, and trade and production data are not available, phenylpropanolamine has not been included in this section.

The Global Trade Atlas (GTA), compiled by IHS Markit., provides export and import data for ephedrine and pseudoephedrine collected from major trading countries. However, given the reporting cycles by participating countries, data often lags behind one year. The most recent year for which full-year data is available is 2020. The data, including from previous years, is continually revised as countries review and revise it. GTA data analysis and a chart identifying the sources of the data are in the tables at the end of this section.

The most recent International Narcotics Control Board's (INCB) Annual Legitimate Requirements (ALR) report available is from May 2021 ([www.incb.org/incb/en/precursors/alrs.html](http://www.incb.org/incb/en/precursors/alrs.html)). A comparative analysis between the May 2021 INCB-ALR report and the top five countries and economies exporting and importing the largest amount of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine, based on 2020 GTA data, indicated legitimate requirements for at least one of the chemicals reported by certain country in this report exceeded ALR requirements. This analysis intended only to point out differences between GTA data and the mandatory requirements in Resolution 49/3 of the March 2006 Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) entitled "Strengthening systems for the control of precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of synthetic drugs". Charts reflecting this comparison are at the link above.

Data on exports and imports of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine and ephedrine are commercial and proprietary and are not available, nor is data on legitimate demand for these substances, whether in bulk or processed pharmaceutical form. Thus, this list of the top five importers does not necessarily demonstrate that these countries have the highest levels of diversion. Instead, it demonstrates the rank position of each country compared to the overall exporters and importers of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine worldwide, as reported by the GTA.

For purposes of this determination, the United States has been excluded from these lists. However, included is additional information on U.S. exports and imports of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. During the preparation of the 2022 CMEA report as well as determination and certification, GTA data for U.S. exports and imports for both ephedrine and pseudoephedrine for calendar years 2018-2020 were updated in light of revised estimates provided by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Overall, the accuracy of this trade data should be viewed with caution, as some countries have less sophisticated infrastructures and methodologies at their disposal than others for measuring the volume, overall trends, and commodities involved in legitimate trade. Furthermore, this data cannot accurately identify the specific trends of smuggling or diversion involving subterfuge.

The trade data source employed in this determination and certification does not reflect illicit smuggling or production around the globe that has been detected by law enforcement and other

reporting. Nor does it reflect an accurate disparity between requirements and imports. Available trade data from GTA is also silent on legitimate commercial sales of alternative precursor chemicals used in methamphetamine production, which comprise a growing proportion of chemicals used in the manufacture of methamphetamine, particularly for the U.S. market.

Thus far, the economic and compliance analyses required by the CMEA remain challenging. Often the collection and reporting of such data requires a regulatory infrastructure that is beyond the means of some governments. Further, not all countries are familiar with the methodology and data sources used by the GTA to report the final numbers, and some countries dispute the accuracy of the data. This increases the difficulty of comparing import or export totals across years. Therefore, it remains difficult to determine with precision the top five countries exporting and importing the largest amount of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine.

Nevertheless, the United States will continue to urge countries in bilateral and multilateral diplomatic and technical forums to report on their licit domestic requirements for methamphetamine precursor chemicals to the INCB. The United States will also continue to work with the INCB and with authorities in the reporting countries to secure explanations for anomalies between reported imports and reported licit domestic requirements, and to follow the development of other chemicals used in the production of methamphetamine.

The alternative method to produce methamphetamine is the nitrostyrene method, which starts from benzaldehyde and nitroethane, to produce phenyl-2-propanone (P2P) or from the intermediary product 1-phenyl-2-nitropropene. This method has been the preferred alternative used by Mexican drug trafficking organizations in recent years to manufacture the precursor chemicals required to produce methamphetamine. The main precursor chemical used in this method is phenylacetic acid (PAA). According to the forensic profiling program of DEA's Special Testing and Research Laboratory, the PAA process, which uses nitroethane and benzaldehyde as the main precursors for P2P production, is declining. However, the PAA-based method continues to be significant in the clandestine manufacture process as the main precursor supporting P2P production in Mexico. In contrast, there continues to be no trace of ephedrine or pseudoephedrine detected in the vast majority of methamphetamine seized in the United States.

**CMEA Trade data. Quantities in percentages are rounded to the nearest.**

<b>Top Five Exporting Countries, Economies, and the United States Ephedrine 2018-2020 (GTA Annual Series Ending Dec 2020)</b>				
<b>Reporting Country</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Quantities</b>		
		<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>India</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>59,810</b>	<b>57,940</b>	<b>77,296</b>
<b>Germany</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>32,910</b>	<b>6,897</b>	<b>18,828</b>
<b>Singapore</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>6,691</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>3,776</b>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>2,458</b>	<b>1,418</b>	<b>1,410</b>
<b>People's Republic of China</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>1,891</b>	<b>2,801</b>	<b>1,205</b>
<b>Top Five Total</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>103,760</b>	<b>70,956</b>	<b>102,513</b>
<b>United States (GTA)</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>United States (DEA)</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.6</b>

**Analysis of Export Data:** The top five exporters of ephedrine in 2020 were India, Germany, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and the People's Republic of China (PRC). According to the Global Trade Atlas (GTA) database, ephedrine exports increased 44.47 percent in 2020 compared to 2019, due mainly to a substantial increase in exports from India, Germany, and Singapore. In 2020, India's exports increased by 33.41 percent from 57,940 kg in 2019 to 77,296 kg in 2020. India continues to rank as the top global exporter of ephedrine for this year's report. Germany's exports also increased from 6,897 kg in 2019 to 18,828 kg in 2020, a 172.99 percent increase. In both cases, the reason for such increases is unknown. Singapore appears as the third top exporter of ephedrine and has also increased significantly in terms of the level of exports as compared with the previous year - 1,900 kg in 2019 and 3,776 kg in 2020, representing a 98.74 percent increase. The United Kingdom's exports slightly decreased by 0.56 percent last year from 1,418 kg in 2019 to 1,410 kg in 2020. In the case of Singapore and the United Kingdom, the reason for such increase and decrease respectively is unknown. The PRC also decreased its exports by 56.98 percent, from 2,801 kg in 2019 to 1,205 kg in 2020. The reason for such decrease is unknown.

According to the most current information provided by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), U.S. exports were 2.3 kg in 2018, 1.8 kg in 2019, and 1.6 kg in 2020. For the purposes of this report, we have relied on the data provided by DEA.

<b>Top Five Exporting Countries, Economies, and the United States Pseudoephedrine 2018-2020 (GTA Annual Series Ending Dec 2020)</b>				
Reporting Country	Unit	Quantities		
		2018	2019	2020
India	KG	413,355	453,258	360,282
Germany	KG	299,676	277,859	278,301
United Kingdom	KG	184,227	147,616	47,248
Switzerland	KG	38,495	48,292	44,540
PRC	KG	52,217	34,078	34,100
<b>Top Five Total</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>987,970</b>	<b>961,103</b>	<b>764,471</b>
United States (GTA)	KG	1,385	1,437	223
United States (DEA)	KG	29,165	15,135	12,622

**Analysis of Export Data:** According to the GTA database, the aggregated volume of worldwide exports of pseudoephedrine from the 2020 top five exporters decreased from 961,103 kg in 2019 to 764,471 kg in 2020, representing a 20.46 percent decrease. The top five exporters of pseudoephedrine in 2020 were again India, Germany, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and the PRC. India, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland decreased their pseudoephedrine exports in 2020 from 453,258 kg to 360,282 kg, 147,616 kg to 47,248 kg, and 48,292 kg to 44,540 kg, a 20.51 percent, 67.99 percent, and 7.77 percent decrease, respectively. The reason for such decreases is unknown. Germany and China's exports slightly increased between 2019 and 2020 from 277,859 kg to 278,301 kg, and 34,078 kg to 34,100, a 0.16 percent and 0.06 percent increase respectively. The reason for such increase in each country is unknown.

According to the most current information provided by the DEA, the United States decreased its pseudoephedrine exports from 15,135 in 2019 to 12,622 in 2020, a 16.60 percent decrease.

<b>Top Five Importing Countries, Economies, and the United States Ephedrine 2018-2020 (GTA Annual Series Ending Dec 2020)</b>				
Reporting Country	Unit	Quantities		
		2018	2019	2020
Republic of Korea	KG	37,034	26,952	33,001
Indonesia	KG	6,372	7,068	6,385
India	KG	33	67	4,178
Canada	KG	5,104	3,643	3,581
Singapore	KG	6,104	9,611	3,106
<b>Top Five Total</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>54,647</b>	<b>47,341</b>	<b>50,250</b>
United States (GTA)	KG	21,111	13,501	30,136
United States (DEA)	KG	2,450	2,679	2,156

**Analysis of Import Data:** According to the GTA database, the aggregated amount of ephedrine imported by the top five countries and economies in 2020 was 50,250 kg, a 6.1 percent increase compared to 2019. The top five ephedrine importers in 2020 were Republic of Korea, Indonesia, India, Canada, and Singapore. The Republic of Korea, the top ephedrine importer in 2020, had a 22.44 percent increase in ephedrine importation from 26,952 kg to 33,001 kg. The reason for such increase is unknown. Indonesia, Canada, and Singapore experienced decreases in their ephedrine importation with a 9.66 percent, a 1.70 percent, and a 67.68 percent decrease respectively. The reason for such increase for each country is unknown. On the other hand, India had a substantial increase on its ephedrine importation, going from 67 kg in 2019 to 4,178 in 2020, a 6,135.82 percent increase. The reason for such increase is unknown.

According to the most current information provided by DEA, U.S. ephedrine imports decreased from 2,679 kg in 2019 to 2,156 in 2020, a 19.52 percent decrease.

<b>Top Five Importing Countries, Economies, and the United States Pseudoephedrine 2018-2020 (GTA Annual Series Ending Dec 2020)</b>				
<b>Reporting Country</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Quantities</b>		
		<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>68,141</b>	<b>65,656</b>	<b>59,913</b>
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>36,721</b>	<b>51,472</b>	<b>36,675</b>
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>24,347</b>	<b>30,456</b>	<b>30,088</b>
<b>Japan</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>27,000</b>
<b>Republic of Korea</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>45,477</b>	<b>43,400</b>	<b>26,431</b>
<b>Top Five Total</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>189,186</b>	<b>207,984</b>	<b>180,107</b>
<b>United States (GTA)</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>150,102</b>	<b>144,378</b>	<b>123,504</b>
<b>United States (DEA)</b>	<b>KG</b>	<b>139,788</b>	<b>145,116</b>	<b>121,640</b>

**Analysis of Import Data:** According to the GTA database, the quantity of pseudoephedrine imported by the top five importers decreased in 2020. The aggregated amount of pseudoephedrine imported by the top five economies in 2020 was 180,107 kg, a 13.40 percent decrease compared to 2019. Switzerland, Turkey, Indonesia, and Republic of Korea decreased their pseudoephedrine importation in 2020. Switzerland's imports dropped from 65,656 kg in 2019 to 59,913 kg in 2020, an 8.75 percent decrease. Turkey's imports decreased from 51,472 kg in 2019 to 36,675 kg in 2020, a 28.75 percent decrease. Indonesia's imports slightly decreased from 30,456 kg to 30,088 kg, a 1.21 percent decrease. Republic of Korea's imports decreased from 43,400 kg in 2019 to 26,431 kg in 2020 a 39.10 percent decrease. In all four cases, the reason for such decreases is unknown. Japan was the only importing economy increasing its pseudoephedrine imports in 2020. It went from 17,000 kg in 2019 to 27,000 kg in 2020, a 58.82 percent increase. The reason for such increase is unknown.

According to the most current information provided by DEA, U.S. imports decreased from 145,116 kg in 2019 to 121,640 kg in 2020, a 16.18 percent decrease. It should be noted that the United States no longer bulk manufactures pseudoephedrine.

## **SYNTHETIC DRUGS**



## Introduction

In 2021, the United States remained entrenched in a continuing and worsening drug epidemic, fueled increasingly by synthetic opioids. Provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that more than 100,000 people died of an overdose between May 2020 to April 2021, a 29 percent increase over the previous year and the highest total ever recorded over a 12-month period. Of these recorded overdose deaths, approximately two-thirds involved a synthetic opioid, primarily illicit fentanyl and fentanyl analogues. Growing U.S. seizures of fentanyl and fentanyl analogues indicate that the availability of these substances continued to expand within the United States in 2021. This increase in deaths recorded during this period also took place in tandem with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated the drug crisis by inhibiting access to some treatment and recovery services and contributing to greater social isolation among those with substance use disorders, according to medical authorities.

North America remains the global epicenter of synthetic opioid use and related overdose deaths, but the synthetic drug landscape continues to evolve and expand globally, presenting new threats and challenges to public health and security in multiple regions. Production and trafficking of methamphetamine and other amphetamine-type stimulants continues to expand across much of Southeast Asia and some countries in Europe, Africa, and Latin America. Counterfeit Captagon, originating largely from Syria, is a growing drug threat across the Levant region and beyond, and new psychoactive substances (NPS) continue to proliferate to new markets globally with nearly 100 new designer drugs identified and reported to the United Nations during 2021 alone. The growing diversification of synthetic drug threats and their emergence in new markets is one of the greatest challenges to international drug control efforts globally, and a continuing top priority of U.S. drug control and demand reduction efforts.

## Synthetic Opioids

Synthetic opioids remain North America's primary drug threat with no signs of abating. Fentanyl and fentanyl analogues continue to be the most prevalent synthetic opioids seized by U.S. authorities and reported to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The number of reported fentanyl seizures identified by forensic analysis increased by 18 percent in 2020 over 2019. The overall volume of fentanyl seized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) increased by 133 percent in fiscal year 2021 compared to the previous year, totaling over 5,080 kilograms (kg). In keeping with trends first reported two years ago, production of most illicit fentanyl and fentanyl analogues available in North America has shifted to Mexico, under the control of powerful transnational criminal organizations that have consolidated their control over the U.S. market by leveraging their established trafficking infrastructure along the U.S. Southwest Border and distribution networks within the United States. In fiscal year 2021, approximately 98 percent of all fentanyl seized by CBP originated in Mexico. Only 113 kg of fentanyl and fentanyl analogues, by way of comparison, reached the United States from destinations outside Mexico in fiscal year 2021.

In May 2021, Mexico's cabinet-level General Health Council regulated four new synthetic drug precursors and created a new "Watch List" for 14 additional dual-use precursor and essential

chemicals in May. Mexico's Interagency Synthetic Drug Control Technical Group (ISDCTG) seeks to add significantly more chemicals to the watch list. ISDCTG has held two outreach meetings with pharmaceutical and chemical industry representatives to support Mexican industry in developing effective "know-your-customer" regulations to reduce diversion of licit chemicals to illicit drug production. The Federal Attorney General's National Center for Information Analysis and Planning to Combat Crime (FGR-CENAPI) is working to implement its precursor chemical (PRE-QUIM) program to share data across the Mexican interagency on shipments of regulated and watch-listed precursor chemicals to identify suspicious chemical movements.

In October, the United States and Mexico adopted the Bicentennial Framework for Security, Public Health, and Safe Communities, whereby both countries committed to expand efforts to disrupt the production and trafficking of synthetic drugs. Under the framework, the countries are creating a bilateral working group on precursor chemical regulation to standardize protocols and regulation for dual-use substances to prevent their use in the production of synthetic drugs.

Almost no fentanyl or fentanyl analogues have been detected entering the United States from the People's Republic of China (PRC) since that country implemented controls over all fentanyl-related substances as a class in 2019. However, according to reports from U.S. law enforcement and other authorities, the precursor chemical supply chain fueling fentanyl production in Mexico largely begins in the PRC. Although more information is needed on the diversion methods used by the criminal brokers supplying these chemicals, most precursor chemical sales in the PRC are apparently legal, involving chemicals not controlled by China or under the UN treaty framework, and with illicit diversion of these chemicals taking place farther downstream in transit. Two major routes identified by law enforcement are direct maritime transit to ports in Mexico and air cargo shipments to Mexico, the United States, and to a lesser extent Canada. U.S.-bound chemicals are subsequently smuggled into Mexico to supply clandestine fentanyl labs controlled by Mexican cartels. Some chemicals are also smuggled into Mexico from Canada, though there is growing evidence reported by Canadian authorities of fentanyl synthesis within Canada, to supply both domestic consumption within Canada and for onward traffic to the United States.

Illicit fentanyl producers have increasingly depended on non-controlled "pre-precursor" chemicals, or designer chemicals intentionally modified by traffickers using more complex methods. This trend has gained momentum since 2017, when at the request of the United States, the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs scheduled 4-anilino-N-phenethylpiperidine (ANPP) and N-phenethyl-4-piperidone (NPP) for international control. ANPP and NPP are the two precursors most frequently used to produce illicit fentanyl using the so-called "Siegfried" synthesis method, which prior to 2017, was the synthesis route of most illicit fentanyl seized by U.S. authorities. The UN requirement for all member states to implement national controls on NPP and ANPP in keeping with commitments under the 1988 UN Drug Convention saw supplies decline on black market websites and other illicit marketplaces, and criminals were forced to adjust to using the more complex methods involving extra steps and alternative chemicals.

According to seizures of fentanyl and fentanyl analogues analyzed by DEA's Fentanyl Profiling Program, approximately 66 percent of samples analyzed in 2020 involved the "Gupta" synthesis method using the chemical 4-anilinopiperidine (4-AP), a replacement precursor for NPP. Another pre-precursor chemical that can be used to produce fentanyl analogues identified by

DEA is boc-4-AP, and the chemical norfentanyl is a direct precursor. None of these chemicals are currently controlled under the 1988 UN Convention, or (unlike in the United States) under domestic laws of many UN member states. In 2021, the United States requested the Secretary General of the United Nations to consider adding 4-AP, boc-4-AP, and norfentanyl to the list of controlled precursors, and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) was conducting a scientific review of this proposal at the time of this writing.

The impact of the 2017 scheduling of NPP and ANPP demonstrates that international scheduling of precursor chemicals can be an effective step in stemming the tide of the illicit fentanyl production. But international scheduling is just one action that in itself is no substitute for national action. The United States has also joined the INCB and other international partners in urging governments to implement domestic controls over these substances to prevent their diversion to illicit use – as the United States did in 2020 by scheduling norfentanyl and 4-AP, under domestic legislation, for example. Mexico’s decision in May 2021 to control and monitor additional precursor chemicals (including 4-AP) was a positive move in this direction. The United States has requested that the PRC strengthen its efforts to address precursor chemical diversion by transnational criminal organizations, including by implementing enhanced controls over fentanyl-related precursor chemicals.

To increase awareness of the widespread range of possible pre-precursor substitute chemicals, the INCB has developed a global watchlist of “Fentanyl-Related Substances with No Known Legitimate Uses.” This INCB list is updated regularly, and currently contains over 40 potential precursors of fentanyl-related substances for which governments and industry have identified no legitimate use. The United States joins the INCB in urging governments and the private sector to refrain on a voluntary basis from any manufacture, import, export, or distribution of the substances on the list, beyond limited research and analytical purposes.

Although fentanyl and fentanyl analogues remain by far the most widely encountered synthetic opioids in North America, and the cause of most overdose deaths, there are other synthetic opioids inflicting harm within the United States and internationally. Within the United States, law enforcement seizures of tapentadol – a synthetic opioid similar in potency to morphine – increased seven-fold over the first six months of 2021 compared to the previous year, totaling over 356 kg. CBP attributed the origin of much of this tapentadol to India, the world’s largest producer of licit pharmaceutical drugs and also a source for illegally diverted tramadol, another synthetic opioid commonly sold illicitly across parts of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Some of these substances remain unscheduled for international control. At its 64<sup>th</sup> session in 2021, the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) voted to schedule isotonitazene, a synthetic opioid linked to overdose deaths in the United States and elsewhere, and in December 2021, the World Health Organization recommended the 65<sup>th</sup> CND vote to schedule two additional synthetic opioids, bupropion and metonitazene, under the UN drug conventions.

Significant gaps remain in the international community’s understanding of synthetic opioid production, trafficking, and use. Because of the high potency of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, these substances can be produced in clandestine labs as small as single rooms or small sheds and trafficked in small and difficult to detect quantities through global postal services or express consignment services. The United States anticipates growing diversification of source

and transit countries for these substances, as well as their chemical supply chains. Our best source for this information – seizure data – is incomplete and does not identify the full picture of the conveyance routes and sources of these substances globally. This underscores the critical importance of expanding early warning systems internationally to share information on developing trends and coordinate global responses.

### **New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)**

NPS are substances of abuse not controlled by the 1961 Convention or the 1971 Convention, but which have the ability to induce psychoactive effects on users mimicking controlled drugs. Producers modify and experiment with new substances in search of new NPS that can avoid detection by authorities and skirt the international control regime.

The rapid proliferation of NPS is creating a critical challenge for law enforcement officials worldwide because of how rapidly new substances can be introduced and remarketed to avoid international control. The number of NPS increased over six-fold over the past decade, with nearly 1,100 different NPS reported to the United Nations through 2021. The percentage of NPS with opioid effects has also increased notably over the past decade.

Much like the spread of pre-precursor chemicals, this volume continues to challenge the ability to control NPS at the international level. The United States has supported efforts to enhance the capacity of the UN drug scheduling framework to increase the number of treaty-mandated drug scheduling reviews by the Expert Committee on Drug Dependence (ECDD) of the World Health Organization. In December 2021, following a scientific review process, the World Health Organization recommended that three NPS (including two synthetic opioids, mentioned above) be scheduled for control under the UN conventions, with four additional substances placed under surveillance. The CND will consider these recommendations in April 2022.

While international scheduling under the UN conventions is the most thorough and effective means to reduce the availability of NPS, it remains insufficient to the scale of the challenge. Scheduling under the conventions can require a lengthy process of gathering evidence and a scientific review of harms. Many countries – including the United States – have enacted domestic legislative reforms consistent with international law to review and control NPS based on their psychoactive effects or broader category of classification (class-based scheduling), rather than specific chemical structure. Some countries that have adopted a broader generic approach to controlling fentanyl analogues include Canada, China, the United Kingdom, and Italy. The United States endorses these innovative national approaches and encourages governments to consider adopting similar measures to complement the international scheduling regime. With support from the United States and other donors, UNODC developed and administers a searchable library of national legislation pertaining to NPS ([Legal Module - national legislative approaches \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/legal-module-national-legislative-approaches)), offering a range of national approaches to controlling synthetic drugs with analysis and national context.

To counter the proliferation of NPS, national authorities must be able to quickly share information on new emerging substances and trafficking trends. The United States works with international partners to expand data collection and information sharing platforms to identify and

provide early warnings of NPS to better mobilize public health and enforcement responses. One important tool is the UNODC's Global Synthetics, Monitoring Analyses, Reporting and Trends program (Global SMART), which operates the UNODC Early Warning Advisory on NPS, an online data collection platform that monitors, analyzes, and shares information on emerging synthetic drug threats and NPS, including forensic profiles. Data collected and analyzed by the Early Warning Advisory on NPS informs CND scheduling decisions that affect international control of NPS under the UN drug conventions. Global SMART also provides training to international law enforcement authorities and helps governments implement scheduling decisions.

Another key partner in this field is the INCB, which maintains a global task force (Project ION) that collects and communicates strategic and operational information related to NPS with little or no known medical, scientific, or industrial uses. This information is shared through a secure online platform (IONICS), and during 2021, information related to over 10,700 trafficking incidents involving over 75 different NPS were communicated to law and regulatory enforcement focal points representing over 150 government, international and regional partner organizations. Additionally, the INCB implements a special global operational project (OPIOIDS Project) focused on the illicit distribution and sales of synthetic opioids and promotes partnerships and practical actions between governments and with relevant industries.

In 2020, INCB launched the Global Rapid Interdiction of Dangerous Substances (GRIDS) Program, with support from the United States. This program has expanded INCB activities to share intelligence and increase training related to the identification and seizure of synthetic drugs. GRIDS also serves as a platform for the INCB to coordinate global special operations by national authorities and provides secure communication channels to support investigations in addition to other practical tools to law enforcement authorities. In August 2021, GRIDS concluded a five-day operational expert meeting on trafficking dangerous synthetic opioids, fentanyl-related substances, and related precursors through postal, express mail, courier, and air cargo services. Attended by over 120 experts from 29 governments along with international experts and private sector partners, this meeting discussed trafficking threats and security issues encountered in the last twelve months, with a specific focus on dangerous non-scheduled and emerging synthetic substances. The INCB also concluded a global special intelligence gathering operation (GAPZ) in December 2021, involving officers from 76 government agencies and five international organizations to identify trafficking origins and illicit distribution points for gabapentin, pregabalin, xylazine and zopiclone, non-scheduled substances increasingly trafficked and associated with opioids-related overdoses.

**Methamphetamine:** One of the most widespread and persistent synthetic drug threats globally are amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), which are manufactured, trafficked, and consumed on nearly all continents and continue to expand to new markets. According to UNODC, global seizures of ATS increase by 212 percent between 2011 and 2019, with methamphetamine representing the overwhelming majority of these seizures. As with synthetic opioids, methamphetamine can be synthesized using a variety of methods and chemicals. Common production techniques involve the use of pseudoephedrine, ephedrine, phenyl-2-propanone (P-2-P), or phenylacetic acid. In recent years, particularly outside of North America, some producers have shifted to alternative chemicals such as APAA (*alpha*-phenylacetoacetamide) and methyl

*alpha*-phenylacetoacetate (MAPA), both of which have added to the list of controlled chemicals under the 1988 UN Convention since 2019. Use of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine is predominant in Asia, Oceania, Africa, and in some regions in Europe. In the Western Hemisphere, the bulk of illicitly manufactured methamphetamine is made using P-2-P-based methods.

Most of the methamphetamine available in the United States is produced in Mexico and trafficking across the U.S. southern border has increased dramatically in recent years. The vast majority (over 90 percent) of large-scale methamphetamine manufacturers in Mexico are believed to use the P-2-P method, according to DEA. Methamphetamine production in Mexico appears to be at or near historic levels, as evidenced by growing seizures, record-low prices, and growing availability within the United States. CBP seizures of methamphetamine over the Southwest border in fiscal year 2021 totaled approximately 82.5 MT, up from approximately 77.2 MT from the previous year and from 59.5 MT in fiscal year 2019.

Canada has also reported an influx of methamphetamine believed to have originated in Mexico, and there are widespread reports from the UN and international law enforcement authorities that Mexican cartels are playing a larger role internationally, including in Europe and Asia. Spain, the Netherlands, Croatia, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand have all reported large-scale methamphetamine seizures linked to Mexico in recent years, and Mexican nationals have been arrested for their involvement in methamphetamine manufacture in Europe. Mexican nationals are also suspected of being active in transferring production skills to clandestine lab operations in Nigeria, which along with South Africa remains one of Africa's leading hubs for methamphetamine production to feed both domestic and international markets.

Methamphetamine is also the predominant illicit drug trafficked and consumed across much of Southeast Asia and Oceania. This market continues to expand, with preliminary data indicating that seizures exceeded 170 MT in 2020 across Southeast Asia, more than twice what was seized as recently as 2017. Burma continues to be Southeast Asia's epicenter for methamphetamine production, but production is also believed to have expanded to Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Farther afield, methamphetamine production has expanded in Southwest Asia, particularly in Afghanistan. Trafficking routes have similarly diversified in Asia, including through Thailand and Laos.

### **The Way Ahead**

As the global synthetic drug market continues to diversify and expands, the United States will elevate its engagement with domestic and international partners to confront this threat. The United States will build upon existing efforts under the five pillars outlined in the Department of State's Five-Year Global Plan of Action, including: (1) reducing the diversion and illicit production of synthetic drugs; (2) strengthening the capacity to detect and interdict illicit synthetic drugs; (3) targeting online sales and financial flows; (4) reducing global demand for drugs; (5) expanding global partnerships and action. While intergovernmental cooperation remains critical, productive partnerships with international organizations, civil society, and the private sector are also important to address the global synthetic drug problem.

Expanded public-private sector collaboration is necessary to stem synthetic drug production and trafficking. The United States has taken measures to enhance crosscutting partnerships with these industries commonly exploited by traffickers in order to promote greater awareness of emerging challenges and advance methods to prevent illicit production, diversion, and trafficking around the world. Notably, the United States has led global engagements to encourage greater political and private sector commitment against illicit drug manufacturing and production, including by organizing initiatives showcasing distinct aspects of the international synthetic drug crisis through case studies and sharing best practices.

In October 2021, the Department of State hosted the second annual Opioids Webinar Week on Public-Private Partnerships to Address Drug Challenges, which garnered a global audience of over 2,000 unique viewers from foreign governments, international organizations, private sector companies, and the interagency. This week-long event heightened awareness of how drug criminals have exploited vulnerable industries and built inter-sectoral networks between government and industry leaders to close vulnerabilities. The United States will seek to continue fostering government to business relationships, promoting greater dissemination and uptake of good practices, and enhancing crosscutting information exchange with private industries to generate innovative and effective solutions to emerging drug threats.

Given the global scale of synthetic drug supply, international organizations and multilateral fora play a significant role in facilitating information exchange and developing responses on shared priorities. The United States will continue engaging with key partners such as UNODC and the INCB to support targeted interventions and operational activities strengthening drug detection and interdiction capabilities.

In November 2021, UNODC released a new Synthetic Drug Strategy (SDS). The SDS builds on the previously U.S.-funded Opioids Strategy to allow greater flexibility to adapt programs to address the ever-changing nature of synthetic drugs. The SDS focuses on four spheres of engagement: multilateralism, health responses, early warning, and counternarcotics interventions. The SDS brings together UNODC programs that provide member states with tools, resources and training to reduce both the supply and demand for synthetic drugs including opioids and their precursor chemicals. The United States provided the first and largest contribution that supported the development of the strategy.

The United States also intends to work closely with its partners to enhance international policy efforts on preventing the criminal misuse of drug manufacturing equipment, including tableting and encapsulation machines and precursor chemicals. The INCB will continue to lead efforts to raise awareness and develop solutions that member states can deploy to prevent the diversion, illicit manufacture, and sale of drug manufacturing equipment and precursor chemicals. This may include continued expert group meetings that convene national authorities and private sector actors to strengthen coordination and expand tools that will make it easier to identify and interdict diverted equipment. This will also include efforts to enhance transnational law enforcement cooperation through case meetings and multilateral data sharing operations targeting companies and individuals that trade in drug manufacturing equipment and precursor chemicals.

In addition to developing solutions to challenges posed by the trade in drug manufacturing equipment and materials, the INCB will continue to enhance global information exchange of law enforcement data to identify emerging trends in NPS and facilitate case cooperation globally. In 2021, the INCB deployed regional liaisons to East Asia, North Africa and the Middle East, and Sub-Saharan Africa. These positions build on a global network of advisors, including one in Latin America that deployed in late 2020 and one in South Asia, expected to deploy in early 2022. These officers will deepen regional engagement with INCB's global efforts by expanding the use of INCB data sharing platforms, private sector engagement tools, and participation in multilateral operations and case meetings.

Further, the United States also seeks to continue impactful diplomacy in multilateral engagements to urge heightened attention and redoubled international cooperation against the threat of synthetic opioids within the framework of the international drug control system and the international drug control conventions. It will elevate the importance of joint cooperation on synthetic drugs as a policy priority in multilateral fora, including at the CND and Organization of American State's Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (OAS-CICAD); as well as in regional discussions such as U.S.-E.U. Drugs Dialogue and engagements with ASEAN, to name a few. Finally, it will continue to emphasize this as a critical issue in bilateral counterdrug dialogue with partners, including India as part of regular high-level meetings.

While the United States has taken measures to confront the public health and safety crisis posed by the global synthetic drug threat, there are still a variety of challenges to implementing effective and longstanding solutions, largely due to the evolving nature of the threat. This requires a coordinated response from the international community and all relevant stakeholders – governments, international organizations, civil society, and private sector companies – to counter the growing risk associated with synthetic drug production and trafficking. The United States remains committed to being a leader in strengthening the global response to the illicit drug trade.



**COUNTRY REPORTS**

# Afghanistan

## A. Introduction

The United States has not maintained an Embassy in Afghanistan since August 31, 2021 and subsequently paused all non-humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. The U.S. government's drug control priorities for Afghanistan have been under review since that time. Thus, this report covers only the period January to August 2021.

Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of illicit opiates. According to preliminary United Nations estimates, 177,000 hectares (ha) of opium poppy were cultivated in Afghanistan in 2021, with potential to produce 6,800 metric tons (MT) of opium. The United States estimated 215,000 hectares under poppy cultivation in 2020, while the United Nations (UN) estimated a similar amount at 224,000 ha.

Afghanistan also produces methamphetamine and cannabis products, though the United States lacks detailed information about the extent of production of these drugs in the country.

Poppy cultivation in Afghanistan is widespread; in 2020, just 12 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces were poppy-free. Afghan poppy cultivation is currently concentrated in the country's south and southwest, accounting for 84 percent of the country's area under cultivation. Revenue from poppy cultivation and the Afghan drug trade have contributed to Afghanistan's internal conflicts, undermined the rule of law, fueled corruption, and contributed to extremely high rates of drug use among Afghans.

Afghan opium is typically refined into heroin or morphine in Afghanistan or neighboring countries. According to U.S. sampling data, Afghanistan is not a major supplier of opiates to the United States. Data from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) 2020 Annual Heroin Report indicates that heroin from Southwest Asia represents less than 1 percent by weight of heroin samples tested in the United States.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Prior to August 15, 2021, the Afghan government under the Ghani Administration was publicly committed to confronting the drug problem in Afghanistan but slow to implement a national drug control strategy. U.S. government capacity building assistance, paused since the Taliban takeover of the country, included support to the Afghan Criminal Justice Task Force, a judicial unit based at the Counter Narcotics Justice Center (CNJC). CNJC also served as the central facility for the investigation, prosecution, and trial of major drug and drug-related corruption cases. Between January 1 and March 31, 2021, the CNJC: (1) investigated 328 cases; (2) arrested 403 defendants in relation to those cases; (3) referred 291 cases to the trial court; (4) referred 272 cases to the secondary court; and (5) appealed (or defended against appeals) 191 cases to the Supreme Court. This resulted in 18 primary court acquittals, 613 primary court

convictions, 25 secondary court acquittals, and 402 secondary court convictions. The Supreme Court upheld convictions in 199 cases.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

The Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU) and the National Interdiction Unit (NIU) were Afghanistan's two primary and most effective units involved in counter-drug enforcement efforts prior to August 15, 2021. U.S. mentoring and training of these units led to significant seizures of drugs and precursor chemicals. Through August 15, 2021, the NIU and SIU conducted 70 operations and seized 3.6 MT of opium, 460 kilograms (kg) of heroin, 2.3 MT of methamphetamine, and 112.8 MT of hashish, according to figures provided by the Afghan specialized units. They also arrested 69 individuals. The United States discontinued support to the NIU and SIU, and other drug interdiction activities inside Afghanistan, following the suspension of non-humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

Virtually no verified poppy eradication occurred in Afghanistan in 2021. As in previous years, limited results were a function of limited political will and central government focus as well as the inherent danger of performing eradication in many of the rural areas where poppy is cultivated.

Primary trafficking routes into and out of Afghanistan include the Balkan route (Iran to Turkey and the Caucasus, to Eastern and Western Europe); the southern route (Pakistan and Iran to Africa, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Canada); and the northern route (Central Asia to the Russian Federation and Europe).

Prior to August 15, 2021, drug traffickers provided weapons, funding, and other support to the Taliban and other anti-government actors. Some insurgents were directly involved in drug trafficking, or "taxing" drug production and trafficking, to finance their operations.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Afghanistan has one of the highest substance abuse rates in the world. To stem the effects of this public health crisis, the United States has for years funded a project to expand treatment for drug abuse in rural areas and supports treatment centers for women, children, and adolescents. The United States currently supports the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime global children's addiction program to develop protocols for treating children, training treatment staff, and delivering services through non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Taliban have requested international support for drug treatment centers, but the long-term prospects for restarting these programs remain dependent on adjusting the program to work directly through NGOs, as well as the findings of an interagency review process. The United States will work directly through international organizations and NGOs to offer online continuing education and training, ensuring that prevention and treatment protocols remain evidence based.

Agriculture is a main driver of Afghanistan's economy and employs approximately 62 percent of its work force. A key challenge to reducing drug production is developing economically viable alternatives to poppy cultivation. The United States has promoted licit crop production and

access to markets for those licit crops and has implemented projects to create sustainable alternative opportunities to poppy, including for rural women, through the UN and NGOs.

The Taliban has requested this type of assistance continue and expand in light of increased levels of food insecurity and the Taliban's stated desire to combat drug use. These programs work only through the UN and NGOs, and not through the Taliban or government entities.

#### **4. Corruption**

While, as a matter of policy, the Afghan government under the Ghani Administration did not encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, widespread and longstanding credible allegations and media reporting suggest that many individual government officials directly engaged in, and benefitted from, the drug trade. One of the Taliban's stated goals has been to eliminate government corruption, and while early public statements suggest a willingness to address the Afghan drug trade, the group has a long history of profiting from drug trafficking. The international community will be watching closely for evidence that the Taliban do not engage in corrupt practices related to the illicit drug trade.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

Since August 31, 2021, the United States has not maintained an Embassy in Afghanistan and the U.S. government's drug control priorities for Afghanistan are under review at the time of this report.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The Afghan drug trade poses a major challenge to Afghan institutions and governance, as well as to countries and communities along key trafficking routes outside the country. U.S. government support for the range of counternarcotics assistance programming to Afghanistan is currently constrained and is likely to remain so.

## Albania

Albania is a source country of cannabis and a home base for organized crime groups moving illicit drugs from source countries into European markets. Albanian cannabis is sent to Turkey and exchanged for heroin and cocaine, which are smuggled across Europe by Albanian national traffickers. Albanian authorities registered an increase in cocaine seizures through the Port of Durres in 2021, primarily in banana shipments from Ecuador. Albanian law enforcement participated in several multi-state law enforcement operations in 2021, with Albanian nationals arrested in Greece, Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands, among others.

Albanian law enforcement authorities cooperated with U.S. counterparts in arrests and seizure of narcotics shipments and drug processing labs in Albania, as well as seizure of assets in Albania related to global international drug trafficking. Albanian courts seized \$1.2 million in assets from Ylli Didani in April 2021 following his arrest on March 31, 2021 in the United States on federal narcotics violations. Albania's Specialized Anticorruption Body (SPAK) registered several successes in 2021, including the arrest of 38 individuals, including one prosecutor and several senior police officials, as part of a large international investigation of narcotics trafficking.

Albanian nationals play an outsized role in international narcotics trafficking and organized crime networks, and Albania is a key element of the Balkan route of drug trafficking into Western Europe and the United Kingdom. Albanian organized crime groups are present in the United States, UK, and throughout Europe, as well as in South America, including Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru, and have established integrated acquisition, transportation, distribution and sales chains to Europe, the UK, and the United States. Albanian organized crime groups continue to launder proceeds in Albania and contribute to corruption in the country. Violent crime in Albania is often associated with organized crime, and judges, prosecutors, police, and journalists have been subject to intimidation.

Relatively weak rule of law, corruption, and a high rate of unemployment are the primary drivers behind Albania's drug control problem. Albania's criminal justice reforms include removing from office judges and prosecutors with ties to organized crime and/or unexplained wealth. U.S. assistance supports Albania's ongoing judicial reforms, including advising and capacity building for SPAK prosecutors and investigators, improved inter-agency cooperation on investigations, corrections reforms to curtail the operations of transnational organized crime behind bars, and specialized equipment to enhance operational capabilities. Albania must continue justice reform efforts, tighten anti-money laundering regulations and oversight, and work to erode the influence of organized crime throughout government and society.

## Armenia

Armenia, located between the source country of Afghanistan and markets of Europe and Russia, is primarily a transit country for illicit drugs. Armenian authorities assert that opium, methamphetamine, and heroin are trafficked into the country mainly from Iran. The government maintains direct control over law enforcement, border enforcement, prosecutorial, and judicial functions. Russian border guards are present at Armenia's borders with Turkey and Iran and compose part of the immigration staff at Yerevan and Gyumri airports.

A popular revolution in 2018 brought to power a democratic government that launched new anti-corruption institutions, but which has said little about narcotics trafficking. After the 2020 intensive fighting in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, a Russia-brokered ceasefire agreement paved the way for an increasingly expansive role for Russian border guard forces along the newly relevant Armenia-Azerbaijan border. The impact of these developments on the flow of drugs in the region – in addition to the effects of Taliban control over Afghanistan – remains unknown.

Between January and June 2021, authorities investigated 625 criminal cases related to drugs, psychotropic substances, and their precursors, a 13 percent increase over the same period in 2020. Prosecutions of these cases, which involved Iranian and Russian nationals, decreased slightly. Authorities seized 482.2 kilograms (kg) of drugs – a seventeen-fold increase from the same period in 2020. This included 347.33 grams of psychotropic substances (a decrease) and 15.5 kg of precursor chemicals (an increase). In March, Armenia and Georgia cooperated to conduct the first international controlled delivery between the countries of a parcel containing 137 grams of the synthetic stimulant drug alpha-PVP. This is a law enforcement technique (for which the United States hosted a 2-day conference in Yerevan with Georgian/Armenian counterparts in December 2018) in which seized drugs are allowed to continue to the next destination (usually the end-user) under the control of law enforcement, in order to obtain additional information/targets.

In February, the Armenian State Revenue Committee (SRC) seized 365 kg of heroin destined for the Netherlands, the second largest drug seizure in Armenia's history. SRC seized 97 kg of heroin in June at the Agarak border. In July, Armenia participated in a historic counterdrug operation by continuously surveilling a tractor-trailer entering Armenia from Iran, traveling onward through Georgia to Ukraine, where authorities seized 368 kg of heroin and arrested two Turkish nationals. Aided by U.S. intelligence, this marked the first time Armenia, Georgia, and Ukraine worked together on an operation spanning the Caucasus.

Embassy Tbilisi's DEA office provided Personnel Recovery Training in June and a Narcotics Investigators Course in October for Armenian officers. Embassy Yerevan's INL office procured \$167,000 in drug inspection equipment to SRC for Armenia's five border crossing points. The United States continues to support construction at the SRC canine facility.

# The Bahamas

## A. Introduction

The Bahamas is a source country for illicit marijuana and a transit point for illegal drugs from Latin America and the Caribbean bound for the United States. Its location, less than 50 miles off the coast of Florida at its closest point, makes it a natural conduit for drug trafficking. The Bahamian archipelago stretches over a nautical area the size of California with over 2,000 islands and cays, the vast majority of which are uninhabited. Traffickers blend in among numerous pleasure craft moving between Florida and The Bahamas. Trafficking also occurs through container ships, commercial and private planes, and fishing vessels.

The United States and The Bahamas enjoy a history of law enforcement cooperation that is important to both countries. There is political will within the Bahamian government to tackle drug trafficking and organized crime. Operation Bahamas, Turks and Caicos (OPBAT), a tripartite agreement dating back to the 1980s, spells out the obligations of The Bahamas, Turks and Caicos Islands, and the United States to address illicit drug trafficking. Under this agreement, Bahamian and U.S. law enforcement partner to target trafficking organizations and regularly interdict shipments of marijuana and cocaine destined for the United States.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Challenges persist in cooperation between police and prosecutors. Early involvement of prosecutors in criminal investigations is lacking, and few drug trafficking cases are prosecuted. Individuals charged with drug trafficking offenses regularly evade justice when released on bail. Trials are delayed by a case backlog, adjournments, and procedural errors. At least one suspect continued to run major drug trafficking operations while complying with all pretrial release requirements, only to later be arrested and convicted in a neighboring country. In recent years, the Bahamian government has prioritized investments in electronic records management technology to improve efficiency, ease case congestion, and reduce timeframes for proceedings. The United States provided transcript recording equipment to the judiciary for criminal cases, automating a process previously done by hand, and plans to expand the system to civil courts.

### 2. Supply Reduction

U.S. law enforcement agencies work closely with the Royal Bahamas Police Force and Royal Bahamas Defense Force on intelligence, investigations, and interdictions. U.S. and Bahamian law enforcement investigations indicate that illicit trafficking through The Bahamas remains high. OPBAT operations helped seize 349 kilograms of cocaine and 1.5 metric tons of marijuana during the first 10 months of 2021. Traffickers smuggle cocaine primarily from Hispaniola through The Bahamas and into the United States using pleasure craft, including sport fishing and sailing vessels, by blending in with legitimate traffic that transits these areas.

Traffickers increased their use of aircraft to smuggle smaller loads of cocaine over the course of 2021.

Larger “go-fast” and sport fishing vessels transport marijuana from Jamaica to and through The Bahamas into Florida. Trends indicate traffickers are taking steps to move marijuana production from parts of the Caribbean closer to the United States. U.S. law enforcement reports U.S. consumer demand for illicit marijuana has increased following marijuana regulation in several U.S. states, due to higher costs for legal marijuana and reduced illicit domestic production.

The Bahamas is studying proposals to legalize cannabis low in THC and medical marijuana as part of an economic growth plan focused on developing and supporting small businesses. Successive administrations have expressed support for sealing criminal records related to simple possession. The media reports strong public support among Bahamians for these initiatives.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The Bahamas continues to document increasing use of controlled substances by the public, chief among them marijuana. The most recent data available, based on a survey in late 2018, suggests that 20 percent of male respondents admitted to smoking marijuana, and of those, 40 percent admitted to smoking daily. Only one percent of respondents admitted to cocaine usage. The Public Hospitals Authority offers substance use disorder treatment and prevention programs. The United States continued to partner with the Public Hospitals Authority in 2021 to increase the number of internationally certified substance use disorder counselors in The Bahamas.

### **4. Corruption**

The Bahamian government does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, there are instances where narcotics traffickers have had ties to government officials. Since 2017, The Bahamas has enacted, but not fully brought into force, a range of laws to fight official corruption. Draft laws presented by the prior administration to establish an ombudsman’s office and an anti-corruption agency focused on public corruption had not yet been taken up in October by the new administration. In May 2021, the first Information Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner were appointed under the Freedom of Information Act to support public access to government records. Parliament has not yet brought into force clauses of the same act, however, that define a process for the public to obtain information.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The Bahamas is a member of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), a security partnership created in 2010 for Caribbean region countries and the United States. CBSI programming in The Bahamas supports narcotics control, gang prevention, and drug demand reduction through regional approaches and coordination.



The Bahamas extradites its nationals to the United States to face drug trafficking charges under a bilateral extradition treaty dating to 1990. Bahamian officials have acknowledged a prolonged extradition process in some cases due to appeals proceedings.

The Bahamas has a mutual legal assistance agreement in place with the United States and responds favorably to requests. Response times from Bahamian authorities to U.S. requests can be long. Forfeiture orders from U.S. courts are not automatically enforceable in The Bahamas.

The Bahamas signed a Comprehensive Maritime Agreement with the United States in 2004, which enables cooperation in drug interdiction operations in and around Bahamian territorial waters.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The United States and The Bahamas enjoy a long standing cooperative relationship against drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. Effective maritime surveillance, patrolling, and interdiction to counter crimes at sea will remain a primary concern for the United States in The Bahamas. Progress against drug trafficking will significantly depend on government efforts to combat corruption, increase extraditions, and strengthen prosecutions so drug traffickers are held criminally accountable. The United States encourages The Bahamas to continue to invest resources in its courts to meet caseload demand and increase the speed of judicial operations. It is important The Bahamas follow through with plans to fully bring into force transparency and accountability legislation to prevent and address corruption and preserve public confidence.

## Belgium

Belgium has been a main hub for cocaine entry into Europe since 2016. In the first 10 months of 2021, authorities seized 80 metric tons (MT) of cocaine, compared to 2020's seizure of 65.4 MT. Heroin imports are also increasing (1.35 MT seized in the first 10 months of 2021), and Belgium has a growing synthetic drug production network, mostly for export. Drug exports via the postal system are a problem, with both Belgian and Dutch exporters taking advantage of the reduced scrutiny packages from Belgium receive compared to those from the Netherlands. Imports of new psychoactive substances (NPS), largely from China, are also rising, as are imports of precursor chemicals. Cannabis makes up the largest portion of Belgium's retail market and was found in 75 percent of the drug discoveries made by police outside the Port of Antwerp. Belgium is not experiencing a significant problem with domestic synthetic opioid abuse.

The organized crime networks controlling cocaine imports are often based in the Netherlands and have ties to the same South American drug trafficking rings that transport cocaine to the United States. Cocaine is most commonly smuggled in international shipping containers destined for the Port of Antwerp. In addition to the cocaine seized in Antwerp, authorities in South America seized more than 64 MT of cocaine destined for Antwerp during the first 10 months of 2021, compared to 67.7 MT seized in 2020. Most cocaine arriving in Belgium is transferred to the Netherlands for distribution around Europe and beyond. Criminal rings take advantage of the open European border, short prison sentences, and the lack of a system to monitor or disrupt non-indexed websites (dark Web).

Belgium's national government, seated in October 2020, prioritized counter narcotics efforts and increased the budgets of the Ministries of Interior, Justice, and Finance (Customs). Belgium enjoyed a major counternarcotics success early in 2021 when its police, in partnership with the Netherlands and France, cracked the encryption of a cell phone network used extensively by organized crime groups linked to drug trafficking. Called "Operation Sky," the effort decrypted millions of messages and led to dozens of arrests in all three countries and beyond. This operation also confirmed that corruption is a problem both in the official and civilian sectors.

Belgian and U.S. law enforcement agencies maintain close cooperation, primarily focusing on cocaine trafficking and drug money laundering. The two countries have fully operational extradition and mutual legal assistance agreements.

# Belize

## A. Introduction

Belize is a significant transit corridor for drug trafficking from South America to the United States. Accessible by both land and sea, Belize borders Mexico, Guatemala, and the Caribbean Sea. With limited resources, vast forest, remote terrain, and porous borders, it is exploited by transnational criminal organizations to land drug planes or conduct sea drops through overflights. Significant gaps in law enforcement capabilities, intelligence gathering, and investigative and prosecutorial capacity limit the interdiction and prosecution of drug related activities. The government's deep budget cuts in 2021, including salary reductions for public servants, along with the COVID-19 pandemic, presented additional challenges to mounting effective counterdrug operations.

Marijuana is the primary drug used in Belize. The Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center (JICC) reported a 35 percent increase in marijuana use during the period October 2020 to September 2021. The National Drug Abuse Control Council (NDACC) of Belize reported increases in the use of marijuana and crack cocaine from October 2020 to August 2021, with use concentrated in Belize City. The United States assisted Belize in procuring antennas, towers, radios, and sensors, for an Aerosol Robotic Network (AERONet) secure communication system which will increase communication and operational capabilities for Belizean Joint Enforcement Teams engaged in counternarcotics operations.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

In 2021, in the face of a stark economic downturn, the Government of Belize slashed its operating budget, including for law enforcement, which was cut nearly 13 percent. The Joint Intelligence Operations Center (JIOC), comprised of multi-sector law enforcement agencies, continued to work in collaboration with the United States to gather information and organize counternarcotics operations. The Belize 2021-2023 Policing Plan prioritized reducing drug use and trafficking. The increase in drug trafficking and usage coincided with an increase in gang-related murders in 2020; increased drug trafficking was accompanied by drug related, violent crime. Belize's 2020-2023 Border Security Strategy outlines five goals for comprehensive border protection, to include a focus on border issues that directly affect national development. The judicial system suffers from lengthy delays and backlogs, and drug related prosecutions can take years to resolve. In 2021, to address these impediments, Belize's legislature passed the Time Limit for Judicial Decisions Bill, which sets specific time limits within which a judge must adjudicate a civil case or appeal. Belize prosecuted 621 individuals for drug related offenses in 2021. Although there have been extradition cases before the courts, no person has ever been extradited for drug-trafficking offenses.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

From October 2020 to September 2021, the JICC reported that marijuana seizures increased by 35 percent, while cocaine seizures decreased by 42 percent. Also in that period, authorities seized 989.7 kilograms (kg) of cocaine, 868.8 kg of marijuana, 4.4 kg of heroin, and 2.6 kg of other drugs (mainly crack cocaine). Most drug seizures were handled by the Mobile Interdiction Team and the Anti-Narcotics Unit of the Belize Police Department (BPD), using a coordinated interagency approach to border patrols and conducting intelligence-based operations. Constrained resources have hindered law enforcement ability to reach locations of drug planes landing in remote areas. Additionally, drug flights entering Belizean air space for transshipment purposes are hard to track due to the limited capability of existing detection equipment for low-flying flights. Fourteen known illicit drug aircraft landings took place during this reporting period, one of which was intercepted. Most planes had already been offloaded and destroyed prior to the arrival of law enforcement. The drugs, mostly cocaine, were then transported by vehicle to awaiting vessels and quickly moved to Mexico and Guatemala. In the first nine months of 2021, 54 arrests were made for drug possession; 411 persons were convicted on drug-related offenses.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The BPD's Community Policing Unit provides support to vulnerable communities to deter the youth population's use of drugs. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Belizean schools held classes virtually in 2021, so officers were not able to visit schools for outreach activities. The National Drug Abuse Control Council of Belize (NDACC), under the Ministry of Health, is Belize's main agency for illegal drug matters. It focuses on drug abuse control in seven main program areas: drug prevention, public education, research and information, legal reform, community empowerment, rehabilitation, and treatment. The council aims to reduce both supply and demand of illicit drugs and to alleviate the consequences of illicit drug use and trafficking. The Ministry of Education, BPD, National Alcoholics Anonymous Association, Statistical Institute of Belize, and Belize Trade and Investment Development Service collaborate with the council. The government, through NDACC, provides treatment programs through Remar Rehabilitation Center in Cayo District and Ashcroft Rehabilitation Center, Kolbe Facility at Belize Central Prison.

## **4. Corruption**

The Government of Belize does not, as a matter of government policy and legislation, encourage, participate, or facilitate illegal activities associated with drug trafficking, but it is widely suspected that collusion and corruption take place at all government levels, including in facilitating or cooperating with narcotraffickers. The government did make some strides in addressing corruption by implementing a series of legislative reforms, including passage of the Money Laundering and Terrorism (Prevention) (Amendment), Electronic Transfer of Funds Crime Bill of 2021, Misuse of Drug Act Amendment 2021, Companies Amendment Bill 2021, Tax Administration and Procedure Amendment Bill 2021, Protected Disclosure Bill 2021, Public Sector Data Sharing Bill 2021 (updated), Finance and Audit (Reform) (Amendment) Bill, 2021, and Public Contracts Commission Bill. Despite significant legislation, Belize lacks enforcement

capability due to the absence of proper enforcement mechanisms and limited resources of the organizations responsible for enforcement. In January 2021, two BPD officers and one Belize Defense Forces (BDF) officer were charged with drug related offenses related to the landing of an aircraft carrying narcotics into the country. The case is pending in the Orange Walk Magistrate Court.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

In 2010, the United States and Belize signed a bilateral Letter of Agreement to implement programs on anti-narcotics, strengthening justice reforms, improving border security, and increasing the professionalization of the BPD. Belize is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which allows it to acquire the Advanced Passenger Information System to streamline air and sea traveler data through CARICOM's Implementation Agency for Crime & Security. U.S. Customs and Border Protection and Belize's Customs and Excise Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July 2020 to implement the Foreign Electronic Cargo Data Exchange Program, which will allow Belize to better screen incoming cargo. The United States continues to engage with Belize to implement legislative changes to assist in the prosecution of drug related offenses and bolstered the security sector's ability to intercept narco-planes by supporting the installation of an AERONet secure communications system.

### **D. Conclusion**

The United States and Belize must continue to work together on countering transnational criminal organizations profiting from narco-trafficking. Belize should continue to expand its multiagency approach to intelligence gathering and operations. Political will to protect witnesses and victims remains a challenge, as does cracking down on endemic corruption. While only an estimated 2 percent of cocaine heading to the United States lands in Belize, a far larger amount traverses both Belize's air space and maritime domain, landing or coming ashore just across its border. Neither the U.S. nor Belize can afford to cede further ground to transnational criminal organizations.

# Bolivia

## A. Introduction

Bolivia is the third largest source country of cocaine and a major transit zone for Peruvian cocaine. In 2020, the United States estimated that coca cultivation totaled 39,400 hectares (ha) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimated a total of 29,400 ha, both more than the legal limits for traditional and medicinal use established by the Bolivian government (22,000 ha). The U.S. government estimate is larger because it encompasses a larger surface area and is based on different methodology than that of the UNODC. European Union (EU) studies estimate the domestic demand for the traditional and medicinal use of coca is less than 14,705 ha. U.N. data shows illicit drug consumption is low in Bolivia.

The Bolivian government has inadequate controls over coca cultivation. The percentage of coca not sold in authorized coca markets was unavailable in 2020 because government controls on coca sales were relaxed during the pandemic. The U.S. government estimated potential pure cocaine production to be 312 metric tons (MT) in 2020. Most Bolivian cocaine is exported to other Latin American countries, especially Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina, for domestic consumption, or for onward transit to West Africa and Europe, rather than to the United States.

In September 2021, the United States determined that Bolivia failed demonstrably to adhere to its obligations under international drug control agreements and the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. This determination was based, in part, on the Bolivian government not taking sufficient measures to safeguard the licit coca market from criminal exploitation. Bolivia was, however, granted a National Interest Waiver allowing certain foreign assistance to continue.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The 2017 Controlled Substances Law (Law 913) provided a legal basis for studies on coca yield per hectare and on determining coca leaf-to-cocaine yield. Both studies were underway with UNODC with EU funding, and results were expected in early 2021, but the Bolivian government paused the studies for additional review. In January 2021 Law 913 was modified through Law 1358, and the Comprehensive Policy Council for the Elimination of Illicit Traffic in Controlled Substances, Excess Coca and Prevention of Drug Consumption was created as the highest body for the approval, monitoring and evaluation of drug policies in Bolivia, replacing the National Drug Control Council (CONALTID). In May 2021, the Coordination Secretariat of CONALTID and the Unit of the Execution of the Fight against Narcotics were merged into the Directorate of Support for the Prevention of Drug Use, Control of Illicit Traffic in Controlled Substances and Surplus Coca (DIPREVCON), with the single function of planning and funding drug enforcement operations. The Vice Ministry for Social Defense and Controlled Substances (VMSD) is mandated to combat drug trafficking, regulate coca production, advance coca eradication and drug prevention, and execute rehabilitation programs.

The Special Counter-Narcotics Police Force (FELCN) reports to the VMSSD and comprises approximately 1,200 personnel. It is the agency primarily focused on interdiction and drug-related money laundering cases. The Joint Eradication Task Force conducts manual coca eradication with approximately 1,750 personnel, down from 2,300 in 2020. The Regional Center for Counternarcotics Intelligence, a regional fusion center for intelligence analysis and sharing that began in 2018, includes participation from Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. Other countries may join once the multilateral legal framework is finalized.

In May, the government presented Bolivia's 2021-2025 Strategy to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking of Controlled Substances and Control of the Expansion of Coca Crops. It is based on four pillars: 1) control of illicit traffic of controlled substances; 2) control of the expansion of coca crops; 3) design and implementation of the comprehensive drug prevention policy in the field of health, education, family, and community; and 4) regionalization of the fight against drug trafficking and international coordination. All four pillars share a mandate to include gender, human rights, and environment strategies. Current Bolivian coca cultivation far exceeds the country's demand for coca for traditional use. The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission continues to recommend that Bolivia implement a system to monitor narcotics and psychotropic drugs used in healthcare to ensure medicines are not diverted for illegitimate uses.

DIPREVECON's 2021 budget is \$30.65 million. Bolivia receives most of its counternarcotics financial support from the EU, which is exploring support to address drug trafficking and related crimes and promote alternative development to coca for the period 2021-2024.

The United States and Bolivia are parties to a 1995 extradition treaty that permits the extradition of nationals for the most serious offenses, including drug trafficking. Bolivia and the United States do not have a bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty but can request assistance through various multilateral conventions to which both are signatories.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

Through September 30, 2021, FELCN destroyed 47 cocaine hydrochloride processing labs and 652 rustic cocaine labs, a 13 percent decrease and 19 percent decrease, respectively, from 2020. FELCN reportedly seized 8.53 MT of cocaine base and 6.23 MT of cocaine hydrochloride in the first 9 months of 2021, a 14.5 percent increase and 19.8 percent increase respectively from 2020. FELCN arrested 2,231 individuals on drug-related offenses in 2021. In authorized areas, Bolivia maintains a "social control" policy to curb illicit coca production, under which the government negotiates with coca growers to obtain their consent for eradication. In unauthorized areas, including national parks, eradication is mandatory.

The U.S. government estimated that coca cultivation totaled 39,400 ha in 2020, a 6.6 percent decrease from 2019, and that potential pure cocaine production increased 3.7 percent from 301 MT in 2019 to 312 MT in 2020. UNODC estimated 29,400 ha of coca were cultivated in 2020, a 15 percent increase from 2019. In 2019, UNODC officials noted that 90 percent of coca cultivation in the Chapare region was destined for cocaine production and not traditional consumption; in 2020, controls were temporarily relaxed due to the pandemic. UNODC is awaiting government concurrence to complete the coca yield per hectare as well as the coca-to-

cocaine yield studies. Authorities reported eradicating 7,073 ha of coca as of October 6, 2021, compared to 2,177 ha for all of 2020. While the government publicly set a 9,000-ha eradication goal for 2021, it estimates it needs to eradicate at least 11,000 ha of coca yearly to see a net reduction. In the first nine months of 2021, the FELCN reportedly confiscated 11 aircraft involved in drug trafficking, down from 23 during the same period in 2020.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Illicit drug consumption is low in Bolivia, according to UNODC. Bolivia has approximately 80 drug treatment and rehabilitation centers, the majority of which are run by non-government organizations. The only two public treatment centers are in Tarija and Santa Cruz.

### **4. Corruption**

The Government of Bolivia does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, senior government officials acknowledge serious corruption problems in the judiciary and police. During the interim government in early 2020, there were allegations of government corruption for the food contracts supporting camps dedicated to eradication. In 2021, the current government mentioned twice they were investigating these allegations, but no further reports on the investigations were subsequently announced.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The U.S. Embassy meets periodically with Bolivian government officials to discuss drug control efforts. In 2021, Bolivia participated in one virtual and one in-person course at the U.S.-supported International Law Enforcement Academy. The United States does not currently have a counterdrug presence in Bolivia. With the EU, the United States is funding a UNODC validation of coca eradication-monitoring project.

### **D. Conclusion**

Bolivia has not adequately controlled coca cultivation or the resultant cocaine production, as reflected by the fact that it remains the third largest source of coca and cocaine in the world and a major transit country for Peruvian cocaine. Both UNODC and U.S. 2020 estimates are well above the government-sanctioned legal limit on coca cultivation of 22,000 ha. Potential pure cocaine production in Bolivia remains historically high. There is no available data to support government statements that traditional and medicinal coca consumption have increased.

In 2013, Bolivia re-acceded to the 1961 UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs with a reservation permitting coca to be used only within Bolivia for traditional and medicinal purposes. However, its inadequate controls over its legal coca markets and its status as a transit country for cocaine trafficking continue to be concerns. In September and October 2021, the government acted to influence the traditionally private coca market in La Paz by supporting a candidate in the leadership dispute within the largest regional coca farmers' organization. The dispute involved violent demonstrations, including confrontations with police.



## Brazil

Brazil is a significant transit and destination country for cocaine. Its porous borders with source countries Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia are three times the length of the U.S. border with Mexico. Most of the cocaine entering Brazil is either destined for its domestic market or for transit to Europe, sometimes via West Africa. Large, violent, and well-organized drug trafficking organizations operating throughout the country, such as the PCC (Primeiro Comando da Capital or “First Capital Command”) and CV (Comando Vermelho, or “Red Command”), among others, coordinate, mastermind, and protect cocaine shipments from Andean countries through northern Brazil to Europe and the United States, via the Caribbean and Central American corridors.

Brazil suffers from substantial and growing domestic drug consumption and is the world’s second-largest consumer of cocaine hydrochloride and likely the largest consumer of cocaine-derivative products. Brazil prioritizes border security in its whole-of-government approach to countering drug trafficking but lacks the capacity to fully stem the flow of illicit drugs across its borders.

The first 11 months of 2021 saw an increase in counterdrug operations and seizures of cocaine and other illicit drugs. Through November, the Brazilian Federal Police (PF) seized 83.3 metric tons (MT) of cocaine and 377 MT of marijuana, an increase over the same period in 2020. As of October, the PF eradicated 1.6 hectares of cannabis plants in Paraguay, in coordination with the Paraguayan Federal Police, and 533.7 square meters in Brazil. Brazilian law enforcement authorities noted increased production and consumption of synthetic drugs, especially in southern states, and have made addressing this trend a high priority. Tetracaine, which is produced in China and used as a precursor for cocaine, is subject to special control by the Brazilian National Health Regulatory Agency (ANVISA).

In 2021, Brazilian federal and state authorities continued to actively promote drug threat awareness, demand reduction, and treatment programs. Brazil takes a holistic approach to reintegration of people with substance use disorders, providing a range of services from medical care to job training. Brazil’s programs are not yet commensurate with the size of its population suffering from substance use disorders.

The United States and Brazil have a standing working group on narcotics trafficking under the U.S.-Brazil Permanent Forum on Security. The 2008 U.S.-Brazil Memorandum of Understanding on Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement provided the framework for capacity building with Brazilian state and federal agencies to address illicit drug trafficking. Bilateral extradition and mutual legal assistance treaties are in force between the United States and Brazil.

# Burma

## A. Introduction

Burma is a major source of illicit methamphetamine and opiates. Facilitated by the illicit import of precursor chemicals from primarily the People's Republic of China (PRC), the entrenched production and trafficking of synthetic narcotics in pockets of Burma has increased due to security declines resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the February 1, 2021, military coup d'état.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported that Burma is one of the largest producers of methamphetamine in the world and the second largest opium poppy cultivator. Seven decades of internal conflict, driven primarily by the military, enabled Burma's illicit economies, including the drug trade. The 2021 military coup hobbled governance in ethnic states and border areas, creating a permissive environment for drug production and trafficking. While the regime police Drug Enforcement Division (DED) occasionally seize illicit drugs and precursor chemicals, the post-coup regime has not focused on counternarcotics.

Illicit drugs produced in Burma are trafficked throughout the region, with routes extending beyond Southeast Asia to Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. Burma is not a major source or transit country for drugs entering the United States. Domestic drug consumption is substantial and widespread.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The military launched a coup d'état on February 1, 2021, that deposed the democratically elected government and left Burma reeling from the return of authoritarian rule. Since that time, many government officials – including police and other law enforcement professionals – have refused to work under the regime, which has limited inter-ministerial coordination and reporting on counternarcotics.

The regime designated the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) as the coordinating body for their counternarcotics efforts. The Minister for Home Affairs is the CCDAC Chairman and the Commander of the DED is the Joint Secretary. The regime CCDAC includes representatives from ministries and justice sector institutions with drug enforcement authorities.

The DED is the primary drug interdiction unit, though joint interdiction operations with the military are common. The DED is understaffed, with only about 1,360 of nearly 4,000 authorized positions filled. Historically, DED operated 65 anti-narcotics task forces, but struggled from gaps in a legal framework to protect whistleblowers and enable complex investigations. Drug cases often conclude without pursuit of high-ranking suspects.

The regime Ministry of Legal Affairs (MoLA) provides oversight to all criminal drug prosecutions in Burma. COVID-19 restrictions delayed or suspended these prosecutions, and law enforcement prioritized politically motivated cases against pro-democracy actors. Prosecution of criminal activity by ethnic armed groups and military-affiliated militias remains outside of DED authority to investigate and the MoLA's to prosecute.

Burma's law enforcement and justice institutions lack experience and understanding of extradition and mutual legal assistance mechanisms. The regime has also prevented most cooperation with international law enforcement except for efforts to pursue its political opponents, including representatives of the pro-democracy movement. Burma has a colonial-era extradition treaty with the United States that has not been used in many years. The DED maintains relationships with counterparts in regional countries, most notably Thailand, India, Australia, the Philippines, and the PRC.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

The coup has caused economic decline that incentivized increased production of highly profitable synthetic drugs as well as increased poppy cultivation for opium and heroin production. According to the 2020 UNODC Myanmar Opium Survey, farmers cultivated about 29,500 hectares of opium poppy, an 11 percent decrease from 2019. UNODC anticipates this cultivation will increase in 2021. Burma implemented opium poppy eradication activities, but the overall reduction is likely due to the rise in synthetic drug production.

From January to December 2021, DED officers continued to report major seizures, including at least 13.7 metric tons of crystal methamphetamine, 145 million yaba tablets (caffeine-coated methamphetamine), and 2,525 kilograms of heroin.

The regime CCDAC destroyed \$667 million in narcotics-related seizures, many from prior to the coup, in Yangon, Mandalay and Taunggyi on the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, including 62 types of narcotic drugs and precursor chemicals.

Primary trafficking routes from Shan State lead to Thailand, Laos, the PRC, India, and Bangladesh over land and to Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Japan via sea. Burma-based drug traffickers are not a significant source of fentanyl.

Public data on drug-related arrests and prosecutions in 2021 was unavailable due to the coup and COVID-19. After the coup, local media reported that police selectively drug tested pro-democracy demonstrators for drug use in a bid to criminalize dissent. The regime has not implemented the amended Drug Law 2018, which includes requirements to provide treatment and rehabilitation services for low-level drug users.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Domestic consumption of illicit drugs is high, although official statistics are unavailable. The regime has not prioritized drug demand reduction activities since the coup. While schools offer a

life skills curriculum that includes drug prevention, schools closed due to COVID-19 and a worsening security environment following the coup.

Burma's former government relied on United Nations, international and local non-governmental organizations, and community-based organizations to provide drug demand reduction services. These organizations provide evidence-based drug treatment and prevention training to health and education professionals. After the coup, many public sector medical professionals joined the anti-regime efforts and refuse to participate in regime-controlled activities.

The Drug Dependency Treatment and Research Unit, under the regime Ministry of Health (MOH) provides Methadone Maintenance Therapy, drug detox services and opioid substitution therapy at public hospitals. In 2021, MOH Methadone Maintenance Therapy centers decreased from 89 to 79 due to COVID-19 restrictions. The regime MOH reported that the number of MMT patients increased to 25,000 as of September 2021. The regime MOH stated plans to establish a new Buprenorphine Maintenance Treatment program and a digital health management database in 2021 but neither initiative was implemented.

Evidence-based drug rehabilitation services are insufficient to meet demand. The regime Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement manages 14 drug rehabilitation centers. Rehabilitation centers remain closed due to COVID-19 and the ongoing political crisis.

#### **4. Corruption**

Burma does not as a matter of policy encourage or facilitate the illicit production or distribution of drugs, or the laundering of proceeds from illicit transactions. However, corruption is widespread in Burma, and illicit proceeds from the drug trade fuel both corruption and conflict.

While the civilian government had made significant strides to address official corruption, the regime Anti-Corruption Commission has focused exclusively on targeting its political opponents with corruption charges to delegitimize the opposition National League of Democracy.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States suspended cooperation on counternarcotics on February 1, 2021. Prior to the coup, the United States had partnered with the DED on law enforcement intelligence sharing, joint investigations, training, and material assistance. Burma did not attend the U.S.-supported International Law Enforcement Academy program in Bangkok in 2021. The United States maintains a working relationship with Burma's DED, collaborating with information sharing and operational assistance on counter drug matters.

Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the United States supports HIV testing, counseling, treatment, and care for people who inject drugs. Other U.S. programs support civil society organizations to engage other local stakeholders to promote sustainable responses to the drug use epidemic in conflict-affected areas.

The United States has continued partnerships with the Colombo Plan and UNODC to promote evidence-based drug rehabilitation and treatment services in Burma and with the UNODC to monitor the anticipated increase in the growth of opium poppy as economic decline drives migrant labor back to opium producing areas in northern Burma.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The scale of Burma's drug problems is enormous. Burma is a major source of illicit drugs throughout Southeast Asia, domestic consumption is widespread, and illicit proceeds from the drug trade threaten internal and regional stability. Progress made prior to the coup has been eliminated. Burma must increase its political will to address the causes of drug production and trafficking and dedicate more resources to build capacity to investigate and prosecute traffickers and to interdict drugs and precursor chemicals. The United States remains a close partner to the people of Burma as they look to address counternarcotics issues and will work with local communities and international partners to address such issues.

## Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde is a transit hub for cocaine, cannabis, and other drugs trafficked from Latin America to Europe and Africa. The archipelago's large maritime zone, minimal patrol resources, and many remote areas on its 10 islands make it attractive to traffickers using air and sea. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing numbers of flights and cargo and cruise ships expanded opportunities for drug traffickers.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reports that marijuana, cocaine, hashish, heroin, and methamphetamines are the most frequently used drugs in Cabo Verde. Crack cocaine is a growing concern.

The level of corruption is relatively low. Cabo Verde's government has an integrated policy on drugs and crime with security, justice, and health, but lacks resources for demand reduction and preventing and combating street crime. Recidivism for drug crimes is high. In 2021, authorities arrested an officer of the Judicial Police on suspicion of drug trafficking and corruption; he is awaiting trial. Support from the United States and other donors is helping to improve the capacity of Cabo Verdean law enforcement agencies to interdict illicit drug shipments.

The Cabo Verdean government acknowledges the logistical attractiveness of the archipelago for the illicit trafficking trade. Its recent prosecutions of foreign nationals attempting to smuggle multi-ton shipments of cocaine through Cabo Verde by boat, as well as its willingness to extradite a high-profile foreign national facing money laundering charges in the absence of a bilateral treaty, demonstrate the government's ability and willingness to combat drug trafficking and related crimes. The United States has partnered with Cabo Verde to enhance maritime security and vowed future cooperation in the border and cargo security sectors.

The United States supports Cabo Verde in combating drug trafficking and associated crimes, providing robust and varied training to its law enforcement and armed forces, including on border security and anti-contraband efforts. The Maritime Security Operations Center in Praia and the Rescue Coordination Center in Mindelo provide oversight of Cabo Verde's maritime territory. The United States partners with Cabo Verdean authorities on periodic patrols to interdict suspected drug transshipments and other illicit activities and to provide training and build capacity within the security sector. The United States also plans to deploy an advisor to provide technical assistance.

In 2021, the United States also assisted multiple Cabo Verdean law enforcement agencies with intelligence sharing on drug control efforts and identification of suspects; sharing of targeting information of marine containers suspected of containing illicit drugs and other contraband; and travel data and case coordination regarding criminal gang members deported from the United States to Cabo Verde.

## Cambodia

Cambodia faces a significant and growing problem with illicit drug consumption, trafficking, and production. It is also becoming a significant transshipment country for methamphetamine and heroin, largely due to traffickers shifting transit routes to avoid law enforcement operations along the Thailand/Burma border. The manufacture, trafficking, and use of illicit drugs in Cambodia, particularly of methamphetamine and other amphetamine-type stimulants, has escalated and cuts across socio-economic lines.

Transnational criminal organizations from Asia and Africa target Cambodia as a transit country or destination for illicit drugs. Large quantities of methamphetamine from Burma enter Cambodia for domestic consumption and export to regional markets. Europe-sourced MDMA (ecstasy) is shipped to Cambodia for regional markets and a small domestic market. The retail distribution of these drugs is typically controlled by Africa-based drug syndicates operating in Phnom Penh.

The National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD) reported that methamphetamine was the most commonly seized drug in Cambodia for the last six years, with exponential increases in the seizures of MDMA tablets as well. Cocaine use has decreased significantly in recent years, and the country now appears to play only a minor role as a transit route for cocaine to regional markets. Heroin primarily transits Cambodia on its way to other markets, though some is consumed domestically. Marijuana continues to be widely used across all levels of society.

During the first nine months of 2021, the NACD reported that Cambodian law enforcement had successfully initiated 4,566 drug-related cases resulting in 10,008 arrests (277 foreigners with 11 different nationalities). As a result, Cambodian authorities seized approximately 301 kilograms (kg) of crystal methamphetamine, one kg of methamphetamine tablets, 25 kg of heroin, 276 kg of MDMA, 510 kg of ketamine, 40 kg of cathinone, two kg of nimetazepam, 105 kg of dried cannabis, 46,588 marijuana plants, and 11 kg of chemical substances. There were no reported seizures of cocaine. On June 26, 2021, as part of Cambodia's International Anti-Drug Day, Cambodian Law Enforcement destroyed approximately 8,121 kg of illicit narcotic substances.

The impact of U.S.-provided law enforcement training, coupled with the improved efficiency of the Cambodia Anti-Drugs Department (CADD), has resulted in substantial increases in the number of drug-related investigations, arrests, and seizures. The increases coincided with the war on drugs the Cambodian government announced in January 2017. Prominent civil society groups allege the campaign has led to human rights violations including arbitrary arrests and abuses in detention centers. The NACD and CADD cooperate closely with the United States, regional counterparts such as Australia, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Cambodia does not have a bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty or extradition agreement with the United States, although it has acceded to multilateral conventions that enable such cooperation.

## Canada

In 2021 transnational criminal organizations trafficked cocaine, opium, methamphetamine, other synthetic drugs, and prescription drugs (some of which transited the United States) to Canada for domestic consumption. Canada is a source of synthetic drugs (opioids), cannabis, and MDMA (ecstasy) to the United States. Drug trafficking from Canada into the United States primarily occurs at Ports of Entry along the shared border. There is limited reporting on smuggling across unguarded portions, due to a significant decrease in law enforcement personnel and the circumvention of the official border by transiting tribal lands along the U.S.-Canada border where national law enforcement does not have a presence.

Canada and the United States cooperate on drug control efforts through federal arrangements between state, municipal, and tribal entities and pursuant to the U.S.-Canada Joint Action Plan to Combat Opioids, launched in January 2020. In accordance with the Action Plan, the first-ever U.S.-Canada Postal Security Memorandum of Understanding and Implementation Plan was launched to further address drug trafficking through the mail. Canada also cooperates trilaterally on drug issues with the United States and Mexico through the North American Drug Dialogue.

The Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) provides the government with “temporary accelerated scheduling” powers for substances for up to two years, pending a comprehensive review and decision on permanent scheduling. It criminalizes the illicit manufacturing or distribution of controlled substance analogues. Canada has taken measures to counter manufacturing of, or trafficking in, illicit synthetic opioids; the CDSA requires registration to import designated devices that could be used to manufacture controlled substances, such as tableting and encapsulating machines. In March 2021, Health Canada listed tramadol as a schedule I drug under the CDSA and the Narcotics Control Regulations (NCR) to facilitate detection, prevent diversion, and assist law enforcement efforts against unauthorized activities.

Canada is the world’s second largest consumer of prescription opioids and reported 1,772 deaths between January and March 2021, a 65 percent increase from the same period in 2020. From April 2020 (the approximate beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic) to March 2021, fatal opioid overdoses rose 88 percent compared with the same period in 2019. In 2020, there was a 34 percent increase in opioid-related arrests compared to 2019, most for possession, trafficking, or production offenses. CBSA seized 7.3 kilograms of fentanyl between April 2020 – April 2021.

Canada has legalized the production, distribution, sale, and possession of cannabis for non-medical purposes, but maintains criminal penalties for possession of unlicensed goods, and unauthorized import or export of cannabis remains a criminal offense. This framework has not proven to effectively deter illicit cannabis, as its cultivation and distribution has increased significantly since the Cannabis Act was passed. The Ontario Provincial Police reported illegal cannabis growing is “still good business.” In the first 10 months of 2021, U.S. authorities seized 36.1 metric tons of marijuana on the northern border, a 40 percent increase from 2020.

Canada is a party to United Nations conventions and protocols to address illicit drugs, corruption, and organized crime. In 2021 the United States and Canada used asset-sharing, mutual legal assistance, and extradition and customs treaties to exchange forfeited assets,



conduct extraditions, and cooperate on law enforcement matters. Additional measures Canada could undertake include improving information-sharing with U.S. law enforcement by updating the 1988 Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries, enhancing cooperation on investigations into drug trafficking rings and possible seizures; increasing collaboration with the United States on money laundering investigations to target the illicit proceeds of drug traffickers; strengthening coordination that targets real estate and cryptocurrencies used in criminal transactions; and increasing cyber investigations of dark net vendors of illicit substances.

# China

## A. Introduction

The People's Republic of China's (PRC) geographical location, vast land area, massive population, large chemical industry, and expanding economy have all contributed to its status as a major source of precursor chemicals for fentanyl and other drugs, new psychoactive substances (NPS), and synthetic drugs including methamphetamine. The PRC shares borders with drug source countries in both Southeast and Southwest Asia and is a major destination and transit country for heroin produced in these areas. Domestic PRC criminal organizations traffic illicit drugs within the PRC as well as to international markets, and PRC authorities have noted the presence of international drug trafficking organizations originating from Mexico and Southeast Asia operating in the country. Its numerous coastal cities with high-volume seaports and its vast network of international airports make the PRC an ideal hub for drug and precursor chemical production and trafficking.

Ineffective oversight of the PRC's massive chemical and pharmaceutical industries provides an ideal environment for the illicit production of fentanyl, methamphetamine, and ketamine. Domestic use of synthetic drugs appears to be increasingly prevalent. According to U.S. and international law enforcement sources, the PRC remains a major source of precursor (and pre-precursor) chemicals used to manufacture much of NPS sold in North America and Europe, which are often purchased via the internet and shipped to overseas customers. Chemical alterations of scheduled drugs to circumvent existing anti-drug laws have hampered efforts to stem the flow of these drugs.

The current opioid crisis in the United States underscores the importance of bilateral U.S.-PRC counterdrug and law enforcement cooperation. At the urging of the United States, the PRC implemented class-wide controls of all forms of fentanyl on May 1, 2019. Traffickers have since adapted their strategies, resulting in the shipment of synthetic opioid precursor chemicals from the PRC to Mexico and greater fentanyl production and shipment from Mexico to the United States. Although U.S. authorities have detected or seized almost no shipments of fentanyl or fentanyl analogues coming from the PRC since September 2019, fentanyl-related overdoses and seizures have continued to increase in the United States because of these changes in trafficking strategies.

Mitigating the spread of synthetic opioid precursors to third countries for fentanyl manufacturing and eventual shipment to illicit U.S. markets presents formidable challenges. PRC law enforcement and chemical industry regulators must do more to prevent these shipments. Trafficking by mislabeling cargo to bypass current laws and avoid detection are challenges that will test future cooperation and law enforcement authorities' adaptability to new trafficking techniques. Coordinated efforts by the United States, PRC law enforcement, and third countries in the supply chain remain critical in reducing the trafficking of these precursors.

## **B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends**

### **1. Institutional Development**

PRC drug control strategy focuses on prevention, education, illicit crop eradication, interdiction, rehabilitation, commercial regulation, and law enforcement. The National Narcotics Control Commission (NNCC) is the PRC's national drug control policy entity; the Ministry of Public Security and provincial public security bureaus enforce NNCC policies and drug laws. The Anti-Smuggling Bureau within the General Administration of Customs is responsible for the enforcement of the PRC's drug control laws at seaports, airports, and land border checkpoints. The PRC maintains bilateral drug control agreements with many countries and international organizations, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and participates in a variety of international drug conferences and bilateral meetings. There is no extradition treaty between the PRC and the United States. The PRC and the United States are parties to a bilateral mutual legal assistance agreement that entered into force in 2001. Despite the existence of a mutual legal assistance agreement, many outstanding requests by both the United States and the PRC remained unfulfilled.

### **2. Supply Reduction**

According to the NNCC's 2020 Annual Drug Report (published July 2021), PRC law enforcement investigated 64,000 drug-related cases, including 47,000 trafficking-related investigations, and made 92,000 drug-related arrests in 2020. Investigations significantly decreased from the previous year, while arrests increased slightly. PRC authorities also targeted clandestine labs used to produce NPS and other synthetic drugs, illicit drugs, and precursors; destroyed 167 drug manufacturing plants; and closed 294 illicit drug manufacturing cases.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

According to NNCC, synthetic drugs – primarily methamphetamine – have surpassed heroin and other synthetic opioids as China's primary domestic drug threat. The PRC has scheduled 431 kinds of drugs for control and fentanyl as a class, but NPS remain a problem. In addition to ketamine, NNCC identified methcathinone and the synthetic cannabinoid JWH-018 as commonly abused NPS during the reporting period. According to the NNCC's 2020 Annual Drug Report, the total number of registered illegal drug users in the PRC is 1.8 million, a year-on-year 16 percent decrease, but media reports the actual number of drug abusers is estimated to be at least 14 million. Of the reported registered drug users, approximately one million used methamphetamine (57.2 percent), a year-on-year 15 percent decrease, and 734,000 (40.8 percent) reportedly used opioids.

### **4. Corruption**

The PRC Government does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. The Ministry of Public Security takes allegations of drug-related corruption seriously and launches investigations when deemed appropriate. Despite efforts to stem drug-related

corruption, financial corruption among provincial, prefectural, county, and district government officials continues to be a concern. Based on publicly available information, no senior PRC official at the central government level is known to have facilitated the illicit production or distribution of drugs in 2021. Similarly, no senior PRC official from the central or provincial governments is known to have laundered proceeds from drug-related activities.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States and the PRC continue to engage on counterdrug efforts at the working level. During 2021, however, COVID-19 related restrictions on travel and in-person meetings effectively prevented formal discussions from taking place. In the past, the two countries have worked through the Bilateral Drug Intelligence Working Group (BDIWG), the Counter Narcotics Working Group (CNWG), and a working group of chemists and experts to exchange views and information on trends in drug abuse and trafficking; discuss pertinent laws, regulations, policies and procedures in the respective countries; seek progress and address challenges in precursor chemical control; and find mechanisms to cooperate on investigations and cases of mutual interest.

### **D. Conclusion**

The potential for continued meaningful drug control cooperation between the United States and the PRC exists, despite the challenges. Drug trafficking, production, diversion, and other drug-related crimes remain significant problems in China. The PRC should strengthen enforcement of chemical control laws and take other measures to prevent the diversion of drug precursors to illicit drug manufacturers and shipment of NPS directly to other countries. PRC law enforcement should enact further measures to assist U.S. law enforcement in tackling these new trafficking challenges.

# Colombia

## A. Introduction

Colombia is the world's top cocaine producer and exporter and a source of heroin and marijuana. According to the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy, Colombian coca cultivation rose to 245,000 hectares (ha) in 2020 (the most recent period for which figures are available), compared to 212,000 ha in 2019. While cultivation since 2017 has not increased as rapidly as the explosive growth in the period 2012-2017, the current estimate of 245,000 ha nevertheless exceeds the all-time record levels. The U.S. government estimates Colombia's potential pure cocaine production increased from 918 metric tons (MT) in 2019 to 1,010 MT in 2020 (the most recent period for which figures are available).

The U.S. and Colombian governments have expanded counternarcotics cooperation and have committed to implementing a whole-of-government approach focused on integrated supply reduction, rural security and development, and environmental protection. In September 2021, the United States and Colombia met for the second high-level Counternarcotics Working Group and committed to a holistic approach to dismantle criminal groups, improve economic opportunities in rural areas, reduce coca cultivation, and increase police presence in rural areas. In October 2021, the two governments met for the ninth annual High-Level Dialogue, where they further committed to concrete actions to advance this new approach.

Under President Duque, Colombia has increased efforts against the illicit drug trade. Colombia reported seizing or assisting with the seizure of 579.8 MT of cocaine and cocaine base during 2020 and nearly 758 MT during 2021. In December 2020, President Duque announced the Colombian government met its target of eradicating 130,000 ha in 2020. At least 95 percent of the cocaine samples seized in the United States in 2020 and subjected to laboratory analysis were of Colombian origin.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Colombian government recognizes the illicit drug trade and organized criminal groups are principal threats to peace and security in Colombia, but struggles with persistent security, governance, and economic challenges in rural regions.

The Colombian government suspended aerial eradication of coca in 2015, removing a critical tool for reducing coca cultivation. A 2017 Colombian Constitutional Court decision set stringent conditions for restarting aerial eradication operations. President Duque has stated publicly his intent to incorporate aerial eradication into a holistic and integrated drug control strategy but has not yet announced a date for the resumption of the program.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

The United States estimates coca cultivation in Colombia rose to 245,000 ha in 2020, compared to 212,000 ha in 2019. The Colombian justice ministry reports that police, military, and civilian contractors manually eradicated 103,257 ha of coca nationwide in 2021. A Colombian appellate court ruled on May 12 that the Colombian police and military may not eradicate within Afro-Colombian communities in Nariño province unless it completes a prior consultation process perceived as so arduous and legally ambiguous that the decision effectively provides impunity for 80 percent of Nariño's 38,000 ha of coca.

Along with coca eradication, the Colombian government's drug control priorities include interdicting cocaine and precursor chemicals, dismantling criminal groups, and extraditing top drug traffickers to the United States. Colombian authorities reported that Colombian forces and international partners seized nearly 758 MT of cocaine and cocaine base in Colombia and abroad in 2021.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

According to the Organization of American States 2019 Report on Drug Use in the Americas, Colombia has the fifth highest consumption rate of cocaine and the sixth highest consumption rate of marijuana in Latin America.

Colombia focuses treatment on youth with substance use disorders. The Colombian National Police prevention unit teaches drug prevention to school children nationwide. Colombia expanded its juvenile drug treatment court first piloted in Medellin to seven other cities. Colombia is also expanding restorative justice programs and is training drug prevention and treatment professionals in the U.S.-developed Universal Treatment and Prevention Curricula.

## **4. Corruption**

Colombia does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, corruption remains a pervasive problem. By the second half of 2021, the Colombian Attorney General's Office prioritized 52,000 corruption cases, including 7,938 cases in which charges were filed, 1,889 cases in which courts ordered pretrial detentions or other precautionary measures, and 1,300 cases in which convictions were obtained. Colombia struggles to secure convictions for corruption crimes and does not regularly publish these figures.

The Attorney General's Office has prosecuted six of the 32 governors elected in October 2019 on corruption charges. On September 24, three former Colombian government contractors were held in pretrial detention for allegedly misappropriating over \$18 million in public funds related to a Ministry of Technologies and Communication (MinTIC) contract to provide internet services in rural schools. Other government officials are under investigation, and the MinTIC minister resigned following the scandal.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

In September 2021, the U.S. and Colombian governments agreed to implement a bilateral whole-of-government counternarcotics strategy. The United States provides counterdrug assistance to the Colombian police and military, the justice ministry, the offices of the attorney general and inspector general, and the judiciary. Bilateral cooperation on extraditions, drug, and money laundering investigations have resulted in hundreds of U.S. indictments and the extradition of high-level drug traffickers. Notably, such cooperation in 2021 led to the capture of Clan del Golfo's leader Dairo "Otoniel" Usuga David. Additionally, the 2016 Asset Sharing Agreement between the United States and Colombia permits the sharing of the proceeds of assets that are seized by or forfeited to U.S. or Colombian law enforcement. To date, the United States has shared proceeds with Colombia on four occasions pursuant to the agreement.

The United States works to strengthen Colombian institutions located in rural, conflict-affected areas. The focus includes reducing drug trafficking and supply; increasing citizen security; bolstering economically sustainable legal livelihoods and markets; expanding the permanent presence of and confidence in the police and other government institutions; environmental protection, including efforts to monitor and counter environmental crimes that sustain and fuel narco-trafficking groups and have a profoundly negative impact on Colombia's environment; promoting the rule of law; dismantling organized crime networks; and protecting human rights.

Through the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security Cooperation, Colombia's police and military build law enforcement capabilities and connections by training regional counterparts in countering transnational organized crime and drug trafficking. Colombia is a regional leader in coordinating the multinational interdiction operation "Campaign Orion" which, with U.S. support, targets illicit drug flow in the land, air, maritime, and riverine regions. Since 2018, these operations have seized a combined total of nearly 546 MT of cocaine, demonstrating Colombia's role as an international leader in counternarcotics.

### **D. Conclusion**

Reducing coca cultivation and cocaine production and targeting organized crime in Colombia are top priorities for both the United States and Colombia, and the Colombian police and military have prevented hundreds of metric tons of drugs from reaching the United States annually at great financial and human cost to Colombian forces and eradicators. Increased efforts under the Duque administration have resulted in measurable progress, particularly in seizures; however, the COVID-19 pandemic and national protests that began in November 2019 and continued through 2021 limited the government's ability to conduct eradication operations. To prevent additional surges in coca cultivation, Colombia will need to expand eradication and continue to expand cocaine and precursor interdiction operations and extraditions of top criminal leaders. Over the long term, with U.S. assistance, Colombia will need to expand state presence to reduce criminal activity and drug trafficking. Colombian crop substitution and rural development programs also require strong commitment and funding to sustain reductions in coca cultivation.

# Costa Rica

## A. Introduction

Costa Rica is a top transit country for drugs entering the United States, with narcotics trafficking increasing during the global COVID-19 pandemic and related corruption concerns posing a serious challenge. Costa Rica's strategic location, vast maritime territory, and the small size of its security forces combine to make it an attractive transit, warehousing, and logistics hub for illicit drug trafficking.

Costa Rica has a growing domestic drug consumption problem, as drugs warehoused in Costa Rica are making their way to the local market and criminal organizations use cocaine as payment in kind for services. Despite significant challenges, Costa Rica is working closely with the United States to enhance police professionalization, improve community security programs, and increase success in drug interdiction and disruption of drug trafficking. However, the pandemic and related budget cuts pose significant challenges to future success, as personnel cuts and resource limitations strain Costa Rican law enforcement services.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Costa Rican government engaged in numerous police professionalization efforts in 2021, including leadership training, improvements to training facilities, canine programs, a new standardized municipal police training program, accreditation of courses by local education authorities, and better cooperation between national agencies and local governments.

Costa Rica's Coast Guard is a successful regional partner for maritime interdiction, including sustained joint operations with the United States. However, ongoing professional development is required to ensure that it advances in maintenance, repair, and sustainable operation of their fleet.

In September 2021, the Judicial Branch took a major step forward in its anticorruption efforts through the launch of Costa Rica's first Judicial Observatory, a web platform designed to provide a wide array of public information and monitoring on cases related to corruption. As of the end of September, 88 cases had been uploaded into the system.

Costa Rica strengthened cooperation among government agencies and law enforcement at a United States-supported remote image processing center, the centerpiece of a scanning analysis operation that monitors high-risk cargo exiting the country. The center helped Costa Rica more than triple seizures from containerized cargo in 2020. Major seizures continued in 2021. Thanks to law enforcement coordination, Costa Rica seized a container with 4.3 metric tons (MT) of cocaine in June 2021, one of the country's largest-ever seizures. During the period January - November, 2021, Costa Rica seized 16.1 MT of narcotics from containerized cargo.

From January through November 2021, the U.S.-supported UH-1ST helicopter training program produced four fully trained Costa Rican flight crews. The helicopters supported 45 missions



ranging from marijuana eradication to emergency rescue, transporting 417 passengers and 6,853 kilograms of cargo. Costa Rica's Air Surveillance Agency nationalized its Raven B Unmanned Aircraft Systems and began operating other platforms, increasing its ability to conduct law enforcement operations in remote regions of the country.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

During the period January - December 21, 2021, Costa Rica seized 70.6 MT of narcotics, the majority of which was cocaine – similar to the 71.2 MT of narcotics seized in all of calendar year 2020 and significantly exceeding seizure totals from previous years. Costa Rica seized 11.9 MT of cocaine in containerized cargo, assisted by U.S.-supported scanning operations. The Costa Rican government, working closely with the United States and regional partners, also reports having disrupted 20 international drug trafficking rings in this period.

Costa Rican authorities destroyed over 408,541 cannabis plants during the January - August 2021 time frame. This number of seizures surpasses by over four MT the cannabis seized during the same period in 2020.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The Institute on Alcohol and Drug Abuse offers treatment and prevention programs, though considerable gaps remain. Drug-related crimes remain serious offenses in Costa Rica, even if laws against personal consumption are rarely enforced. The Costa Rican Drug Institute oversees drug prevention programs.

## **4. Corruption**

The Costa Rican government does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in money laundering. However, the growing presence of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) is an ongoing concern. Additionally, in 2021, there were several reports of municipal-level corruption and cases of alleged high-level corruption in the National Assembly.

The government is working to address corruption. U.S.-trained Judicial Investigative Police officials were instrumental in arresting government officials allegedly involved with TCOs in a high-level public transportation corruption case in summer 2021. The government of Costa Rica, as a recent signatory to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Anti-Bribery Convention, has committed itself to new anti-money laundering protocols, and since 2019 has implemented new laws on bribery and corruption.

The judiciary is in the final months of a three-year effort to strengthen ethics controls in its investigative, prosecutorial, and court systems. In September 2021, Costa Rica launched a Judicial Observatory to increase transparency in all judicial processes, complementing a new anti-corruption code and national corruption awareness campaign.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States supports capacity building for Costa Rica's security and judicial institutions through the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). CARSI supports the United States' Strategy to Address the Root Causes of Migration in Central America by tackling the underlying security and governance factors driving such migration. CARSI funding is aimed at fighting illicit drug production and trafficking and combatting corruption and transnational criminal organizations, which are among the key such drivers, complementing other U.S. efforts such as those focused on assisting vulnerable populations displaced by drug trafficking, violence, and crime.

Costa Rica shares the U.S. priorities of disrupting the flow of illicit drugs and dismantling organized crime. The United States supports Costa Rican efforts to investigate and prosecute crimes more effectively, to make its borders more secure, and to increase the safety of its citizens, consistent with CARSI.

The United States supports police professionalization through a range of leadership and specialized training. President Carlos Alvarado has made the U.S.-supported "Let's Grow Security" ("Sembremos Seguridad") citizen security program the core of his security strategy. As part of its efforts to institutionalize this program, Costa Rica is implementing a problem-oriented policing methodology, using trends and data to better focus law enforcement efforts, encouraging inter-institutional collaboration, and addressing the root causes of criminality.

Through November 2021, the United States assisted in transporting 67.2 MT of cocaine seized by Costa Rican authorities to the United States for destruction. The United States is supporting an effort to provide an organic incinerator capability. In the justice sector, the United States provides support on a broad range of topics, including trafficking in persons, money laundering, improved procedures for prosecutors, and the creation of a judicial compliance office.

Costa Rica established a second Maritime Interdiction Unit in 2020, which carried out several major maritime seizures in 2021.

### **D. Conclusion**

Costa Rica demonstrated a strong commitment in 2021 to countering drug trafficking and transnational criminal organizations, despite major challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and related budget cuts.

Top priorities should include: 1) professionalizing police and judicial institutions, with an emphasis on anti-corruption; 2) efforts to maintain and sustainably operate capital assets, to include much-needed staffing increases in police forces; 3) investment in border security, to include Border and Customs Police; 4) strengthening Costa Rica's cooperation with regional partners; 5) efforts to expand citizen security best practices within Costa Rica and throughout the region.

## Cuba

Cuba is not a major consumer, producer, or transit point of illicit drugs. Cuba's domestic production and consumption remain low due to active policing, strict sentencing, and nationwide prevention and public information programs. Cuba's intensive security presence and interdiction efforts have kept supplies of illicit drugs down and prevented traffickers from establishing a foothold. Cuba concentrates supply reduction efforts on preventing smuggling through its territorial waters, collecting abandoned drugs found washed up on coastal shores, and conducting thorough airport searches. Cuba dedicates significant resources to prevent illicit drugs and drug use from entering or spreading within the country, and regional traffickers typically avoid Cuba.

While Cuba participates with the US and other nations in maritime narcotics interdiction efforts, most maritime seizures include drugs found washed ashore on Cuba's coast after being jettisoned by traffickers being pursued by law enforcement. With respect to international cooperation, the Cuban government reports 43 bilateral agreements for counterdrug cooperation, including the U.S.-Cuba Operational Cooperation Arrangement to Counter Illicit Traffic in Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances (signed in July 2016). The United States maintains a liaison to coordinate with Cuban law enforcement, particularly the Cuban Border Guards. The United States and Cuba exchange limited drug control information at the working level.

Prescription drug use disorder is increasing in Cuba, though it remains low compared to other countries. Despite severe pharmaceutical shortages in Cuba, steroids, psychoactive drugs, sedatives, and painkillers are available in the black market through diversion from the legitimate supply chain (including drugs intended for veterinary use) and illicit importation.

# Dominican Republic

## A. Introduction

The Dominican Republic is a transit country for most of the cocaine flowing from South America through the Caribbean. Maritime routes involving the use of “go-fast” boats and commercial containers are the primary method of transportation. The Dominican government continued its cooperation with the U.S. government in 2021 to interdict illicit drug shipments, extradite criminals, and combat the influence of drug traffickers and transnational criminal organizations. Despite this cooperation, corruption continues to hamper these efforts. While illicit drugs remain available locally, most drugs are transshipped for onward movement to the United States and Europe. The Dominican Republic does not have a significant capability to produce precursor chemicals.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The United States maintains a strong relationship with key Dominican government law enforcement institutions. The primary partners are the National Directorate for the Control of Drugs (DNCD); the Dominican National Police (DNP); the National Council on Drugs (CND); the Office of the Attorney General; the National Intelligence Directorate (DNI); and the Armed Forces. The Dominican Specialized Corps for Port Security (CESEP), and Specialized Corps for Airport Security, working with U.S. authorities, international organizations, and private port operators, continued to improve security at key aerial and sea points of entry. The participation of the Dominican government in the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), Cooperative Situational Information Integration system, and the Central America Integration System (SICA) enhanced relations with the U.S. and regional Caribbean partners.

The Dominican Republic is a party to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

### 2. Supply Reduction

Most seizures result from operations targeting vessels from South America. Dominican forces reported seizing 14.36 metric tons (MT) of cocaine during the first nine months of 2021 in Dominican territory. This represents an estimated street value of \$430,730,250.00. Despite the operational challenges experienced during the pandemic, seizures were 116 percent higher than for the same period in 2020.

Dominican security forces cooperate with the U.S. and international partners in planning and conducting interdiction operations. The Dominican Port of Caucedo is certified under the U.S. Container Security Initiative (CSI), but the other 15 ports are not. The United States funds the operation of the Container Control Programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for two Port Control Units (PCU) in Rio Haina and Caucedo; additional PCUs are expected to become operational in 2022. These units are responsible for profiling and targeting suspect containers and include members from the DNCD, CESEP, and Customs.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Local drug use is concentrated in tourist centers and major metropolitan areas, although drug use and associated violence occurs throughout the country. The Dominican government conducts outreach efforts to inform the general population and youth about the dangers of drugs. The CND conducted demand reduction efforts in 2021 under its strategic national prevention plan. The DNP promoted community-based policing as an effective way to deal with crime locally and the publication of its Community Policing manual has served as a catalyst to implement community policing throughout the largest cities in the country.

### **4. Corruption**

The Dominican government does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. Recognizing the negative impact corruption has on law enforcement, the Abinader administration has demonstrated a willingness to prioritize efforts to combat illicit activities among judicial, military, and law enforcement entities. Recent high-profile operations to dismantle major transnational criminal organizations reflect a commitment to combat corruption across all political parties.

During the first 10 months of 2021 several high-level arrests made by the independent prosecutor general's office, including a former member of the Dominican Congress and investigations into the activities of former government officials and their associates. Further investigations into the illicit activities of standing members of the Dominican Congress could lead to civil and/or disciplinary proceedings and asset forfeitures.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U. S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States supports a wide range of efforts designed to address crime and violence affecting Dominican citizens, primarily through CBSI, a security partnership between the United States and Caribbean nations that seeks to reduce illicit trafficking and increase public safety and security. U.S. assistance improves Dominican capabilities to conduct investigations, undertake effective prosecution, and coordinate and participate in drug control efforts with the United States and neighboring countries.

The United States provided equipment and training in 2021 to increase the capabilities of Dominican law enforcement entities, including the DNCD canine unit and other specialized units, to enhance communications and coordination and strengthen maritime capabilities through training in maritime law enforcement, boarding inspections, search and rescue, port security, and professional development for the Dominican Navy.

The United States also provides tactical training, equipment, and other assistance to law enforcement and military institutions to strengthen interdiction capabilities. This includes training and technical assistance to the DNP to strengthen police skills, improve management, enhance operational capabilities, and modernize the institution. During 2021, multiple U.S.-funded sources – including the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security Cooperation,

the International Law Enforcement Academy in San Salvador, UNODC, and private institutions - conducted over 40 activities, both virtually and in person, and trained more than 590 Dominican law enforcement and military officials.

U.S. assistance also strengthens justice sector capacity to prosecute complex money laundering, fraud, public corruption, and illicit drug trafficking cases, and to establish internal controls to prevent corruption. The United States works with courts, prosecutors, public defenders, and other justice sector actors to build the capacity of the national police and prosecutors to develop stronger cases and successful prosecutions. U.S. assistance strengthens Dominican civil society coalitions for citizen security and criminal justice reform, supports access to justice for vulnerable populations, and helps at-risk youth build individual and community resilience to criminality through prevention programs that provide social, economic, and educational opportunities.

The U.S.-Dominican Republic extradition treaty was entered into force in December 2016, updating a 1909 treaty. The United States and the Dominican Republic have shared approximately \$4 million in assets under the 2012 Permanent Forfeited Asset-Sharing Agreement. The Dominican Republic is one of the United States' most active extradition partners. Due to the lack of a formal bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty, requests for legal assistance take place through informal channels and formal means under other multilateral treaties. The Dominican Republic processes U.S. requests for legal and judicial assistance expeditiously.

The Dominican Republic has had an agreement on international narcotics control cooperation with the United States since 1985. The Dominican Republic signed and ratified the Caribbean Regional Maritime Agreement (also known as the Treaty of San Jose) and has a maritime counter-drug agreement with the United States that entered into force in 1995.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Combating pervasive corruption, restoring public confidence in law enforcement, addressing illicit maritime drug smuggling, and confronting rising levels of drug-fueled violence are major challenges facing the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Republic's interdiction efforts demonstrate institutional capacity and political will to help stem the flow of drugs into the country. The Abinader administration has demonstrated a strong commitment to strengthen efforts to build a coherent, multifaceted drug control program featuring both increased cooperation between national security forces and greater regional cooperation.

## Dutch Caribbean

### A. Introduction

The Dutch Caribbean consists of Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba. Aruba, Curaçao, and Sint Maarten are semi-autonomous countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba are special municipalities of the country of the Netherlands. Aruba and Curaçao are located 30 to 40 miles north of Venezuela and serve as northbound transshipment points for cocaine originating from Colombia and Venezuela. Cocaine is primarily transported via go-fast vessels, fishing boats and inter-coastal freighters for transshipment to the United States, other Caribbean islands, Africa, and Europe. Sint Maarten is in the Eastern Caribbean and is a transshipment hub for cocaine, heroin, and marijuana transiting onward to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as well as Europe.

### B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

#### 1. Institutional Development

Aruba, Curaçao, and Sint Maarten have a high degree of autonomy over their internal affairs, with the right to exercise independent decision-making in several counternarcotics areas. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is responsible for the islands' defense and foreign affairs and assists the governments in their efforts to combat narcotics trafficking through its support for the RST (Recherche Samenwerkings Team or "Special Police Task Force") and the Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard.

Since 2016, the United States, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Aruba, Sint Maarten, and Curaçao have been party to a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at enhancing existing cooperation and strengthening law enforcement and the criminal justice system in the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. While its purpose is broad based, the Memorandum makes the fight against drug trafficking more effective. These efforts are ongoing.

#### Aruba

Aruba's police force, the Korps Politie Aruba (KPA), is a regional leader in the fight against narcotics trafficking and international criminal organizations. The KPA is at the forefront of collecting and sharing intelligence with regional law enforcement partners. The primary method of transporting cocaine to Aruba is via go-fast vessels, cargo containers and commercial flights. KPA conducted several successful investigations in 2021, including, in part, a seizure of over 300 kilograms (kg) of cocaine, a seizure of nearly four kg of heroin, and a marijuana seizure of over 280 kg. Despite resource challenges, the KPA continues to investigate trafficking organizations effectively.

#### Curaçao

Curaçao's police force, the Korps Politie Curaçao (KPC), works closely with the United States to diminish the flow of illegal narcotics from Venezuela and Colombia to the Dutch

Caribbean. In April 2021, KPC reported seizing 147 kg of cocaine and 49 kg of marijuana intended for distribution in Curaçao and potentially onward shipment to Europe. KPC continues to investigate drug trafficking organizations effectively, but institutional weaknesses remain.

### Sint Maarten

Sint Maarten/Saint Martin is a major transshipment point for cocaine in the Caribbean to the United States, partially due to its proximity to the U.S. Virgin Islands (approximately 100 nautical miles away) and Puerto Rico (approximately 200 nautical miles away), as well as to Europe. This small two-nation island (Sint Maarten/Dutch side – population of approximately 44,000 and Saint Martin/French side – population of approximately 37,000) is a challenging place for law enforcement to combat drug trafficking. Sint Maarten has not had a visa requirement for Colombian and Venezuelan nationals since 2015. Colombian and Venezuelan drug trafficking organizations operating in Sint Maarten/Saint Martin mostly employ Dominican boat captains to transport large cocaine shipments via go-fast vessels to the United States. U.S. reporting shows multi-ton quantities of cocaine smuggled monthly into Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands via go-fast vessels from Sint Maarten/Saint Martin. In 2021 the United States and the Korps Politie St. Maarten (KPSM) coordinated and conducted an operation to arrest a high level narcotics trafficking fugitive. The subject was located, arrested without incident, and is currently awaiting extradition to the United States.

Lastly, the Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard, Royal Military Police (Koninklijke Marechaussee), RST, Dutch Navy, Central Office for the Suppression of Illicit Drug Trafficking, and French Customs in Saint Martin work effectively to target maritime vessels trafficking large quantities of cocaine from Sint Maarten/Saint Martin to the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

### Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, Saba

The National Office for the Caribbean in the Netherlands Ministry of Interior Affairs and Kingdom Relations assumes the responsibilities of law enforcement, security, and other administrative functions on behalf of the Government of the Netherlands for Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba.

None of these islands have particularly high levels of detected narcotics trafficking. However, Bonaire is at times suspected of being a staging location for pilots and smaller private planes planning to take illicit flights to South and Central America. The pilots and planes are then suspected of transporting narcotics north throughout the Caribbean and the United States.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

Increased intelligence sharing and cooperation between Dutch Caribbean law enforcement organizations and the United States offers opportunities to improve counternarcotics efforts. In addition, the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding targets enhanced police enforcement and organization for airport security and harbor/cruise terminal security with the goal of reducing drug trafficking. U.S. data shows that in 2021 the Dutch Caribbean with U.S. law enforcement support seized nearly six metric tons of cocaine.



### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Drug treatment and prevention is accomplished through a combination of privately and publicly funded foundations on each of the islands. Sint Maarten has one drug treatment foundation which suffered severe damage from Hurricane Irma in 2017 and has yet to fully recover.

### **4. Corruption**

None of the Dutch Caribbean countries, as a matter of government policy, encourages or facilitates illegal activity associated with drug trafficking; however, in October 2018 approximately 500 kg of seized cocaine was stolen from the KPC's evidence vault in Curaçao. This investigation continued for the first nine months of 2021, though the crime remains unsolved.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The objectives of U.S. counternarcotics policy in the Dutch Caribbean are to promote cooperation between law enforcement and military partners, and to reduce illicit drug trafficking. The United States works with its island counterparts to advance joint investigations, both within the Dutch Caribbean and the United States.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands supports counternarcotics efforts by supporting the U.S. Air Force Forward Operating Locations (FOL) in Curaçao. U.S. military aircraft conduct detection and monitoring flights from the FOL in Curaçao over the southern Caribbean Sea. In addition, the Dutch Navy regularly conducts counternarcotics operations in the region as the lead for Task Group 4.4 under the auspices of Joint Interagency Task Force South.

### **D. Conclusion**

Over ten years after the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles, Curaçao, Aruba, and Sint Maarten are still establishing counternarcotics organizational structures among their agencies. The COVID-19 pandemic did not lessen drug trafficking in the region. However, the pandemic and the changing regulations that come with combatting the virus did at times have unforeseen adverse effects for counternarcotics efforts. The United States continues to encourage the Dutch Caribbean islands to embrace regional cooperation and intelligence sharing efforts.

## Eastern Caribbean

### A. Introduction

The Eastern Caribbean refers to the region's seven independent countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The region is a transshipment route for cocaine and marijuana to North America, Europe, and the wider Caribbean basin. Drug production consists of marijuana cultivation, in most cases for local consumption, with varying amounts produced in each of the seven countries. Several countries continue to report increases in seizures of high-grade marijuana originating from the United States, Canada, and South America. There is small-scale, local demand for cocaine and negligible use of synthetic drugs.

Challenges to properly addressing the illegal drug trade include the jurisdictional complexity of the Eastern Caribbean, with numerous maritime borders due to countries' proximity to one another and South America. Additionally, countries do not have sufficient maritime patrol and domain awareness resources to effectively cover their national waters. Traffickers use a variety of vessels to transport illicit drugs, but "go-fast" and fishing boats are the most popular, enabling traffickers to evade capture by accessing multiple territorial waters and using an "island hopping" strategy to move drugs through the region.

### B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

#### 1. Institutional Development

All Eastern Caribbean countries continue to have a solid working relationship with the United States on counternarcotics operations.

Since mid-2021, Antigua and Barbuda has issued nine Provisional Medicinal Cannabis Licenses to companies to grow marijuana. The government noted an increase in cannabis interdiction from the United States and Canada at its ports of entry. Other Eastern Caribbean countries indicated that traffickers importing cannabis into the region increasingly use commercial carriers and express mail delivery services.

In 2021, Barbados amended its Drug Abuse and Prevention Act to decriminalize possession of 14 grams or less of cannabis, instead levying a fine of \$100. In 2020, Dominica decriminalized the possession of up to 28 grams of marijuana for personal religious use. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines allows cultivation of medical marijuana under the Medical Cannabis Industry Act of 2018, and a 2019 Drugs Act amendment allows individuals to possess up to 56 grams of cannabis without being subject to arrest. Saint Kitts and Nevis similarly amended its laws to allow for 56 grams of cannabis for personal use.

All Eastern Caribbean countries have signed or ratified the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism. Antigua and Barbuda and Saint Lucia ratified the Inter-American Convention on Extradition. Antigua and Barbuda,

Dominica, and Grenada signed and/or ratified the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

During the first nine months of 2021, drug seizures in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines totaled 125.47 kilograms of cocaine and 5.5 metric tons of marijuana, according to data received from each country. Most of the cocaine, and 85 percent of the marijuana, was seized in Barbados and Grenada. Antigua and Barbuda also reported the seizure of 192 tablets of ecstasy. During the same period, Antigua and Barbuda reported 67 drug-related arrests with 51 prosecutions and 51 convictions. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines reported 55 drug-related arrests, 45 prosecutions, and 45 convictions. Barbados reported 63 drug-related arrests, 11 ongoing prosecutions, and 21 convictions. Grenada reported 137 drug-related arrests, 137 mostly ongoing prosecutions, and nine convictions. Saint Kitts and Nevis reported 58 drug-related arrests during the period. No data for the other two countries was available at the time of this report.

The United States provided assistance to all of the Eastern Caribbean countries in 2021 in the form of training and equipment, which has allowed U.S. law enforcement agencies to build better operational relationships with regional counterparts. Support to Antigua and Barbuda complied with Brooke Amendment sanctions (prohibiting new assistance to countries that fall more than a year past due in servicing their debt obligations to the United States) and support to St. Lucia complied with relevant Leahy provisions (requiring vetting of security forces for human rights violations).

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

While reliable statistics on local consumption are not available, evidence suggests that the most-used drug by far is marijuana. All Eastern Caribbean countries have some form of drug demand reduction programs. For example, Barbados, Grenada, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines implement the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program for youth in their countries.

Barbados also has programs through the National Council on Substance Abuse, the Centre for Counseling Addiction Support Alternatives, and Alcoholics Anonymous. The National Council on Substance Abuse monitors the programs through qualitative assessments, surveys, and pre- and post-testing. The Community Relations Department of the Royal Grenada Police Force has school programs to highlight substance use disorder. Grenada's National Council on Drug Control has organized programs and produced publications to support demand reduction.

Saint Kitts and Nevis has four formal programs, including the Teen and Police Service (TAPS) program, which addresses at-risk or troubled teens. In addition, Operation Future brings children and parents together to learn about the perils of drug use. Saint Lucia's Substance Abuse Advisory Council develops policies and programs tailored to individuals, communities, and the entire country. Additionally, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has numerous prevention programs, including a Coast Guard summer program highly sought after by teens, a local cadet force with growing membership, and police youth clubs. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has a

Monday night radio program that reaches a large audience with anti-drug messaging, and police are facilitating the establishment of neighborhood-watch programs.

Some countries have drug rehabilitation clinics. The Crossroads Rehabilitation Center and its affiliate halfway house, Bevon House, are in Antigua and Barbuda. Barbados has five drug rehabilitation clinics, including one that was opened in 2020. Saint Lucia has the National Mental Wellness Centre. For over 30 years, The Marion House has offered drug counseling in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

#### **4. Corruption**

As a matter of policy, all Eastern Caribbean governments do not encourage or facilitate illegal activity associated with drug trafficking. No senior government officials or military officers were arrested in the first nine months of 2021 for narcotics-related offenses.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

U.S. assistance to the Eastern Caribbean is delivered mainly via the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), a security partnership between the United States and Caribbean nations that seeks to reduce drug trafficking, advance public safety and citizen security, and promote justice. The United States has agreements with the Regional Security System (RSS) under the CBSI in addition to bilateral agreements on law enforcement cooperation with each country. The main counternarcotics goals of the agreement include supporting operations of the RSS Air Wing and the Digital Forensic Lab and collaborating on training for all member states. The United States has an additional agreement with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) to promote regional integration and build IMPACS' capacity to provide additional training to CARICOM member states via CBSI-Connect, an online learning management system.

All Eastern Caribbean countries have extradition and mutual legal assistance treaties in force with the United States.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The United States enjoys a strong counternarcotics operational relationship with Eastern Caribbean countries. The United States continues to strongly recommend that all member countries meet their financial commitments to the RSS and that the Eastern Caribbean countries develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for communication and coordination between countries, as well as regional exercises using realistic counternarcotics interdiction scenarios to practice SOP implementation. Countries in the region should continue to train and professionalize counternarcotics officers, including developing a career path for such officers.

# Ecuador

## A. Introduction

Situated between the world's two largest cocaine producing countries, Colombia and Peru, Ecuador is a major transit country for illicit drugs. Ecuador is not a major drug producing country, though authorities have discovered some clandestine cocaine processing facilities in the jungle along the Colombian border. Porous land borders and a largely unprotected coastline enable transnational criminal organizations to traffic cocaine from Colombia and Peru for distribution to the United States and Europe. Ecuador is also a major transit country for chemical precursors to process illicit drugs. Ecuador's government is committed to efforts to address drug trafficking, and authorities seized a record quantity of narcotics in 2021. While the government has increasingly turned to the United States as its security partner of choice, the police, military, and justice sector lack sufficient resources to effectively confront transnational crime.

Since his inauguration in May 2021, President Guillermo Lasso has committed to reducing both drug supply and demand and to combating transnational criminal organizations. Domestic drug consumption is rising, and treatment facilities are insufficient to fully address increasing substance abuse. Colombian and Mexican cartels run drug trafficking and other illicit activities in Ecuador, while drug-related gang wars contributed to record levels of prison violence in 2021.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Ecuador's Ministry of Health has the oversight of drug prevention and treatment programs. The Ministry of Government is responsible for efforts against the production, trafficking, sale, and use of illicit drugs, for regulating the use of controlled substances, and for destroying seized substances. In the first 10 months of 2021, the government reported destroying 56.48 metric tons (MT) of seized narcotics.

During 2021 the United States conducted maritime patrol flights in coordination with Ecuador to monitor and interdict maritime drug trafficking. U.S. and Ecuadorian maritime authorities also conducted operations involving the boarding of vessels claiming Ecuadorian nationality and stateless vessels in international waters. The United States continues to support several units within the police.

### 2. Supply Reduction

In September 2021, Ecuador broke its record on annual drug seizures, and seizures reached 139 MT as of mid-October. Cocaine seizures totaled 117.54 MT during the first 10 months of 2021, a 60 percent increase from 2020 and the highest ever total in Ecuador. The volume of heroin seized during the first ten months in 2021 totaled 263.98 kilograms (kg), a decrease of 415.9 kg from the same period in 2020. Seizures of marijuana totaled 21.8 MT during the first 10 months of 2021, down from 24.05 MT during the same period in 2020. The police seized 22,130.82

liters of liquid controlled precursor chemicals and 31.77 MT of solid controlled precursor chemicals during the first ten months of 2021, compared with 17,934.58 liters of liquid controlled precursor chemicals and 57.55 MT of solid controlled precursor chemicals in the first ten months of 2020. On August 13, the U.S.-supported Ecuadorian National Police seized 9.4 MT of cocaine in Guayaquil, one of the country's largest ever seizures. As of October 14, the police had arrested 10,478 individuals for trafficking-related crimes, compared to 9,720 during the same period in 2020, a 7.8 percent increase.

Maritime seizures of all illicit drugs totaled 5.14 MT during the first 10 months of 2021, nearly double the 2.67 MT seized at sea during the same period in 2020. The police detected five drug trafficking aircraft and located four clandestine airstrips in Galapagos, Guayas, Esmeraldas, and Santa Elena provinces.

Guayaquil is a major transshipment hub for cocaine concealed in cargo shipped to Europe and around the world. Authorities inspected 22 percent of containerized exports from Guayaquil ports. During the first 10 months of 2021, the police conducted 53,759 container inspections in the four Guayaquil ports and the Posorja Port that ship containerized cargo, an increase from the 52,083 containers inspected in these five ports in all of 2020. U.S. officials continued to work with Ecuadorian authorities to secure maritime cargo under the Container Security Initiative established in 2018. In October, President Lasso issued a decree requiring Ecuador's ports to scan all outgoing containers.

Ecuador is not a major drug producing country. During the first 10 months of 2021, Ecuador eradicated 30,360 coca plants (approximately 3 hectares), mostly in the northern border province of Sucumbios. Synthetic drug production and consumption is a growing concern for Ecuadorian authorities.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Ecuador has 71 publicly funded out-patient drug treatment facilities and 12 in-patient facilities, which authorities say is an insufficient number to deal with the country's rising drug abuse problem. The lack of sufficient drug treatment facilities has led to the growth of unofficial facilities.

The United States provided support to the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America on drug demand reduction efforts, including through training women leaders to engage vulnerable youth on efforts against drugs. In May the U.S.-supported International Society of Substance Use Professionals conducted its first Ecuador Chapter online prevention and treatment seminar with over 600 participants. The U.S.-supported Organization of American States Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission conducted a three-month virtual drug prevention pilot training of trainers for 30 participants. In January the U.S.-supported Colombo Plan concluded a three-month virtual drug treatment training of trainers for 26 officials and private sector professionals. The Colombo Plan also carried out four prevention and treatment trainings.

#### **4. Corruption**

Ecuador does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. President Lasso has made fighting corruption a priority. Government policy and laws forbid the illicit production or distribution of narcotics or other controlled substances, as well as the laundering of proceeds from illegal drug transactions.

Drug-related corruption nevertheless remains a problem within Ecuador's public security forces and judicial system. On April 20, 2021, a police captain accused of narcotrafficking attempted to bribe a judge to dismiss his case. He was sentenced to 17 years in prison for trafficking one kilogram of cocaine and 12.8 kilograms of marijuana.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

President Lasso views the United States as Ecuador's primary partner to fight transnational crime and drug trafficking, particularly along the northern border with Colombia. In 2021, the United States provided donations, technical assistance, and training to judges, prosecutors, the police, Coast Guard, the military, financial analysts, and other criminal justice sector officials to counter drug trafficking and transnational organized crime.

Throughout 2021, the United States provided logistical and operational support for Ecuadorian counterdrug operations. The United States continues to work with Ecuadorian security officials to increase their maritime and land interdiction capacity, including at port facilities, and to strengthen their anti-money laundering capabilities related to drug trafficking.

The United States and Ecuador have a bilateral extradition treaty that entered into force in 1873 and a supplemental extradition treaty from 1941. Ecuador's constitution prohibits the extradition of Ecuadorian citizens. The United States works with Ecuador's National Court of Justice to improve administrative processes related to extradition requests. The United States and Ecuador do not have a bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty but cooperate under the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, as well as relevant UN conventions.

#### **D. Conclusion**

While Ecuador's record-breaking drug seizure levels are a positive indication of its counternarcotics efforts, the government must do more to secure its borders, improve maritime and airspace security, and strengthen its justice sector. Ecuador must also tackle corruption in the police, military, and justice sector and strengthen security and administrative control over the prison system. Due to budgetary limitations, however, Ecuador lacks the resources to strengthen its security forces and justice sector without greater international support. Ecuador should continue collaborating with the United States and other partners to strengthen interinstitutional cooperation, promote information-sharing, and advance anti-corruption initiatives.

# El Salvador

## A. Introduction

El Salvador is a transit country for illicit drugs destined for the United States. Analysis of 2020 and 2021 drug trafficking trends suggests that to avoid detection, drug trafficking organizations are transferring cocaine shipments by maritime conveyance along littoral waterways, the coastline and farther offshore, beyond 500 nautical miles, into the Pacific Ocean, some of which is beyond the operational capacity of regional navies, including that of El Salvador.

Transnational criminal organizations are also using private vehicles to transport small amounts of cocaine north to the Guatemalan border, and larger amounts from Honduras and Nicaragua to Guatemala using prefabricated concealment devices attached to large trucks. Small shipments of bulk currency have been detected moving at sea along the coastline south toward Nicaragua.

A lack of reliable information on the severity of drug consumption and internal distribution within El Salvador continues to be a challenge. Despite the worldwide pandemic, interdictions during the first nine months of 2021 were significantly higher than the same timeframe in 2020 and 2019.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Anti-Narcotics Division (DAN) of the National Civil Police (PNC) is the primary agency responsible for addressing drug-related crimes in El Salvador. The PNC has had a vetted, full-time Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU) since late 2019. The SIU is responsible for conducting high level and international drug investigations and is the primary contact for such cases within El Salvador's Attorney General's Office (FGR). The SIU continued to build institutional links with SIUs in Guatemala, Honduras, and Colombia, greatly expanding El Salvador's ability to respond to drug trafficking alerts and to investigate larger criminal organizations.

El Salvador has a full-time liaison officer with the United States to support hemispheric drug control coordination.

El Salvador's National Electronic Monitoring Center allows Salvadoran law enforcement authorities with judicial warrants to intercept electronic communications for violations of Salvadoran law including drug and human trafficking, extortion, gang/terrorist organizations, and homicide. The center also supports U.S. partners in a wide variety of investigations targeting transnational criminal organizations. It continues to expand, increasing communication between the PNC and FGR, streamlining the flow of actionable intercepted intelligence from the center to PNC surveillance teams. The United States purchased an upgrade to the intercept system, which was installed in 2021 and provides enhanced capability of intercepted targets, improved reliability regarding uptime and link analysis of the cases and creates an overall more robust investigatory tool. In anticipation of this acquisition, the PNC and FGR increased the number of personnel in the wire center by 66 percent. This increase, primarily of PNC officers,



was necessary to properly support the new intercept system. Also, the FGR has expanded the physical space of the wire center, doubling its previous size.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

From January through September of 2021 the DAN reported seizing approximately 3,861 kilograms (kg) of cocaine, 724 kg of marijuana, and 2 kg of crack cocaine. During the same period, Salvadoran authorities seized \$399,420 in bulk currency and arrested 2,184 individuals on drug-related crimes. Two of those seizures occurred 300-500 nautical miles offshore.

In August 2021, the Salvadoran Navy reportedly seized approximately 1,370 kg of cocaine in the maritime domain, consistent with the trend that all previous large narcotics seizures by the PNC have occurred at sea.

In 2021, authorities observed an increase in maritime drug trafficking within Salvadoran territorial waters. This increase has coincided with an increase in littoral interdiction operations. The newly expanded maritime police unit, the PNC's Maritime Tactical Operations Response Section (STORM) and the Salvadoran Navy have been conducting enhanced patrolling of the Pacific coastline. The Salvadoran Navy maintains primary responsibility for maritime interdiction at or beyond 20 nautical miles from El Salvador's coastline. The average at-sea interdiction occurs between 200-400 nautical miles offshore, and suspects are detained and escorted ashore for processing by the Salvadoran justice system, normally the SIU and FGR Anti-Narcotics Unit. The Salvadoran Navy is increasing its coverage of coastal areas by enhancing maritime interdiction capabilities of Naval Trident units stationed in La Concordia, La Paz, and Jiquilisco Bay and renovating a site in Meanguera Island in the Gulf of Fonseca.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Synthetic recreational drug use among Salvadoran youth is a growing concern. El Salvador lacks reliable information on the severity of drug consumption and internal distribution.

## **4. Corruption**

The Government of El Salvador does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, corruption within the Salvadoran political system, at all levels of government, remains a problem. The United States continues to support programs aimed at curbing corruption, including training, mentoring, vetting, and polygraph tests for El Salvador's security forces. Between September and November 2021, despite travel restrictions and the pandemic, the United States conducted 150 polygraph tests on new members of the specialized and vetted units.

Post worked previously with interlocutors in the Ministry of Public Security, the Attorney General's office, and the Legislative Assembly to assist in the development of a new "control and confidence" law to classify sensitive jobs and require the job holder meet specific clearance requirements. This protocol aims to stymie corruption within the government. The proposal is

part of a slate of public security reforms that may be introduced to the Legislative Assembly within the next few months.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States supports capacity building for El Salvador's security and judicial institutions through the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). CARSI supports the United States' Strategy to Address the Root Causes of Migration in Central America by tackling the underlying security and governance factors driving such migration. CARSI funding is aimed at fighting illicit drug production and trafficking and combatting corruption and transnational criminal organizations, which are among the key such drivers, complementing other U.S. efforts such as those focused on assisting vulnerable populations displaced by drug trafficking, violence, and crime.

U.S.-supported programs aim to expand Salvadoran capabilities to interdict, investigate, and prosecute illegal drug trafficking and other transnational crimes, implement prevention programs, and strengthen El Salvador's justice sector. The United States' continued support of El Salvador's Automated Fingerprint Identification System database (AFIS) has resulted in data sharing that allows U.S. law enforcement access to over 350,000 criminal fingerprints, including records for drug traffickers and members of transnational criminal organizations. El Salvador's AFIS is the most commonly "hit" foreign database for U.S. law enforcement.

The Cooperative Security Location (CSL) Agreement, signed by the United States, permits basing of U.S. counter-narcotics detection and monitoring air assets in El Salvador. The arrangement supports El Salvador as a hub for regional drug interdiction efforts. It also allows U.S. access to ports and other governmental facilities in connection with aerial detection, monitoring, and tracking of illicit drug trafficking operations.

### **D. Conclusion**

El Salvador's significant democratic backsliding, autocratic shift, and corruption prevalence fortunately to date have had limited impact on El Salvador's ability to act as a cooperative and willing partner for the United States in counternarcotics efforts. In fact, Salvadoran interdiction successes likely drove drug traffickers to shift their maritime routes further from El Salvador's coast, where the Salvadoran Navy has been able to achieve record seizures at record distances offshore. Corruption within the Government of El Salvador limits the government's ability to hold bad actors accountable and impunity in the judicial system reduces risks to narco-traffickers.

The Government of El Salvador should significantly increase efforts to strengthen the entire continuum of the country's criminal justice institutions and to combat corruption and impunity. By doing so, more could be done to also address drug trafficking, violent crime, and other criminal activities of transnational criminal organizations. Political will to confront corruption and support adequate budgets for the National Police and Attorney General's Office, including adequate pay and physical protection, remains a challenge

## Georgia

While not a significant producer of illicit drugs, Georgia's strategic location in the Caucasus makes it an attractive transit hub for transnational criminal organizations trafficking significant quantities of cocaine, heroin, and synthetic drugs to European destinations via the Black Sea.

Mobility restrictions introduced by the Georgian government to stop the spread of COVID-19 have affected drug supply, distribution, and demand in different ways. Use of cannabis and benzodiazepines has increased, while the use of MDMA (ecstasy), cocaine, and amphetamines has fallen compared to pre-pandemic levels. Smuggling and distribution of new psychoactive substances, much of which is sold on non-indexed web sites (dark web), also increased during COVID. The Central Criminal Police Department (CCPD) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as a result of its focus on identifying and bringing to justice the organizers of such distribution networks, seized approximately 10 times more new psychoactive substances from illicit trade in 2021 than in previous years.

A U.S.-facilitated operation in March 2021 led to the first ever successful international controlled delivery between Armenia and Georgia of 137 grams of the synthetic drug alpha-PVP. This is a law enforcement technique in which seized drugs are allowed to continue to the next destination (usually the end-user) under the control of law enforcement, in order to obtain additional information/targets. The operation was carried out by the Armenian State Revenue Committee and Georgian CCPD, and two additional parcels were intercepted as a result (157 grams of alpha-PVP and 125 grams of mephedrone). The last two years have seen the emergence of synthetic drug-production laboratories in Georgia, primarily synthesizing these two substances, which CCPD's Dark Web Drug Unit specifically targets.

In July 2021, the Armenian State Revenue Committee and the Georgian CCPD, with DEA information, conducted surveillance of a suspicious tractor-trailer for several weeks as it traveled from Iran, across Armenia and Georgia and onto a ferry at the Poti seaport, and then across the Black Sea to Odesa, Ukraine. In Ukraine, the units handed over surveillance to the Ukrainian National Police, who seized 368 kilograms of heroin and arrested two Turkish nationals. This was the first time a multi-national operation of this magnitude occurred in the Caucasus region.

New amendments were introduced in 2021 to the Law of Georgia on Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Narcological Assistance. Amendments refined the definitions of small, large, and particularly large amounts of eight substances (amphetamine, desomorphine, lysergic acid, MDMA, methadone, methcathinone, methamphetamine, and heroin). While this is a positive step forward, Georgian law does not define the small, large and especially large quantities for the majority of scheduled narcotics, including drugs most frequently consumed.

# Ghana

## A. Introduction

Ghana is a transit point for illicit drugs trafficked from Asia and South America to other African nations, Europe, and to a lesser extent the United States. Cocaine from South America and heroin and controlled pharmaceuticals from Asia are smuggled into the country for export to other countries, while limited amounts are left for local consumption.

Porous borders and a lack of resources hamper Ghana's efforts to combat the illegal drug trade. Cannabis is grown in almost all forest regions in Ghana mainly for domestic use within mining and other labor-intensive working environments. However, an increasing amount of locally cultivated cannabis is now being trafficked to international markets.

Although there are allegations of illicit production of methamphetamine in Ghana, no methamphetamine laboratories have been found to date. However, methamphetamine produced in clandestine laboratories in Nigeria and Afghanistan transit the country and precursor chemicals required to produce crystal methamphetamine are believed to be diverted from Ghanaian sources. Officials report that the illegal importation and abuse of tramadol and tapentadol, a controlled pharmaceutical, are increasingly problematic. However, no baseline surveys have been conducted to ascertain the extent of the drug use in the country.

Ghana continues to work productively with international partners on law enforcement operations targeting transnational drug trafficking organizations and to offer U.S.-sponsored trainings that improve Ghana's capabilities, although COVID-19 affected such efforts throughout most of 2021. Ghana is not a significant source or transit country for drugs entering the United States.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

In March 2020 Parliament passed and the president signed the Narcotics Control Commission Act. The law transformed the former Narcotics Control Board, an agency under the Ministry of Interior with limited functions, to the independent Narcotics Control Commission (NACOC) with an expanded mandate and law enforcement powers, including arrest and prosecutorial powers. The new law authorizes NACOC officers to be armed. The Ghanaian government is currently discussing the passage of additional regulations to ensure effective implementation of the Act. The Ghana Police Service's (GPS) Drug Law Enforcement Unit (DLEU) continues its counternarcotics efforts separately from NACOC.

Ghana is a pioneering member and active participant in the Africa Multilateral Drug Enforcement Coordination (AMDEC) meetings, which consist mainly of drug law enforcement agencies in Africa. The AMDEC platform provides for information-sharing on drug-related cases between the United States and African countries across the continent.

## 2. Supply Reduction

NACOC monitors activities of 233 Ghanaian companies involved in precursor chemical distribution chains. Hydrochloric and sulfuric acids remain the most frequently imported precursor chemicals. The main challenge with monitoring and controlling precursor chemicals is difficulty identifying the small, informal, and often unlicensed businesses involved with chemical usage.

On April 12, 2021, the DLEU acted on local intelligence and intercepted a bus traveling from Kumasi to Niger carrying 260 kilograms (kg) of suspected cannabis. DLEU partnered with the Bono East Regional Police Command for the operation. The packages were discovered in the air conditioning ducts and under the rear seat cushions of the bus. Two suspects were arrested and charged as part of this operation.

On August 10, the NACOC, in collaboration with the Volta Regional Command of the Ghana Police Service, seized 9,752 slabs of cannabis, estimated to be worth \$774,270 from a transport truck in Ho. The operation resulted from several months of intelligence work by NACOC tracking cannabis cultivation and distribution in the Volta Region.

In 2021 NACOC interdicted fewer than five kg each of cocaine, heroin, hashish, and methamphetamine.

## 3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment

Consumption of cannabis, tramadol, and other drugs in Ghana is a growing problem. Narcotic substances are commonly found on suspects arrested for various unrelated offenses, such as robbery. School and public sensitization programs are conducted across the country on a regular basis. The DLEU and NACOC conduct operations to arrest and deter youth from the use of narcotic substances.

NACOC partnered with mass media, educational, corporate, community, and faith-based organizations to conduct Drug Abuse Preventive Programs (DAPPs) aimed at reducing the demand for drugs. NACOC conducted DAPPs through presentations, photo exhibitions, radio and television discussions, and social media campaigns utilizing Facebook and Twitter.

Ghana has benefited from the U.S.-sponsored Colombo Plan Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC). In 2020, 25 Ghanaians from the Ministry of Education, NACOC, and community groups underwent training to qualify as internationally certified drug prevention professionals to help in efforts against drug trafficking in the country. The focus of the training was on school-based and workplace substance use disorder prevention.

## 4. Corruption

Ghana does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. Ghana has laws that cover drug-related corruption, but enforcement is patchy due to lack of capacity,

resources, and, at times, political will. Ghana also has a free and dynamic press, which routinely reports on corruption issues. There are no known senior Ghanaian officials associated with illegal drug trafficking activities.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

Since 2015, the United States has provided capacity building and assistance to the DLEU through training, donations, and mentorship. In September 2021, the United States initiated a two-year project through funding to the United National Office on Drugs and Crime to provide technical and logistical assistance to NACOC to counter drug trafficking and organized crime.

There is no mutual legal assistance treaty between Ghana and the United States, although mutual legal assistance can be provided through multilateral conventions to which both countries are signatories. Extradition is available between Ghana and the United States based on the 1931 United States – United Kingdom treaty to which Ghana acceded after independence.

### **D. Conclusion**

NACOC is working to streamline and increase information-sharing between agencies. Ghanaian law enforcement and intelligence agencies have alleged that transnational drug trafficking networks operating in the country have links to organized crime and terrorist organizations. However, fragmented data collection and incomplete information sharing make accurate figures difficult to obtain.

Ghana maintained a high degree of cooperation with the United States and other international partners on drug control issues, resulting in several high-level seizures and arrests. While drug consumption in the country continues to be a concern, enforcement efforts have been positive, and Ghana is building its capacity to enforce drug trafficking laws.

Challenges include lack of alternative livelihood or alternative crops programs for people cultivating cannabis, lack of law enforcement accessibility to areas of cannabis cultivation, weak institutions, and lack of resources.

# Guatemala

## A. Introduction

Guatemala has made progress on several important fronts in limiting the transit of illegal drugs but has remained a major drug transit country in large part due to its proximity to United States consumer markets, limited law enforcement resources, and widespread corruption.

In 2021, the number of detected illicit air deliveries of drugs fell to the lowest number in years, including a nearly four-month period with no detected illicit air landings. Maritime seizures continue to decrease from record levels in 2018. Guatemala's land ports of entry and seaports are vulnerable to drug trafficking due to limited intelligence sharing and oversight by customs and law enforcement and vast corruption.

Guatemala has increased eradication of coca, cannabis, and opium poppy fields. However, the lack of government presence and economic alternatives in rural areas continues to make illicit cultivation and transit an attractive source of income. The past year represented a record for incinerated precursor chemicals for Guatemala and a record number of arrests of individuals with pending extradition requests in the United States.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Eradication operations targeting illicit cultivation of coca, opium poppy, and cannabis increased in 2021. Many such operations have been conducted in the same regions for several years, suggesting a lack of viable economic alternatives in rural areas.

In May, the Guatemalan government restored a U.S.-donated chemical incinerator to full capacity. As of October, the incinerator had reportedly destroyed 537 metric tons (MT) of chemicals in 2021, a record for the largest amount of seized chemical precursors incinerated in one year. Despite this progress, the government has not yet passed new regulations or oversight on new chemical precursors transiting the country.

Transnational criminal organizations continue to take advantage of Guatemala's seaports to traffic narcotics. A September 2021 visit by a United States port assessment team underscored the need to improve collaboration among port security teams, including inspection and detection techniques. To date, the Guatemalan government has not passed legislation to designate a port authority capable of ensuring that ports comply with international standards on security. A draft of this legislation has been pending in Guatemala's congress since 2019.

Guatemala's Counternarcotics Aviation Program (FIAAT), with the support of the United States, continues to train and develop helicopter flight crews and National Police (PNC) special forces to conduct counternarcotics operations, including in nighttime operations. In August, FIAAT helicopters assisted with the apprehension of three individuals pending extradition to the United States on drug charges.

## 2. Supply Reduction

A specialized antinarcotics unit (SGAIA) of the PNC is responsible for combating drug-related criminal activities within Guatemala and has oversight on eradication operations. SGAIA units, including canine handlers, operate throughout the country, including at air, sea, and land port of entries. As of September 2021, SGAIA reported 7.1 metric tons (MT) of cocaine seized, with over 995,037 coca plants and 14,422,344 opium poppy plants destroyed in eradication missions.

The Naval Special Forces (FEN) has primary responsibility for maritime drug interdictions. The amount of cocaine seized from Guatemala's maritime theater fell by nearly 90 percent from 2018 (22.4 MT) to 2021 (two MT as of September 2021), despite little change in the overall supply. This decrease is likely due to traffickers' change in methods and routes to evade Guatemala's interdiction forces. In April 2021, the United States donated four Midnight Express coastal interdiction vessels to the FEN to increase Guatemala's capacity to intercept drug traffickers.

As of September 2021, Guatemalan authorities reported 16 air deliveries of drugs, compared to 40 reported in 2020. PNC and military forces destroyed 21 clandestine airstrips and seized almost 6 MT of cocaine from planes smuggling narcotics during this period. From June until September, Guatemala reported 117 days without an illicit air landing.

## 3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is finalizing a survey on drug use in Guatemala. The report, the first since 2005, will cover all 22 departments of Guatemala. Preliminary results indicate that the prevalence of substance use disorder begins at an earlier age than reported in previous surveys, with cocaine the leading abused drug.

None of the 44 residential centers for drug treatment within Guatemala meet minimum standards of care. There is only one outpatient treatment center in Guatemala that provides treatments to drug users; 55 percent of its patients are female, and 27 percent are minors. The Guatemalan Anti-Drug Commission has a limited budget with which to execute nationwide programs (\$235,000) and provide treatment (\$186,000), with most money used for administrative expenses.

## 4. Corruption

Guatemala does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, pervasive corruption in Guatemala allows drug traffickers to yield significant influence over military forces and all levels and branches of government.

Corruption in Guatemala impedes rule of law and bolsters rather than deters drug trafficking. In April, June, July, and September of 2021, the United States announced a series of sanctions against current and former members of Guatemala's congress, the judiciary, and the prosecutor's office (Public Ministry). Many of those sanctioned reportedly received support from drug trafficking organizations.



In July 2021, Attorney General Maria Consuelo Porras announced the dismissal of the head of the Special Prosecutor's Office Against Impunity (FECI) Juan Francisco Sandoval. The decision caused civil protests. The United States announced a loss of confidence in Attorney General Porras's work and paused programmatic support to the Public Ministry.

In September 2021, the United States added Attorney General Porras and Public Ministry Secretary General Angel Pineda to the Section 353 Corrupt and Undemocratic Actors list for their role in obstructing investigations into acts of corruption.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States supports capacity building for Guatemala's security and judicial institutions through the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). CARSI supports the United States' Strategy to Address the Root Causes of Migration in Central America by tackling the underlying security and governance factors driving such migration. CARSI funding is aimed at fighting illicit drug production and trafficking and combatting corruption and transnational criminal organizations, which are among the key such drivers, complementing other U.S. efforts such as those focused on assisting vulnerable populations displaced by drug trafficking, violence, and crime.

The United States and Guatemala have a bilateral agreement to actively address illicit trafficking by air and sea. This agreement includes provisions on ship boarding, passengers, pursuit, entry to investigate, over flight of territorial seas, order to land, and interdiction support. Guatemala also has an extradition treaty with the United States.

The United States government provides advisory, training, and logistical support and equipment to Guatemalan National Police directorates to assist in disrupting drug trafficking and transnational criminal organizations. U.S.-supported vetted units include the Sensitive Investigations Unit, the Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit, and the Transnational Anti-Gang Unit within the Guatemalan National Police.

### **D. Conclusion**

Corruption is the main impediment to Guatemala's ability to effectively combat drug trafficking. At the operational level, Guatemala's counternarcotics forces demonstrate effectiveness when there is close collaboration with U.S. partners. However, entrenched corruption in Guatemala's political and military ranks allows narcotics traffickers to gain significant influence over those in positions of power. Political infighting and limitations in the legal system also impede narcotics investigations and law enforcement cooperation, exacerbating a culture of impunity and corruption.

The Guatemalan government can take a series of steps against corruption, such as designating a port authority and ensuring transparency in the selection of a new Attorney General. The Guatemalan government should expand its presence and improve relations in rural areas to enable law enforcement to better respond to reports of drug trafficking and for medical professionals to provide treatment and implement drug prevention strategies.

# Guyana

## A. Introduction

Guyana is a transit country for cocaine destined for the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, Europe, and West Africa. Cocaine originating in Colombia is smuggled to Venezuela and onward to Guyana by sea or air. Smugglers also transit land borders and the shared river network with Brazil, Venezuela, and Suriname. Cocaine is concealed in legitimate commodities and smuggled through commercial and private air transport, maritime vessels, human couriers, “go-fast” boats, and postal systems.

Drug traffickers exploit the country’s poorly monitored ports, remote airstrips, intricate river networks, porous land borders, and the permissive environment resulting from corruption and the under-resourced security sector. Guyana also has a growing domestic drug consumption problem. Despite these challenges, the Government of Guyana has demonstrated some political will to combat drug trafficking in and through Guyana.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Guyana’s drug control institutions are the Guyana Police Force, Guyana Revenue Authority, Customs Anti-Narcotics Unit, Special Organized Crime Unit, and Guyana Defense Force Coast Guard. These agencies are responsible for the implementation of the National Drug Strategy Master Plan 2016-2020, which has expired, but still serves as guidance for interagency counternarcotics action. The government has committed to drafting and instituting a new five-year plan beginning in 2022. Guyana has an ongoing coordination mechanism among agencies with counternarcotics equities, but corruption and limited financial and human resources hampered its effectiveness.

The 1931 Extradition Treaty between the United States and the United Kingdom is applicable to the United States and Guyana, and Guyana cooperates with the United States on extradition cases. In 2008, Guyana acceded to and has since filed information requests under the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, to which the United States is also a party. Guyana has bilateral counternarcotics agreements with its neighbors and the United Kingdom. Guyana is a member of the Organization of American States’ Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (OAS/CICAD). In 2020, a bilateral Shiprider Agreement with the United States went into force, enabling joint maritime and aerospace patrols to counter narcotic flows.

### 2. Supply Reduction

The Government of Guyana has a drug enforcement presence at its international airports, post offices, and at some seaports and land-border entry points. Guyanese authorities are aware of unlicensed airstrips in the interior of the country that facilitate the movement of drugs, but have

not taken action against them. The government does not have a robust container inspection program in place at its seaports.

Local cultivation and consumption of marijuana has grown over the past year, and Guyanese law enforcement conducted eradication operations at cannabis farms throughout the country. In September 2021, law enforcement destroyed four metric tons (MT) of marijuana, cocaine, and other illicit drugs that had been seized over a two-year period. The government has shown the will to pursue marijuana consumption and cultivation. It has not addressed the increasing amount of high-value cocaine trafficking between Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, and Suriname, which takes advantage of remote airstrips in Guyana's interior, by conducting enhanced monitoring and/or destruction.

Drug enforcement agencies reported several interdiction efforts and drug seizures in 2021. During the first nine months of 2021, authorities seized 563 kilograms (kg) of cocaine and 1,545 MT of marijuana. Seizures increased by 9 percent for cocaine and 130 percent for marijuana compared to the same period in 2020 (518 kg of cocaine and 671 kg of marijuana, respectively). Most of the cocaine seized during this period was due to a single May seizure of 453 kg of cocaine found in a plane flying from Brazil to Suriname, which crash landed in eastern Guyana.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Guyana has a growing domestic drug consumption problem. Marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug in Guyana, followed by cocaine. In addition to marijuana and cocaine, authorities also seized small amounts of synthetic drugs, including MDMA (ecstasy) and methamphetamine. The Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Human Services and Social Security are responsible for addressing demand reduction. Guyana has a comprehensive demand reduction strategy that addresses drug rehabilitation. Non-governmental organizations also offer rehabilitation services, with the government providing financial assistance. The Georgetown Public Hospital also provides free rehabilitation services for drug users. The government conducts anti-drug awareness sessions in secondary schools and has drug treatment courts.

### **4. Corruption**

As a matter of policy, the Government of Guyana does not encourage or facilitate the illicit production or distribution of narcotics or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances or the laundering of proceeds from illegal drug transactions. Guyana is a party to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, but has not fully implemented its provisions, such as the seizure of property obtained through corruption. Insufficient resources, weak law enforcement institutions, an ineffective judicial system, and inadequate compensation for civil service employees and public safety officials facilitate corruption throughout all sectors.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States supports a wide range of efforts to address crime and violence affecting Guyanese citizens, primarily through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). CBSI

is a security partnership between the United States and Caribbean countries that seeks to substantially reduce illicit trafficking, advance public safety and citizen security, and promote justice. Priority concerns shared by Guyana and the United States include increasing law enforcement capabilities, protecting borders and ports, providing social, economic, and educational opportunities to at-risk youth, and combating money laundering. The Guyanese government has an interest in deepening cooperation with the United States on drug control, extradition, mutual legal assistance, and other international crime issues. In October, the Guyanese government agreed to commence a CBSI-funded Container Control Programme to strengthen port security and deter the trafficking of illicit goods.

The Guyanese military and law enforcement maintain cooperative relationships with the United States. In June 2021 Guyana hosted the annual U.S.-sponsored Tradewinds joint regional security exercises, which included a counternarcotics training component.

CBSI-funded programs support Guyana's maritime operations by providing interdiction assets, relevant command and control systems and associated logistical support and training. In 2021, the United States provided maritime training to Guyana's Coast Guard.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The United States and Guyana cooperate positively in advancing mutual interests against the threat of international drug trafficking, and Guyana has shown interest in furthering collaboration under CBSI. The United States looks forward to tangible progress on investigations, prosecutions, extraditions, security sector capacity enhancement, engagement of at-risk communities, and enforcement of laws against money laundering and financial crimes.

To achieve results, Guyana should invest more in its security sector, enhance the entrance requirements, professionalism, and training levels of its personnel, combat corruption, and focus on greater interagency coordination and information sharing. Counterdrug activities should focus on improving port security and enhanced container inspections, and on building skills in complex transnational investigations. Political will is needed to dismantle trafficking networks which are linked to corrupt individuals in the public and private sector.

# Haiti

## A. Introduction

Haiti is a transit point for cocaine from South America and marijuana from Jamaica to the United States. Haiti is not a producer or significant consumer of illicit drugs, although there is cannabis cultivation for local consumption. The counternarcotics unit of the Haitian National Police (HNP), known by the French acronym BLTS, has led investigations and drug interdiction operations against trafficking organizations along the southern coast, causing illicit activity to shift to northern Haiti. The Haitian government and its people faced a series of crises in 2021. In July, the president of Haiti was assassinated inside his residence and his wife was injured in the attack. Several HNP officers who were responsible for the president's security were arrested, including the heads of the presidential security detail. In August, 2021, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti's Tiburon Peninsula and devastated three of the ten southern departments of the country. More than 2,200 people were killed and over 12,000 injured.

Haiti is also grappling with a surge of gang kidnappings averaging more than 15 per month. In the aftermath of the earthquake, violent gangs expanded operations beyond inner-city slums and wield control over access points to highways that connect the Tiburon Peninsula to the capital. Gangs raid humanitarian supply trucks and prevent supplies and food from reaching earthquake-affected areas in the south of the country. Gangs also block fuel deliveries to gas stations and abduct fuel trucks, contributing to a fuel shortage and crippling an already suffering economy where nearly 60 percent of the population live in poverty. These overlapping political, economic, and security crises have overwhelmed the HNP, which was already suffering from low morale and corruption. Further, the HNP Director General believes most of the gangs have active HNP officers as members. The HNP also struggles to control Haiti's porous borders where illicit arms and drug trade occurs; most of Haiti's coastline and land border shared with the Dominican Republic is largely unmanned and uncontrolled. The HNP, the sole security force in the country, is understaffed, under-resourced, and overextended.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Haitian government continues to face challenges to adequately fund the police force, resulting in an insufficient number of police officers in every category of policing, including counternarcotics. The scheduled graduation of the 31<sup>st</sup> HNP class of 638 recruits (500 males and 138 females) in December 2021 will increase the number of HNP officers to close to 15,000. Given Haiti's population of 11 million, HNP would need to increase their force to 22,000 to have a ratio of 1.66 officers per 100,000 habitants.

BLTS remains the primary domestic organization dedicated to drug interdiction. It has 225 officers and is supported by and works in close coordination with the border patrol unit (POLIFRONT) and the Haitian Coast Guard (HCG). BLTS officers will join POLIFRONT officers at the new outpost at Anse-à-Pitre on the southern border with the Dominican Republic. POLIFRONT units are now posted at the three official border crossings at Ouanaminthe, Anse-à-

Pitre, and Malpasse. The HCG is the sole maritime enforcement agency. It has operating bases in Cap-Haitien, Killick (Port-au-Prince), and Les Cayes. Maritime law enforcement is a daunting task considering Haiti's 1,100 miles of coastline and seven international ports. The HCG has a total of 12 vessels; two operational vessels, three requiring repair, and seven that are no longer operational. BLTS also operates two boats for maritime interdiction. As of 2021, the HCG had 181 officers, and POLIFRONT had 317. Operational capacity remains low due to insufficient funding, improper management, fuel shortages, and inaccessibility of maintenance supplies.

In June 2020, the Government of Haiti (by executive order) adopted new penal and criminal procedure codes that, once implemented, could have a positive impact on judicial reform. However, additional public consultations need to take place, legislation impacted by the new codes needs to be drafted and enacted, and many systems must be established before implementation can occur. Thus, the timetable for implementation of the new codes could be lengthy.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

The BLTS executed several successful operations in 2021 that resulted in the seizure of 2.76 metric tons of marijuana and 94 kilograms of cocaine. In addition, 54 suspects were arrested for alleged drug-related crimes during this period. The United States does not currently have information about any significant availability or trafficking of illegal synthetic drugs in Haiti.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Illicit drug abuse is uncommon in Haiti, as the population's minimal discretionary income mitigates against widespread drug abuse. The Government of Haiti runs small-scale public awareness and demand reduction programs funded through the counternarcotics policy commission, but there is no available data on the impact of these programs.

## **4. Corruption**

The Haitian government does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate drug trafficking or associated money laundering. Effective government action to fight corruption, particularly related to drug trafficking organizations, is constrained by two major factors. The first is Haiti's weak legal framework. Haiti did not classify corruption as a crime until 2014, when a law formally criminalized public corruption and set penalties for bribery and illegal procurement. Implementation of this law remains a challenge, as well as educating judges on the law. Haiti's asset seizure laws have enabled the Central Unit of Financial Investigations and the HNP's Financial and Economic Affairs Bureau to seize the assets of drug traffickers convicted of crimes outside of Haiti. The constitution, however, grants immunity to members of parliament, which obstructs law enforcement efforts.

The second constraining factor is Haiti's systematically weak judicial system, which is hampered by opaque court proceedings, antiquated penal and criminal codes, lack of judicial oversight, and widespread judicial corruption and inefficiencies. To date, there have been five successful convictions for drug trafficking, and only one conviction on corruption related

charges. The Unit for Combating Corruption has advanced 32 corruption-related cases to the judiciary since its inception in 2005 but without tangible results.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

Haiti maintains several international drug control agreements and cooperates regularly with the United States on drug-related cases. The 1997 bilateral letter of agreement on Cooperation to Suppress Illicit Maritime Drug Traffic allows U.S. law enforcement agencies to enter Haitian territorial waters and airspace in pursuit of suspect vessels or aircraft; to board and search suspect vessels; to patrol Haitian airspace; and to carry members of the HCG as passengers on U.S. vessels. Although there is no mutual legal treaty between Haiti and the United States, the Haitian government has cooperated regularly within the limits of Haitian law. Although the Haitian constitution prohibits the extradition of Haitian nationals, there is a bilateral extradition treaty (entered into force in 1905). The Government of Haiti has surrendered individuals under indictment in the United States to U.S. law enforcement agencies.

U.S. drug control initiatives in Haiti focus on improving the capacity of the BLTS, POLIFRONT and the HCG to detect, investigate, and deter drug trafficking organizations. Agreements between the United States and Haiti in 2004 and 2013 govern these activities. Core goals are to increase overall drug interdiction capabilities and to develop legal cases against trafficking organizations.

### **D. Conclusion**

The HNP remains committed to combatting illicit drug trafficking. However, ongoing gang violence, kidnappings, and political instability are straining and diverting HNP's meager resources as they try to provide overall security to the general Haitian population. Continued U.S. support for the institutional development of the HNP is critical to increase Haiti's ability to address drug trafficking. The severe dysfunction of the Haitian judicial system limits domestic prosecution of offenses and limits the ability of law enforcement to deter drug trafficking organizations. Prosecutors and courts lack capacity and corruption remains an issue. It remains to be seen if the adoption of the new penal and criminal procedure codes will be implemented and enforced to improve matters. Drug seizures remain low, and the ability of the HNP to patrol Haiti's maritime and terrestrial borders is insufficient.

# Honduras

## A. Introduction

Honduras is a key transit country for U.S.-bound cocaine and precursor chemicals used to produce illicit drugs. During the first nine months of 2021, the Government of Honduras reported seizing 14.2 metric tons (MT) of cocaine - four times more than all seizures in 2020. Despite this success, significant challenges remain to interdict illicit drugs transiting Honduras. Honduran interagency coordination increased as the U.S.-supported Joint Interagency Operations Center began operation, but interdiction is still severely limited by the government's lack of resources. The remote northeastern departments of Gracias a Dios and Colón are particularly vulnerable to trafficking due to limited infrastructure and minimal government presence.

Small-scale coca cultivation has been discovered periodically for at least a decade. Honduran security forces are increasingly finding and destroying coca fields and the laboratories co-located with them. There is not enough information to evaluate the quality of leaf being grown or purity of cocaine produced. There is no evidence that cocaine produced in Honduras has reached the United States.

The Honduran government has increased its efforts against drug trafficking in coordination with U.S. law enforcement agencies; however, structural challenges of investigative capacity, resources, communications, and corruption remain.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Corruption, combined with low tax collection rates, deprives law enforcement agencies, courts, and prosecutors of resources required to stop the flow of drugs and bring traffickers to justice. The 2014 security tax has helped security agencies, but funds have not met the significant personnel, equipment, and technology needs, especially in remote areas of the country. The COVID-19 pandemic strained already limited resources.

Through cooperation with the United States and other international partners, the Honduran government has established criminal justice infrastructure to investigate, arrest, and prosecute drug traffickers. The newly established Joint Interagency Operations Center (JIOC), staffed by Honduran civilian and military officers, coordinates responses to trafficking alerts. It coordinated a joint civilian and military counternarcotics operation, Operation Dominio II, from August 27 to October 10, 2021. As part of this operation, the JIOC directed its first-ever mission engaging military and police assets to locate and secure 13 hectares (ha) of coca and a cocaine paste processing lab. The Government of Honduras also reported 576 kilograms of cocaine seized.

Honduras is party to the Organization of American States' Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission and the Caribbean Regional Agreement on Maritime Counternarcotics, and ratified



the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters. Honduras is a participant in the Multilateral Maritime Counter Drug Summit.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

During the first nine months of 2021, Honduran authorities reported seizing 14.2 MT of cocaine, far exceeding the 3.4 MT seized in 2020 and the 2.2 MT seized in 2019. Authorities conducted most of these seizures on land, as capacity to interdict drugs entering Honduras by sea and air is limited. Collaboration between the Honduras National Police's Anti-Drug, Frontier Police, and Special Forces Directorates – all supported by the United States – has been fundamental to these seizures. Civilian and military counternarcotics units increased joint operations during 2021, undertaking a 45-day joint operation in Colón and Gracias a Dios and another multi-week operation in the Bay Islands. Honduran authorities seized no fentanyl during this period.

Authorities eradicated approximately 30 ha of coca and destroyed seven cocaine base laboratories during the first nine months of 2021 as compared to 40 ha and 11 laboratories during the same period of 2020.

The Ministry of Defense shares vital information with U.S. authorities, but operational elements within the Honduran Navy have limited ability to act on this information due to resource constraints, primarily fuel and limited interdiction assets. The Ministry reported the destruction of 18 clandestine airstrips used for transshipment of narcotics during the first nine months of 2021, as compared to 34 during the same period of 2020. The Honduran government does not have the capacity to track all suspected drug trafficking flights without outside support.

The Communication Intercept Unit, part of the National Directorate of Investigation and Intelligence, controls the judicial wire intercept facility. The United States works closely with vetted Honduran law enforcement units to improve access to the information generated. The United States invested in new equipment for this facility to be used by U.S.-supported and vetted units, although it is not yet operational.

The September 2021 conviction by a Honduran court of seven members of the Bayron Ruiz drug trafficking organization demonstrated the capability of the Honduran system to successfully dismantle and prosecute the organization following the extradition of its leader to the United States in 2019. Ruiz pled guilty to drug trafficking charges in a U.S. court in 2019.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Public information on drug use is insufficient. The Honduran Drug Observatory has never undertaken a general population survey regarding illegal drug use and the only national survey is of secondary students conducted in 2005. Based on the 2005 information, the Organization of American States' Inter- American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) reported the most used drugs are marijuana, hallucinogenic mushrooms, and cocaine, and that student drug consumption levels were some of the lowest in Central America at that time. Prevention and treatment programs are limited in both scope and geography in Honduras, and the COVID-19 pandemic affects treatment in outpatient and admitted care facilities. The Honduran Institute for

Prevention of Alcoholism, Drug Addiction and Dependency, the sole government agency dedicated to addressing drug addiction, has insufficient resources for programming.

#### **4. Corruption**

The Government of Honduras does not, as a matter of official government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution. However, corruption remains widespread in private and public institutions and impedes interdiction and prosecution efforts. Honduran authorities do identify and bring to justice some low-level police, military, and government officials involved in drug trafficking. Some anti-corruption units within the Public Ministry are making headway against public corruption but continue to be limited by resource constraints.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States supports capacity building for Honduras' security and judicial institutions through the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). CARSI supports the United States' Strategy to Address the Root Causes of Migration in Central America by tackling the underlying security and governance factors driving such migration. CARSI funding is aimed at fighting illicit drug production and trafficking and combatting corruption and transnational criminal organizations, which are among the key such drivers, complementing other U.S. efforts such as those focused on assisting vulnerable populations displaced by drug trafficking, violence, and crime.

The U.S. government also works closely with the Honduran government to develop policies and standard operating procedures for the JIOC to coordinate interdiction operations and information sharing between the Honduran military, police, investigators, and prosecutors.

The United States provides advisory, training, and logistical support and equipment to the HNP, Public Ministry, and military to improve Honduras' capacity to disrupt drug trafficking. U.S.-supported vetted units include the Sensitive Investigations Unit and the Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit in the HNP and the Transnational Anti-Gang Unit in the Public Ministry.

The United States and Honduras are parties to an extradition treaty. Honduras cooperates on extraditions. The United States maintains a bilateral agreement with Honduras to suppress illicit traffic by sea, including by ship boarding, ship riders, pursuit, entry to investigate, and overflight.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The United States helps Honduras build its institutional capacity to address drug trafficking, corruption, and other criminal issues. While Honduras demonstrated improved capacity to conduct land interdictions in 2021, insufficient fuel, command and control gaps, limited communications capabilities, and corruption hampered additional progress. Limited aviation assets hinder Honduran capabilities to locate and track aerial and maritime trafficking. Corruption in security, investigative, and judicial bodies, especially in the remote eastern Caribbean region where most drugs arrive, limits the government's ability to hold bad actors accountable, and impunity in the judicial system greatly reduces risks to narcotraffickers.

# India

## A. Introduction

India is a source, transit, and destination point for illicit narcotics. India is committed to addressing its drug production, trafficking, and use challenges. It has tightened regulations and increased law enforcement authorities related to illicit production but faces resource and capacity limitations relative to the country's large population. Challenges are compounded by India's large pharmaceutical sector, geographic location, and transportation infrastructure.

Drug traffickers exploit high levels of technical expertise and supplies of chemicals in India to manufacture synthetic drugs and precursor chemicals for markets in the United States and elsewhere. Illicit drugs and precursor chemicals originating in India are available in Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia, and North America. U.S.-based customers use online pharmacies and call centers to illegally obtain pharmaceutical drugs through mail shipments from India. Websites registered in India advertise a range of drugs, including fentanyl and fentanyl analogues. India authorizes and regulates legal opium production in three states for pharmaceutical manufacturing. Opium poppy is also grown illicitly for domestic consumption.

Billions of tablets of opioids and several tons of precursor chemicals originating in India were seized worldwide in 2021. U.S. law enforcement agencies assess that online drug sales, including of opioids, will continue to increase. Drug use disorder in India is growing, facilitated by illicit narcotics and the availability of over-the-counter medicines. Commonly abused drugs in India include heroin, marijuana, and tramadol, with growing use in recent years of pharmaceutical opioids, cocaine, and MDMA (ecstasy) analogues. Given India's size and the lack of comprehensive data on drug use, accurate estimates of the extent, pattern, and nature of drug use disorder in India are not available.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

In 2021, India tightened regulations to address illicit production of controlled substances and increased the authorities of law enforcement agencies. The health ministry formed a committee headed by the Drugs Controller General of India to examine the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and draft a new law to regulate online sale and supply of medicines.

Many pharmaceutical and chemical products, licitly produced in India where there are few to no controls, find their way into the illicit market in countries where those substances are regulated. For instance, India is a major source of the synthetic opioid pharmaceutical tapentadol that is now trafficked throughout the African continent.

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) is India's primary law enforcement agency for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The Central Bureau of Narcotics supervises the legal cultivation of opium poppy and issues licenses to manufacture, import, and export-controlled drugs. Other relevant agencies include the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Central Board of

Excise and Customs, and the Enforcement Directorate. The National Investigation Agency sometimes participates in investigations to determine if narcotics trafficking is related to terrorist financing.

Inadequate training, equipment, staffing, and interagency coordination constrain efforts to investigate criminal drug manufacturing and trafficking and identify higher-level targets. Long delays in India's court system complicate effective prosecutions. A lack of comprehensive drug legislation can also impede efforts by Indian law enforcement agencies to conduct complex drug conspiracy investigations. Regulatory processes are slow and require multiple agencies. As a result, regulation often lags the development and proliferation of chemical precursors that may be diverted to illicit drug manufacture and novel synthetic drugs.

The Government of India has entered bilateral agreements with 36 countries on cooperation to reduce demand and prevent the illicit trafficking of narcotics, psychotropic substances, and precursor chemicals. India is a signatory to mutual legal assistance treaties with 41 countries, including the United States, and maintains extradition treaties with at least 50 countries, including the United States. The NCB also shares information and coordinates with regional organizations, including the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Drug Offences Monitoring Desk; Colombo Plan; and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Co-Operation.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

India's drug control regime faces challenges regulating chemical and pharmaceutical production, trade, and sales. Lack of information technology, including integrated networks and case management software, present additional enforcement challenges.

Indian security forces made an increasing number of high-volume maritime narcotics interdictions in 2021, indicating a shift toward maritime trafficking. Port officials seized large quantities of heroin from shipping containers, including nearly 3,000 kilograms (kg) in September in Gujarat. In June, NCB arrested members of a drug trafficking syndicate operating online pharmacies over the dark web to export illicit drugs, including tramadol, cough syrup, and amphetamine to countries including the United States. Customs officials made multiple airport interdictions of couriers smuggling heroin, cocaine, and MDMA. India has a positive record of collaborating with the private sector to identify and track suspicious sales and transport of precursor chemicals.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The most recent national survey by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE) in 2018 estimated that 23 million people aged 10 to 75 used opioids, especially heroin and pharmaceutical opioids. The survey estimated that eight million people had opioid use disorders and over 70 percent of people with drug use disorders did not receive treatment.

India's MSJE and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare develop national guidelines and implement drug treatment clinics within government hospitals across the country. MSJE is

responsible for implementing the National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (2018-2024) and funds over 400 NGOs to operate integrated drug use disorder awareness, treatment, and rehabilitation centers. The National AIDS Control Organization supports harm reduction strategies, including opioid substitution therapy, targeting injecting drug users to prevent the spread of HIV.

#### **4. Corruption**

The Government of India does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution or launder the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. Nevertheless, some security and local officials have been implicated in drug-related corruption. Official corruption has undermined the effectiveness of control regimes for illicit drugs, and media reports allege widespread official corruption, with bribes paid to police and local officials to ignore illicit poppy and cannabis fields. Media reports claim that corrupt border officials have enabled cross-border movement of heroin, pharmaceutical drugs, and precursor materials.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

U.S.-Indian law enforcement cooperation, particularly with NCB and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, yielded multiple joint arrests and high-value seizures in 2021. Investigations showed that Indian organizations transferred narcotics and proceeds from trafficking on behalf of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs). U.S. and Indian law enforcement authorities therefore continue to target TCOs with extensive ties to India based in the United States and elsewhere.

In June 2021, India and the United States convened a second bilateral Counternarcotics Working Group to expand engagement on law enforcement and public health, share data and best practices, and support India's regional counternarcotics leadership. An in-person meeting is expected in 2022.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Global demand for illicit synthetic drugs such as pharmaceutical opioids, methamphetamine, MDMA, ketamine and other dangerous drugs has given rise to entrepreneurs in India who retool commercial chemical factories to illicitly produce large volumes of these drugs and their precursors. Illicit manufacturing and trafficking networks in India will increase as global demand for synthetic drugs continues to grow. Underemployed chemists in India are susceptible to recruitment by criminal organizations. More proactive regulations, such as early detection and scheduling of new psychoactive substances and improved regulation of online drug sales; enhanced digital and traditional investigative capacity; and improved coordination among Indian government agencies are necessary to address India's growing role as a source for precursor chemicals and synthetic drugs.

# Indonesia

## A. Introduction

Indonesia is a transit and destination point for illicit drugs. With over 17,000 islands, its archipelago presents a formidable challenge for maritime interdiction and border control. The main drug abused and seized in Indonesia is crystal methamphetamine. Middle Eastern criminal organizations produce methamphetamine in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border region and transport it in small vessels, typically with Iranian crews, avoiding shipping lanes and transferring the drugs at sea.

Criminal organizations based in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Burma fund the production of methamphetamine in Burma and transport the drugs through Malaysia into Indonesia. These organizations use Indonesia as a significant transit point for methamphetamine destined for Australia and New Zealand. Indonesia is also a significant market for MDMA (ecstasy), most often sourced from the PRC or the Netherlands. Cannabis is primarily grown in northern Sumatra and other parts of Indonesia for domestic consumption. An emerging trend during the COVID-19 global pandemic is the sale of small amounts of narcotics on social media accounts for individual use. The Indonesian Government, including the Anti-Narcotics Agency (BNN) and Indonesia National Police (INP), continued efforts to investigate, disrupt, interdict, and prosecute crimes related to illicit narcotics in 2021.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The BNN budget in 2021 was expected to increase by 8 percent; however, with the prolonged pandemic only a 2.4 percent increase was approved. The head of BNN, Petrus Golose, stated that if the pandemic continues, the agency projects only a 1 percent increase in 2022.

In 2021, Golose and Indonesia's Maritime Security Agency Chief Vice Admiral Aan Kurnia announced their first joint operations resulting in drug seizures. BNN and INP also worked with Customs to interdict drug shipments at sea. BNN has initiated a Memorandum of Understanding with four prominent maritime agencies -- Customs and Excise office, Marine and Air Police Corps, Sea Transportation Directorate, and the Directorate General of Marine Resources and Fisheries Law Enforcement -- for integrated sea operations. Under this Memorandum, all parties agreed to share information, integrate operations and patrols, and jointly share each other's infrastructures. Additionally, INP and the Indonesian Financial Transaction Reports and Analysis Center worked together to investigate money laundering resulting from drug trafficking.

BNN received high marks for its annual financial audit by the Indonesia supreme audit agency (BPK) for the eighth consecutive year. The audit reviews how BNN disburses and uses its funding for programs, activities, and operational purposes. Samples are taken from 233 BNN units and sections across Indonesia.

BNN is actively maintaining and building relationships with international partners including Malaysia and the United States that share similar views regarding the global challenge posed by the drug trade, the threat of new psychoactive substances (NPS), and the importance of reducing demand by supporting drug rehabilitation programs.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

Between January and September 2021, BNN investigated at least 30 narcotics cases and destroyed evidence of approximately 127 kilograms (kg) of crystal methamphetamine, 164,874 MDMA pills, and 988.31 kg of dried cannabis.

INP and BNN held a joint press conference April 28, 2021, to announce the collective seizure of 2.5 metric tons of crystal methamphetamine following a series of operations against what they called the “Middle East-Malaysia-Indonesia network.” The seized drugs were transported by sea from Afghanistan and transited through Malaysia and were worth approximately \$100 million.

As a result of joint investigations involving several different law enforcement agencies in Aceh, Indonesian authorities destroyed two hectares of cannabis, and five metric tons of marijuana. BNN conducted many such operations in 2021 to promote Indonesia’s “BERSINAR” program (“Indonesia is a drug-free zone”).

In October 2021, BNN signed a Plan of Action with the National Commission for Development and Life without Drugs (DEVIDA) to replicate DEVIDA’s efforts in Peru that successfully converted coca plant farming into the cultivation of commodities such as coffee, bananas, and cocoa. The project aims to support BNN efforts in Aceh for alternative development of cannabis crops into crops that support the national food supply.

BNN continued to provide recommendations to the Ministry of Health on measures to control NPS; as of October 2021 no additions had been made to the 73 different NPS identified as illegal by the Government of Indonesia and regulated by the Ministry of Health. Four remaining NPS are not yet included in the Ministry’s Regulation in 2021.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Narcotics law no. 35 (2009) provides detailed guidance on drug user rehabilitation versus criminalization; an updated list of narcotics; and the establishment of drug courts. Indonesian law allows for the death penalty for narcotics offenses. Several senior government officials are taking note that low-level drug offenses are a leading cause of overcrowding in prisons; the Director General of Corrections met with the National Planning Agency in 2021 to discuss implementation of the law to emphasize successful rehabilitation and possibly alternative justice in place of incarceration.

BNN also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection in September to support assistance to women and children who encounter drugs. A program under the MoU entitled “Drug Free School” enhances the awareness of parents and school children about the dangers of drug abuse.

#### **4. Corruption**

The Indonesian government does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, corruption at all levels of government and society continues to be endemic and undermines the country's counternarcotics efforts. Information regarding corrupt law enforcement is made available to the public; for example, press reported on October 1 that 11 police officers in Asahan were arrested for stealing drugs seized as evidence and then selling it to an illegal drug syndicate.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

Information provided by the United States contributed to significant drug seizures in 2021, including intelligence regarding Middle Eastern organizations sending shipments of crystal methamphetamine via dhow vessel to Indonesia, primarily to the Banda Aceh, North Sumatra region.

Although there are no bilateral mutual legal assistance or extradition treaties between Indonesia and the United States, Indonesia does cooperate to some extent. For example, Indonesia's domestic extradition law provides for the possibility of extradition of non-Indonesia citizens with the approval of the President. Indonesia can also rely on various multilateral treaties as a basis for mutual legal assistance.

Indonesian law enforcement agencies requested the United States resume counterdrug training even while Indonesia was under COVID-19 lockdown status. During the summer of 2021, United States attachés conducted counternarcotics workshops for the INP and BNN in Yogyakarta and Malang. The workshops included classroom instruction and extensive simulated exercises on informant handling, surveillance, arrests, and property searches.

In 2021, the United States provided funds to the International Consortium of Universities of Drug Demand Reduction to create an International Technology and Training Center in partnership with BNN and Indonesian universities, hospitals, and drug treatment centers. The United States also partnered with Indonesia and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to deliver drug demand reduction information to persons incarcerated in Indonesian prisons.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Although Indonesia is committed to reducing drug consumption and enforcing its drug control laws, demand for illicit narcotics appears to be growing. The United States will continue to support Indonesian law enforcement efforts to disrupt the international drug trade, particularly in the maritime arena, while also helping Indonesia embrace a wide range of interventions aimed at reducing drug use and associated problems.



## Iran

Iran is a significant transit and destination country for opiates, cannabis products, and methamphetamine, the vast majority originating in Afghanistan. Significant volumes of methamphetamine are also produced and consumed within Iran, as well as trafficked to international markets. Drugs transiting Iran move primarily through Iran's northern border to Turkey and Azerbaijan, as well as by sea from Iran into Eastern Africa, for further transshipment to international markets. Some corrupt Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps personnel reportedly facilitate illicit drug smuggling or profit from the drug trade. An estimated 9,000 metric tons of drugs pass through Iran annually, according to Iranian press reports. There was a notable increase in drug seizures and violent incidents along the Iran-Azerbaijan border in 2021.

Iran's Drug Control Headquarters (DCHQ) is the country's leading drug policy coordination body and reports directly to the country's president. The Law Enforcement Force (LEF) comprises the country's uniformed police units, including the Anti-Narcotics Police and border interdiction forces. The Iranian government treats illicit drug consumption as a serious challenge. DCHQ authorities estimate that 2.8 million people regularly use some form of illicit drug within the country. Iranian authorities also believe there could be more than 1.4 million additional unidentified persons with substance use disorders in Iran. Opium is the most widely used illicit drug in Iran, according to Iranian authorities, followed by cannabis products and methamphetamine (known locally as "shisheh" or "glass").

Most of the government's counternarcotics efforts are focused on interdiction and law enforcement. Non-governmental organizations and the private sector manage the majority of Iran's demand reduction and treatment centers. Iran closed many treatment centers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime maintains a field office in Tehran that provides training and capacity support to Iranian authorities, including on demand reduction, drug interdiction, and forensic analysis of drug seizures. Iran maintains liaison relationships with some neighboring countries and has made some attempts to expand law enforcement cooperation with them. For example, on February 9, 2021, then Judiciary Chief Ibrahim Raisi signed an agreement with his Iraqi counterpart to increase cooperation against drug trafficking. However, operational cooperation on international investigations remains limited. According to Iranian authorities, the government spends over \$700 million a year on border control. Drug control cooperation between Iran and European states has been limited partially due to concerns over the Iranian government's widespread application of the death penalty for drug offenses.

# Jamaica

## A. Introduction

Jamaica is the largest Caribbean source country of marijuana and a transit point for cocaine trafficked from South America to North America and other international markets. Traffickers also export Jamaican-grown marijuana to other Caribbean countries in return for illicit firearms and other contraband. Criminal gangs in Jamaica and Haiti engage in a thriving “guns for ganja (marijuana)” enterprise in which, for example, Jamaican criminals use marijuana for currency with which to obtain guns or other contraband from criminal entities in Haiti.

Due to Jamaica’s geographic position in the western Caribbean, a coastline with over 150 unmanned seaports, its high volume of tourist travel, and status as a major containerized cargo transshipment hub, the country is a prime location for drug trafficking. The U.S. and Jamaican governments cooperate by means of bilateral legal assistance and extradition treaties, agreements on maritime law enforcement, sharing of intercept information, and sharing forfeited assets. Jamaica’s drug control efforts face significant challenges from weak drug penalties, internal conspiracies and corruption, organized crime, gang activity, resource constraints, and an inefficient criminal justice system.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The United States and Jamaica have strong law enforcement cooperation on targeting illicit drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) Coast Guard is responsible for maritime law enforcement, while the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) is the primary agency responsible for drug enforcement on land. Jamaica has a draft national drug control strategy that has yet to be finalized and is due to expire at the end of 2021.

Jamaica’s efforts to bring drug traffickers to justice are hobbled by an under-resourced and overburdened police and judicial system. Drug traffickers often discard the drugs at sea when confronted, leaving authorities with insufficient evidence for criminal charges. This, along with repeated delays and trial postponements, contributes to significant case backlogs leading to impunity for many offenders. In response, the Jamaican government, with U.S. government support, strives to make progress towards reducing the backlog of court cases and provide more timely justice.

The United States and Jamaica are bilateral parties to a mutual legal assistance treaty, a ship rider agreement, and an extradition treaty. In 2021, Jamaica amended its extradition treaty to facilitate extraditions. The United States and Jamaica share intelligence and make use of a reciprocal agreement to share forfeited criminal assets and a bilateral agreement on law enforcement cooperation on maritime interdiction of illicit traffickers, including boarding of suspicious vessels and embarkation of law enforcement officials on the other country’s ships.

## 2. Supply Reduction

According to the JCF, authorities seized 290 kilograms (kg) of cocaine over the first nine months in 2021, an increase from 67 kg seized during the same period in 2020. While most cocaine reaches Jamaica via small “go-fast” vessels from Central and South America, cocaine seizures at or near the Port of Kingston indicate large shipments reach Jamaica via commercial shipping containers from South America. After reaching Jamaica, some cocaine shipments are transshipped in containers through the Port of Kingston onto vessels or aircraft bound for the United States and other international markets or are divided for outbound shipment concealed in mail, parts of aircraft, luggage, air freight, and human couriers.

Despite COVID-19 lockdowns, according to police data, during the first eight months of 2021 Jamaican authorities, supported by the United States, eradicated 199 hectares (ha) of cannabis plants (compared to 253 ha in 2020) and seized approximately 15 MT of cured marijuana, compared to 20 MT in the first eight months of 2020.

Traffickers smuggle Jamaican-grown marijuana out of the country via commercial shipping and small vessels. Small fishing vessels and speedboats carry marijuana to Central America, Haiti, the Cayman Islands, and The Bahamas. Police and customs officials also target marijuana shipments smuggled via commercial shipping directly to the United States.

Jamaica prohibits the manufacture, sale, transport, and possession of MDMA (ecstasy) and methamphetamine and regulates the precursor chemicals used to produce them. There were no reports of synthetic drugs or precursor chemicals produced or trafficked in Jamaica in 2021. U.S. law enforcement agencies work closely with Jamaican police and customs officials to develop leads, share information, and facilitate interdiction of drug shipments originating in or transiting through Jamaica. In the first nine months of 2021, 634 persons were arrested for drug crimes, an increase from the arrests in 2020.

## 3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment

The Ministry of Health’s National Council on Drug Abuse provides assessment, counseling, and treatment services for substance abusers and conducts prevention programs for targeted populations such as children and parents. In 2021, the Ministry of Health funded a campaign entitled “Good Ganja Sense” to dispel myths about cannabis, increase awareness about decriminalization and legalization and the difference between recreational and medicinal use of marijuana. The latest household study from 2016 found that 28 percent of the population (12-65 years) had used marijuana at some point in their lifetime and the latest secondary school survey (2017) found that the average age of first-time substance use is 12-13 years old.

The Jamaican government operates one detoxification center and offers services at Kingston’s Bellevue Hospital (a mental health institution). Drug treatment remains underfunded and under resourced. Significant partnerships include the United States, Organization of American States, European Union, World Health Organization, United Nations, and the Caribbean Community.

#### **4. Corruption**

As a matter of policy, the Jamaican government does not encourage or facilitate illegal activity associated with drug trafficking or the laundering of proceeds from illicit drug transactions. Jamaican law penalizes corruption, but in practice, corruption remains entrenched and widespread even among law enforcement and senior government officials. Further, the judicial system has a poor record of prosecuting corruption cases against law enforcement and government officials. Internal conspiracy schemes at Jamaica's airports and seaports facilitates the movement of drug shipments across borders, and organized crime leaders have historically had ties to government officials.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The U.S. and Jamaican governments coordinate closely on shared priorities related to illicit drug control, including investigative capacity, customs cooperation, maritime security, and support to the judicial system. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) is a security partnership between the United States and nations of the Caribbean that seeks amongst other objectives to reduce illicit trafficking and improve public safety. CBSI support to Jamaica includes training, equipment, technical assistance, and logistical support for interdicting illicit drugs and trafficked firearms, developing more effective and efficient criminal case procedures, and for combating financial other organized crime. The United States has supported the JCF's Narcotics Division and the JDF's Military Intelligence Unit and Coast Guard with equipment and training. The U.S. government continues to raise concerns about illicit drug trafficking with the Jamaican government as well as transportation agencies and commercial shippers.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Cooperation between Jamaica and the United States related to drug trafficking and transnational crime continued to be strong in 2021, especially as it pertained to efforts to dismantle internal conspiracies at airports. Significant progress against drug trafficking will depend on efforts to arrest and prosecute high level drug traffickers and their accomplices, increase penalties for drug trafficking, combat internal conspiracies and corruption, increase extraditions, finalize and implement a national drug strategy, and provide swift justice to hold drug traffickers accountable.

# Kazakhstan

## A. Introduction

Kazakhstan is a transit country for Afghan opiates destined for Russia and Europe. Heroin seizures have gradually declined for the past six years (with one exception in 2019), suggesting the rise of alternative trafficking routes to the European and Russian market. Anecdotal reports from non-government organizations (NGOs) indicate local use and availability of heroin continues to decline.

Conversely, the synthetic drug market continues to expand, outpacing the use of traditional drugs. The nationwide shutdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and early 2021 created temporary shortages of illicit drugs. However, these shortages have dissipated. In the first nine months of 2021, Kazakhstan's domestic clandestine drug laboratories reportedly met the needs of the country's synthetic drug user population. In the past the bulk of synthetic drugs were imported.

Kazakhstan has over 144,000 hectares of cannabis growing in the wild and seeds imported from the Netherlands are used to cultivate the drug in the northern part of the country. Hashish is also produced in Kazakhstan.

The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan and its past reliance on illicit drugs as source of revenue could potentially result in an increase in Afghan heroin production and trafficking along the Northern Route to Europe.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments/Policies and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Kazakhstan's National Security Strategy outlines the country's counternarcotics goals. The country implements drug demand reduction and treatment in accordance with its National Healthcare Strategy for 2020-2025. Kazakhstan has adequate laws and resources to confront drug trafficking, although it is seeking assistance to combat the use of encrypted messaging platforms exploited by traffickers for drug sales. In September 2021, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (the nation's police agency) placed an additional 29 synthetic drugs and precursors on the controlled substances list. Changes to the law in 2021 made sales of more than one gram of any synthetic drug a felony.

Kazakhstan is host to and a member of the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center for Combatting Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Their Precursors (CARICC). The government of Kazakhstan provides both facilities and funding to the CARICC, based in Almaty.

## 2. Supply Reduction

During the first nine months of 2021, with the resumption of domestic and international commerce following periodic pandemic related lockdowns, Kazakhstani law enforcement seized 57 kilograms (kg) of heroin (compared to six kg for the same period in 2020); 842 kg of hashish (compared to 505 kg for the first nine months of 2020); and ten metric tons (MT) of marijuana (compared to six MT for the same period in 2020).

Total seizures of all synthetic drugs for the first nine months of 2021 were 166 kg (compared to 240 kg in 2020). The seizures were primarily of alpha-pyrrolidinovalerophenone (alpha-PVP), and mephedrone, with smaller amounts of methamphetamine and MDMA. The number of clandestine drug manufacturing laboratories seized was 40 for the first nine months of 2021 compared to 21 for the same period in 2020. The laboratories showed increased sophistication, using professional laboratory equipment. The Ministry of Internal Affairs seized three MT of precursor chemicals from laboratories. Mephedrone and alpha-PVP are the most common synthetic drugs manufactured in clandestine laboratories. Police believe clandestine laboratories pose a lower risk to traffickers than smuggling finished product from outside the country. The Ministry of Internal Affairs reported that some seized laboratories demonstrated a capacity for high levels of production. Law enforcement submitted requests to close 845 websites and online accounts that provided information on the distribution of illegal drugs.

One dosage unit of heroin (0.2 to 0.3 grams) costs between \$28 to \$32, depending on purity and region of the country. A gram of mephedrone costs \$42, while individual dosage units (0.3 grams) of the drug averages \$14.

In addition to locally produced and imported synthetic drugs, users buy pharmaceuticals like tramadol or tropicamide eye drops (a pupil dilator used in eye exams and generally used in conjunction with heroin) with relative ease, despite the need for a prescription. Chemical precursors for manufacturing synthetics are imported from Russia and China, while laboratory equipment is purchased online from the latter. Clandestine laboratories are generally found in rural areas.

The tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content of cannabis can vary from one percent for plants growing in the wild in Kazakhstan's north and to up to 15 percent for cannabis grown in the south. Cannabis grown indoors has much higher THC content.

## 3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment

The age of the user often dictates the types of drugs abused, with adolescents using pharmaceutical drugs like tramadol and adults under 30 using amphetamines and other synthetic drugs. Older users generally abuse cannabis, hashish, or heroin or convert poppy seeds into a cheap and low-grade heroin. Younger generations' changed preferences make heroin markedly less popular overall compared to past years. There are 18,952 registered drug users in Kazakhstan, 1,506 of whom are female. Of the total, 6,100 are registered as suffering from substance use disorders involving heroin (4,500) and opium (1,600).

The Ministry of Internal Affairs working with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, and NGOs, conducted 3,153 drug demand reduction events in 2021, reaching 177,000 people. The government produced two videos for the parents of ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders that focused on the dangers of synthetic and pharmaceutical drugs.

With support from the United States, the Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America continued its program for community based anti-drug programming in six regions of Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan provides residential drug-abuse treatment through government and non-governmental organizations. The government provides methadone maintenance. NGOs reported in 2021 that fewer people sought drug abuse treatment than in previous years, to avoid being reported to the police.

#### **4. Corruption**

The Government of Kazakhstan does not, as a matter of policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. Three law enforcement officers were arrested in the first nine months of 2021 and convicted of possession with intent to distribute an illegal drug. Two of the officers received prison sentences of 10 and 15 years respectively, while the third was fined.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

U.S. drug-control programs aim to improve Kazakhstan's capacity to combat drug trafficking and drug demand. The United States supports counternarcotics capacity-building with a focus on countering drug-related money laundering and will support the introduction of a drug treatment curriculum at medical schools. All U.S. government programs enjoy host-government support. Kazakhstan has a mutual legal assistance agreement with the United States.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Kazakhstan is committed to continuing drug-demand and supply-reduction efforts and strengthening international cooperation. The increase of synthetic drug production capacity of some seized laboratories in 2021 and law enforcement's assessment that these laboratories are meeting local demand are new areas of concern. COVID-19 related border closures appear to have inadvertently spurred a home-grown illicit drug industry.

# Kenya

## A. Introduction

Kenya is a transit country for illicit drugs, including heroin and cocaine, and domestic drug consumption is growing within the country. Precursor chemicals used to produce methamphetamine and other illicit drugs also transit Kenya. Cannabis and miraa (khat) are grown domestically for both local use and export.

Heroin originating from Southwest Asia enters Kenya via direct shipping across the Indian Ocean from South Asia and over the border with Tanzania. Most heroin entering Kenya is destined for international markets across the globe, principally Europe. Domestic heroin abuse is a growing concern in Kenya, especially along the coast and in the main port city of Mombasa. Cocaine enters Kenya primarily via transshipment through Ethiopia from South America.

Kenya recognizes the threat from the illegal drug trade, and along with regional neighbors it is taking steps to increase control of its territorial waters. This includes increased cooperation with regional maritime security bodies like the Djibouti Code of Conduct. Kenya is in the beginning stages of drafting a Maritime Security Strategy, in partnership with the International Maritime Organization. Increased enforcement and preventive measures in Kenya have had the effect in recent years of pushing some maritime drug transport southward, toward Tanzania, Mozambique, and beyond.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Kenya continues to target drug traffickers operating within Kenya. Kenya's primary drug enforcement agency, the Anti-Narcotics Unit within the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, is seen as the leading counternarcotics entity in East Africa.

Kenya's justice sector requires further strengthening to effectively prosecute and convict drug traffickers and transnational trafficking networks. International assistance, including from the United States, targets improvements in plea bargaining, alternative sentencing, and case management to speed up judicial proceedings and encourage low level cooperation in advancing major drug trafficking investigations.

Kenya is a member of the Djibouti Code of Conduct, which coordinates maritime security in the Western Indian Ocean, and is the chair of its Information Sharing Working Group. This is a young body with strong potential to empower nations in the region to exercise greater control and coordination in addressing trafficking threats along with other transnational crime.



## **2. Supply Reduction**

During the first nine months of 2021, the Anti-Narcotics Unit seized approximately 10 kilograms (kg) of heroin and approximately 2.25 metric tons of cannabis, along with 250 grams of cocaine, one kg of methamphetamine, and small quantities of ketamine, rohypnol, MDMA (ecstasy), and assorted prescription drugs. Authorities seized approximately \$180,000 from vehicles linked to suspected drug trafficking. In October 2021, Kenyan authorities in coordination with Interpol and the United States arrested and expelled a major Iranian heroin trafficker for trial in the United States.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Law enforcement, health officials, and leading politicians recognized the danger posed to the public of increasing use of illicit narcotics. The National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) is a national demand reduction organization focused on educating Kenyan citizens on the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. A 2016 survey of secondary students in Kenya found that 7 percent had used marijuana and 1 percent had used heroin. Estimates by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and others have estimated that Kenya has at least 50,000 people who inject drugs, most located along the coast, in Mombasa, and in Nairobi.

In June 2021 NACADA published “National Guidelines for Alcohol and Substance Use Prevention and Management in Basic Education Institutions” and in July 2021 it published “National Guidelines on Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention.” NACADA operates a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week helpline for addiction counseling and referrals to hospitals and treatment, as well as family support. In September 2021, NACADA and UNODC, with U.S. support, launched a trial training curriculum on the use of alternatives to incarceration to refer some individuals suffering from substance use disorders for treatment and reduce related overcrowding in corrections facilities.

## **4. Corruption**

Kenya does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, endemic corruption is perhaps the most important factor constraining Kenya’s progression toward good governance, development, and regional leadership in Africa. Both Kenyan and international media highlight the role of gang activity in supporting the drug trade in the port city of Mombasa and along the Kenya-Tanzania border, reportedly with the complicity of low-level law enforcement.

The government has made some efforts to combat the problem. Kenya’s National Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission maintains oversight of drug-related corruption. Kenyan law enforcement supports U.S. investigations and conducts its own into corrupt officials who are directly or indirectly involved in drug-related crimes, such as money laundering or obstruction of justice. The former governor of Nairobi, Mike Sonko, is currently facing prosecution on

corruption charges and has widely been accused of operating a narcotics-trafficking network in Nairobi and elsewhere in Kenya.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The Government of Kenya is committed to countering the flow of drugs through and within its territory, and its efforts have had some impact in diverting traffickers to less restrictive neighboring countries. With U.S. support, the Kenyan government is expanding its liaison and communication with drug and border enforcement authorities in East Africa and undertaking assessments of its border security capacity and capability to address trafficking of illegal drugs and other goods. The United States continues to assist the Kenyan government in expanding the use of plea bargaining and alternative sentencing in drug-related cases to facilitate the investigation and prosecution of transnational narcotics networks.

The United States also bolstered Kenya's maritime capability by initiating a security cooperation partnership with the Kenyan Coast Guard Service (KCGS) in July 2021. The program seeks to build technical skills including seamanship, boarding team, and vessel maintenance proficiency. Several international partners - including the United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, Denmark, the EU, the International Maritime Organization, and UNODC - are partnering with the United States to support KCGS development.

Extradition between Kenya and the United States is governed by the 1931 U.S.-United Kingdom Extradition Treaty. There is no bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty between Kenya and the United States, though both countries are parties to various multilateral conventions with provisions for assistance.

The United States remains committed to continued bilateral cooperation with Kenya to counter drug trafficking. Kenya remains receptive to U.S. mentoring programs and continues to support U.S. drug trafficking investigations on a regular basis. The United States has helped Kenya establish a specialized drug investigative unit and has provided advanced training and mentoring to this unit.

### **D. Conclusion**

Kenya's geographic position in the Western Indian Ocean makes it an attractive target for narcotics traffickers moving drugs from Asia and Latin America to Europe and the Arabian Peninsula, and the growth of substance use disorder within the country is a concern. The Government of Kenya, law enforcement, and civil society continue to preach vigilance, publicly reject the illicit narcotics trade, and support demand reduction and mental health efforts, but public corruption is a major factor in the effectiveness of all Kenyan government endeavors. Kenya is a strong potential partner on international law enforcement cooperation and should continue to prioritize improving Kenyan control over the maritime environment in the Western Indian Ocean, as well as expand coordination with regional law enforcement and border forces to better combat transnational networks.

# Kyrgyz Republic

## A. Introduction

The Kyrgyz Republic's geographic location, membership in the Eurasian Economic Union, limited resources, and weak criminal justice system make it a prime transshipment location. The Kyrgyz Republic lies along a significant transit route for illegal drugs moving north from Afghanistan to Russia, and to a lesser extent into Europe. Illicit drugs are often smuggled into the country from Tajikistan across un-demarcated borders. The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan has increased the risk of illegal drug trafficking through Kyrgyz Republic.

The Counter Narcotics Service (CNS) under the Kyrgyz Ministry of Interior (MOI) is responsible for countering illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and their precursors. The Ministry of Health controls the legal use of narcotic drugs. The Kyrgyz Republic has shown a commitment to fighting drug use. Domestically, the Kyrgyz Republic continues to work on identifying new types of psychoactive substances, coordinating law enforcement activities to improve drug interdiction, and improving border controls.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Kyrgyz Republic's 2014 National Anti-Drug Program and Action Plan to counter drug use and crime is still being implemented. Plans to adopt a new action plan in 2021 were delayed due to a political crisis related to the annulled parliamentary elections in October 2020. The new National Anti-Drug Program and Action Plan is expected to be approved in the first quarter of 2022. In addition, the draft "Law on Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances, and their Precursors" is pending approval. The United States works closely with the Ministry of Health and Social Development to ensure the new law maintains confidentiality, protects human rights, and combats discrimination. CNS has prioritized efforts against synthetic drugs and psychoactive substances.

The Kyrgyz Republic is a member of the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center (CARICC), which promotes regional information sharing and cooperative operations to combat transnational drug trafficking.

### 2. Supply Reduction

In October 2021, CNS and the Customs Service conducted a special operation seizing 10 kilograms (kg) of methamphetamine worth \$531,286 transiting from Iran through Uzbekistan. In the first eight months of 2021, law enforcement agencies registered 754 drug crimes, an 18 percent increase from the same period in 2020, and drug-related crime amounted to 2.45 percent of total crime.

In 2021, MOI announced the seizure of 120 kg of hashish, 445 kg of heroin, seven kg of opium, and 177 kg of marijuana: a total of 749 kg of illicit drugs, a nearly 50 percent increase from 2020. Notably, in 2021 MOI also seized 4,934 kg of precursor chemicals.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The United States supports the Kyrgyz Republic through advocacy programs aimed at improving access to quality drug prevention and treatment services. These programs include organizing high-level advocacy meetings, supporting technical expert groups, reviewing policy and legal documents, and building the capacity of health care workers and civil society organizations to assist key populations.

According to the Ministry of Health's Republican Narcology Center, the number of officially registered "People Who Inject Drugs" was 5,113 as of January 1, 2021, a substantial decrease from 2015 when 6,358 persons were registered. According to the Narcology Center, the decrease was mainly due to the high mortality rate among drug users due to tuberculosis, AIDS, overdose, and other health conditions. The prison system has registered 413 people who inject drugs, or five percent of the total prison population.

Prevention programs for key populations, including harm reduction programs, are an important component under the comprehensive response to the HIV epidemic in Kyrgyzstan. Funding for harm reduction program activities is provided through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) grants. The United States provides technical assistance through capacity building for government and health care workers. Kyrgyz government funding for harm reduction activities remains limited. Young people are increasingly using new psychoactive substances because they are relatively cheap and accessible online.

### **4. Corruption**

The Kyrgyz Republic government does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, there are instances of corruption among law enforcement agencies and politicians in aiding the transport of drugs. Eradication of corruption is commonly claimed as a priority, but the results have been mixed, and corruption remains widespread. The Kyrgyz Republic adopted a new anti-corruption strategy in September 2020. While Kyrgyz law provides criminal penalties for public officials convicted of corruption, the government has not implemented the law effectively. The payment of bribes to avoid investigation or prosecution is pervasive at all levels. Likewise, law enforcement officers, particularly in the southern part of the country, employ arbitrary arrest, detainee abuse, and the threat of criminal prosecution to extort cash payments from citizens.

The Kyrgyz Republic is in the process of a government-wide reorganization and revision of the country's criminal codes. As a result, the State Service for Combatting Economic Crimes (Financial Police), as well as the anti-corruption branch of the State Committee for National Security (GKNB), were dissolved in 2021. The new criminal codes, which were sent back to parliament for revision by the President in October, will determine the official agencies

responsible for the investigation of corruption; however, it is likely the Prosecutor General's Office and investigative department of the GKNB will handle future corruption cases. Also, a new anti-corruption council under the president was created to direct governmental anti-corruption policies.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

United States policy objectives in the Kyrgyz Republic are to strengthen the existing capacity of law enforcement bodies, expand their ability to investigate and prosecute criminal cases, enhance anti-corruption efforts, and increase overall security in the country.

There has been limited engagement from the Kyrgyz MOI, the State Customs Service, or the State Border Service with the United States in countering narcotics trafficking. A proposed memorandum of cooperation between the MOI and the United States designed to replace the previous memorandum stalled in the approval process.

The Kyrgyz Republic does not have an extradition agreement or mutual legal assistance agreement with the United States. However, it is a signatory to multilateral legal instruments that can be used to facilitate cooperation.

### **D. Conclusion**

The Kyrgyz Republic's location makes it a prime candidate for transit of drugs, particularly from Afghanistan, that can then be shipped to Kazakhstan, Russia, and the European Union's border without further customs checks due to its membership in the Eurasian Economic Union. The CNS lacks capacity to effectively address drug smuggling but shows a willingness to work with international partners to improve its performance. The Prosecutor General's Office is also interested in working with partner countries to arrest and extradite drug smugglers. Sources in the MOI believe it is impossible to stop the flow of drug trafficking along non-demarcated borders until Kyrgyz, Uzbek, and Tajik authorities bring an end to border conflicts and demarcate the border. Tackling corruption and transnational crime syndicates while demarcating borders could help reduce the quantity of drugs trafficked from Afghanistan.

# Laos

## A. Introduction

Laos shares approximately 3,000 miles of porous borders with Burma, Cambodia, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Thailand, and Vietnam. Laos is a key transit route for both precursor chemicals into the Golden Triangle (Thailand, Laos, and Burma) and for methamphetamine to the Asia-Pacific market. Methamphetamine production facilities discovered in northern Laos in 2021 indicate in-country drug production is growing. Despite closed borders, methamphetamine seizures increased six-fold during the first six months of 2021 compared to the preceding year.

Most of the opium produced in Laos is destined for export and refinement into heroin. Laos is not a significant source of opiates trafficked to the United States. The Lao National Commission for Drug Control and Supervision (LCDC) reported 4,624 hectares (ha) cultivated in 2019 and 5,290 ha in 2020. The United States plans to fund a new opium survey in 2022. Drug production is limited, but seizure data indicates trafficking of methamphetamine, amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), and heroin from Burma is increasing, fueling domestic drug use.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The National Steering Committee to Combat Drugs, chaired by the prime minister, is Laos' top policy-making body for drug control. The LCDC and the Counternarcotic Police Department (DCD), under the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), are the main coordinating bodies for drug-related law enforcement activities. Police are organized into 18 provincial Counter Narcotics Units, one for each province and the capital. Laos does not have a bilateral extradition or a mutual legal assistance agreement with the United States; however, Laos has acceded to multilateral conventions that enable such cooperation. Laos is receptive to training opportunities. However, MPS, which has asked for equipment support, has declined to sign a Letter of Agreement with the United States for bilateral cooperation to address drug trafficking and transnational crime. Laos has also been reluctant to approve an additional U.S. position assigned to U.S. Embassy Vientiane to enhance counternarcotics cooperation.

According to a Prime Minister's Office notice, MPS will consider stronger penalties for its drug suppression agenda. Currently Laos retains the death penalty for serious drug offenses.

Laos' drug policy faces three overlapping problems. First, Laos remains a significant producer of illicit opium poppy. LCDC data suggest the total area of opium cultivation in 2020 was 5,290 hectares, up from 4,624 in 2019. The United States plans to provide funding to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to conduct for a formal opium survey in 2022 to obtain updated numbers.

Second, drug use in Laos is on the rise. Policy responses are based on a public health approach. The government continues to invest in in-patient drug treatment centers as a primary response.

UNODC, international partners, and the United States, in cooperation with Laos' government, are implementing community-based treatment centers across the country.

Third, significant quantities of opiates, ATS, and precursors continue to be trafficked through Laos to neighboring countries. The United States and other donors are making further investments in coordination with the government of Laos to improve border control, especially through a network of border liaison offices. The criminal justice system is directing investigative and prosecutorial resources towards targeting individuals and networks involved with criminal networks. A National Drug Control Master Plan for 2020-2025 is under review by the Government of Laos along with National Agenda regulations regarding drug control.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

Laos' drug control authorities have increased their cooperation on border control and interdiction with counterparts in neighboring countries over the past several years. Laos joined other member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in adopting the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle. The plan represents a concerted effort to reduce drug trafficking and production in the Golden Triangle border region, building on the Safe Mekong Joint Operation Project, which began in 2013, and the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs (2016-2025). The Safe Mekong Joint Operation Project on Drug Control is focused on disrupting the flow of drugs out of the Golden Triangle and intercepting the flow of chemical precursors into the region. Partner countries include the PRC, Thailand, Vietnam, Burma, and Cambodia.

Police processed 1,523 drug-related cases and arrested 2,138 people, including 55 foreigners, between January and June 2021. According to the government's reporting for the first half of 2021, police confiscated 319 kilograms (kg) of heroin, 15 kg of opium, over 1.7 metric tons of cannabis, over 35 million amphetamine tablets, and over 506 kg of crystal methamphetamine. Media reported that an additional 17 million methamphetamine tablets were confiscated in July 2021, and 72.6 million methamphetamine tablets and 1,537 kg of crystal methamphetamine in October 2021.

In 2016, the United States launched a three-year, \$1.5 million alternative development program with the UNODC in Houaphanh province and, in 2020 and 2021, the United States provided additional funding to the project, which assists former opium poppy farmers to develop and sustain coffee plantations. In 2018, the United States signed a Letter of Agreement with Laos' Department of Customs focused on improving border security and disrupting the flow of illicit substances into Laos.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The government prioritized combating illicit drugs on its National Agenda in 2021 and has increased efforts to raise awareness of the risks and consequences of drug use through mass media. The government's official figure of 40,000 consumers of illicit drugs in the country likely underestimates usage.

Government drug treatment facilities lack resources to provide evidence-based treatment and follow-up. To encourage demand reduction, the United States partners with UNODC to support the adoption of community-based, voluntary treatment and provides funding for 28 community-based treatment centers. This funding provides screening and counseling services at district hospitals in six provinces. The United States also trains national trainers on U.S.-developed Universal Protection and Treatment Curricula, again in partnership with UNODC.

In October 2020, Laos marked the 19<sup>th</sup> National Day Against Drug Abuse by destroying 700 kg of illicit drugs. Vientiane's mayor highlighted the dangers of substance use disorder and trafficking.

#### **4. Corruption**

Laos does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. Salaries for police, military, and civil authorities are low, and corruption in Laos remains endemic.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The National Assembly's ninth legislature and the National Agenda on Drug Problems 2021-2023 introduced measures to counter narcotics. The agenda articulates six priorities: awareness raising; creation and dissemination of laws and regulations; strengthening of law enforcement agencies; improvement of drug control management and cooperation; improving political system capacity from local to national levels to address drug issues; and increasing international cooperation. The Master Plan provides a framework for implementing Laos' national drug laws and calls for a budget of \$18 million over five years. Implementation funds are expected to come from the national budget and international donors.

The United States supports Laos' goal to strengthen the rule of law and create a better environment for combating transnational crime. Most U.S. counternarcotics assistance to Laos supports law enforcement, including training and equipment for the DCD, Counternarcotics Units, and Customs department. In December 2021, the Government of Laos approved the reestablishment of the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Director position at U.S. Embassy Vientiane, which will increase bilateral counternarcotics cooperation.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Drug control cooperation between Laos and the United States is increasing and focuses on border security and improved law enforcement capacity. Drug trafficking networks across Southeast Asia span international borders, requiring strong regional law enforcement capacity and cooperation. Laos' drug enforcement institutions lack the necessary resources to counter the increasingly sophisticated drug-related crimes that have accompanied the country's economic integration into the global economy.



# Liberia

## A. Introduction

While Liberia is not a significant transit country for illicit narcotics bound for the United States or Europe, the country's nascent law enforcement capacity, porous border controls, and proximity to major drug transit routes contribute to trafficking, mostly of cocaine and heroin, to and through Liberia and onward to other West African countries. Liberia is not a significant producer of illicit narcotics, though local drug use, especially locally grown cannabis, is not uncommon. Other illicit drugs consumed within Liberia include heroin (mostly smoked), cocaine (snorted), and the synthetic opioid tramadol. Local authorities report an increased prevalence of amphetamine-type stimulants and intravenous drug use. Due to poor transportation and communications infrastructure and a lack of capacity and interest within the Government of Liberia, there is no reliable data on drug consumption or overall trends within Liberia. To date, there is no evidence of synthetic opioids being trafficked through Liberia. Most locally consumed drugs produced elsewhere enter Liberia by foot and vehicle traffic across land borders, with commercial aircraft and maritime vessels also serving as routes. Drug use among the country's youth is a growing public concern.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA), Liberia National Police (LNP), Liberia Coast Guard (under the Armed Forces of Liberia), and National Security Agency share responsibility for combating drug trafficking within Liberia. Some of the Nigerian criminal networks operating in Liberia traffic drugs. Local authorities work with the United States and other international partners to combat transnational crime. The LDEA and LNP have expanded coordination and information sharing with Interpol's West African Police Information System.

Liberian investigations and prosecutions of drug trafficking have improved since the 2014 LDEA Act and Controlled Drugs and Substances Act came into effect. The LDEA continues to improve its operational capacity and professionalism through using confidential sources; work with private businesses; initiating controlled deliveries; investigation of international smuggling groups; and inter-agency coordination.

The U.S.-Liberia extradition treaty dates from 1939 and is in effect. While no mutual legal assistance treaty between Liberia and the United States exists, both countries are nevertheless able to provide each other such assistance, and Liberia is a party to multilateral conventions that enable such cooperation.

### 2. Supply Reduction

Marijuana is the most widely available drug in Liberia. Little information is available on the extent of local cannabis cultivation and local trafficking networks, but the public does not view local cultivation as a major concern.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on counter-narcotics operations because officers and agents were periodically tasked with enforcing health protocols, making them less available for drug operations. In the first nine months of 2021, the LDEA seized approximately 5.3 kilograms (kg) of heroin, down significantly from 272 kg of heroin in 2020, as well as 4.1 kg of cocaine, down from 26.3 kg of cocaine in 2020. In addition, the LDEA seized one metric ton (MT) of marijuana. Though seizures were down, 211 narcotics cases were referred to the courts for prosecution in 2021. LDEA agents and LNP officers also participated in 62 U.S.-funded local trainings and multiple U.S.-funded virtual trainings during the year.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

There are no recent data available on current drug use within Liberia, though anecdotal reports indicate that drug use has increased in the emerging middle class and is common in the expat and Lebanese communities.

Due to a lack of resources and capacity, the government has conducted very little drug prevention, rehabilitation, or treatment since the 1970s (pre-civil war). Persons with substance use disorders are referred to the only psychiatric hospital in Liberia or to one of the few non-governmental organizations working in the field. The COVID-19 pandemic caused already scarce rehabilitation services to be reduced. COVID-19 social distancing measures precluded in-person public participation in the LDEA's annual drug burning to mark the International Day Against Illicit Drugs-World Drug Day, but invited journalists to live-stream the event, which led to heavy and generally positive coverage of the LDEA's work. LDEA and civil society groups have also advocated for passage of amendments to the Drug Law to make trafficking a non-bailable offence.

### **4. Corruption**

The Government of Liberia does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate the production or distribution of illicit drugs, nor is it involved in the laundering of proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, insufficient resources, an ineffective judicial system, and inadequate salaries for government employees and law enforcement officials facilitate corruption. The United States supports programs aimed at curbing corruption in the judiciary and elsewhere.

In July 2021, an LDEA official alleged in public remarks that she had intercepted a Liberian legislator who was trafficking drugs but retracted the claim after questioning by the Liberian House of Representatives. Press also reported that a National Security Agency official had been arrested for possession of marijuana and that a Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation official had stated some corrections officers were involved in narcotics trafficking in prison facilities. LDEA fired five agents, including the commander of the Grand Kru County detachment, for allegedly selling confiscated cocaine.

**C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States works with Liberia to address international drug trafficking and reduce local demand. Among ongoing initiatives, the United States is funding a \$2.5 million project through the UNODC to enhance Liberian law enforcement capacity to counter transnational crime and trafficking of drugs and other contraband. A drug demand reduction project is also under development. U.S. assistance seeks to build the Government of Liberia's capacity to develop criminal cases against international trafficking organizations active in the country and encourage judicial case processing and attorney understanding of anti-drug laws. Liberia waived jurisdiction over two Liberian-flagged vessels in 2021, permitting the United States to prosecute shore-based conspirators using the vessels to coordinate the shipment of illicit drugs.

**D. Conclusion**

The Government of Liberia has stated its commitment to preventing transnational criminal organizations from gaining a major foothold in its territory but lacks the resources and capacity to do so. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to present serious setbacks in resource allocation, manpower, and ability to conduct law enforcement operations. Despite significant constraints, the LDEA is also working with other regional drug enforcement entities to exchange intelligence and information – collaboration that has led to the successful arrest and prosecution of international traffickers within Liberia's borders. After years of effort to overcome institutional and political resistance, the LDEA has deployed to all of Liberia's official ports of entry. The United States will continue to support and assist Liberia's efforts to strengthen its law enforcement capacities and fulfill its international drug control commitments.

## Malaysia

Malaysia is a transit point for criminal organizations supplying illicit drugs to the Australian market. It is not a source country for illicit drugs bound for the United States. Drugs smuggled into Malaysia include crystal methamphetamine, MDMA (ecstasy), cannabis, heroin, ketamine, and Erimin 5 (nimetazepam). Malaysian drug seizures were considerably higher between January and September 2021 than during the same period in 2020. Methamphetamine is the most abused and trafficked drug in Malaysia.

The death penalty remains in effect for illicit drug trafficking despite calls by human rights groups to abolish capital punishment in Malaysia. Due to inadequate conspiracy laws and the high burden of proof required for a drug trafficking conviction, Malaysia has limited success in prosecuting drug trafficking organizations. Nevertheless, the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) remain committed in addressing the public health danger of illicit drug trafficking. The RMP reported that between January to September 2021, 37,834 persons were arrested for drug possession and 19,174 were arrested for supplying drugs.

From January to September 2021, Malaysian authorities seized 1.2 metric tons (MT) of heroin base, almost 7 MT of methamphetamine, 432 kilograms (kg) of ketamine, and 235 kg of MDMA.

Heroin and methamphetamine trafficking through Malaysia increased in 2021, likely due to increased production in Burma and new smuggling routes into Malaysia. Illicit drugs are also smuggled in from the “Golden Crescent,” including Iran and Pakistan. In addition to the above reported seizures, in October 2021 the RMP seized 398 kg of methamphetamine that originated in either Mexico or Guatemala. The RMP also reported that 16 clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were dismantled from January to September 2021.

Malaysia has extradition and mutual legal assistance treaties with the United States and there is a robust cooperation relationship on extradition and mutual legal assistance with the Malaysians. Malaysian authorities attended U.S.-funded virtual counternarcotics and drug/chemical diversion training. The United States also supported the completion of two command centers to further support arrests and interdictions. The facilities, located in the northern province of Kelantan in peninsular Malaysia and Sabah in East Malaysia, will be used by the RMP Narcotics Crime Investigation Department to enhance cross-border and maritime transnational criminal investigations.

# Mexico

## A. Introduction

Mexico is a significant source for heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, and synthetic opioids, especially fentanyl. Ninety seven percent of the heroin seized and scientifically analyzed in the United States originated in Mexico. Mexico also is a major transit country for cocaine from South America to the United States, a destination for fentanyl precursors originating from China, and the primary source of fentanyl and fentanyl-laced counterfeit pills destined for U.S. markets. U.S.-Mexico bilateral cooperation prioritizes reducing drug production and cultivation; inhibiting the illicit cross-border movement of drugs, cash, people, and weapons; denying revenue to transnational criminal organizations that traffic in narcotics; and developing criminal investigations and prosecutions against TCOs. Local and state security officials in Mexico report that conflict over control of retail drug sales, especially of methamphetamine, are a major security problem nationwide.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's administration expressed a commitment to reduce crime and violence through social programs aimed at addressing poverty and social inequalities and through the creation of the federal security force – the National Guard – that was created in 2019. In June 2021, to help curb government corruption, the administration gave the Mexican Navy control of all Mexican ports and vowed to reduce drug trafficking through the ports. Mexico's proposed 2022 federal budget for justice and national security increased 6 percent from 2021, largely to fund National Guard bases and stations, whereas spending on the army dropped for the first time since 2001, by 7.5 percent, in part because some funding is diverting to the National Guard. Effective investigations and implementation of an adversarial criminal justice system remain uneven, and 93 percent of crimes go unreported or uninvestigated.

### 2. Supply Reduction

Mexico is the main source of heroin for the US market. Mexican poppy cultivation and potential pure heroin production fell for the third consecutive year in 2020, reaching their lowest levels since 2014, according to U.S. government estimates. Poppy cultivation decreased 24 percent to 23,200 hectares (ha), down from 30,400 ha in 2019. This cultivation amount would produce approximately 59 metric tons of pure heroin.

The Mexican Office of the President publishes drug eradication and seizure statistics for civilian law enforcement agencies in Mexico. According to the President's Annual Report and Monthly Security Report, in 2020, Mexico eradicated 2,903.7 hectares (ha) of cannabis and 12,427 ha of opium poppy. For 2020, Mexico also reportedly seized 21.2 metric tons (MT) of cocaine (a 109 percent decrease from 2019); 188.7 MT of marijuana (11.5 percent decrease); 714.4 kg of opium gum (73 percent increase); 32.79 MT of methamphetamine (155 percent increase); 286 kg

of heroin (23.5 percent decrease), 158 clandestine laboratories (84 more than 2019); and 1.3 MT of fentanyl for 2020 (596 percent increase).

During the first six months of 2021, Mexico reported eradicating 474.6 hectares (ha) of cannabis and 7,913.5 hectares (ha) of opium poppy. Also during the first six months of 2021, Mexico seized 8.97 metric tons (MT) of cocaine (a 90.85 percent increase compared to the same time period in 2020); 43 MT of marijuana (58 percent decrease); 44.7 kg of opium gum (194 percent decrease); 29 MT kilograms of methamphetamine (144 percent increase); 141.5 kg of heroin (16 percent decrease), 17 clandestine laboratories (10 fewer than the same period in 2020); and 1 MT of fentanyl (81 percent more than the same period in 2020).

The Mexican government demonstrated progress in 2021 on measuring poppy cultivation, yield, and eradication through programs supported by the United States through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). According to UNODC's report on poppy cultivation, the Mexican army partnered with U.S. government agencies to enhance its counterdrug capacity in 2021 and has increased use of, but not fully maximized, a U.S.-funded poppy eradication validation program.

Canines donated by the United States to Mexico assisted in significant seizures of illicit drugs in 2021, including fentanyl and its precursors. During 2021, canines assisted in the seizure of 1 MT of methamphetamine, 21.28 kg of fentanyl, \$648,231, 121 illicit firearms, and other contraband.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Illegal drug consumption in Mexico has grown steadily since 2002, in large part driven by the popularity in drug consumption among adolescents ages 12 to 17. Although alcohol and marijuana use has declined slightly, the demand for amphetamines has more than doubled since 2017 (and more than tripled since 2014) as the price dropped to an all-time low in 2019.

The United States is helping 18 Mexican states establish drug courts to sentence low-level offenders to treatment rather than incarceration. The United States also works with Mexican agencies to certify drug counselors; train first responders, psychologists, and other medical professionals who treat substance abuse; train state officials on evidence-based policies for preventing and treating addictions; and establish a National Drug Observatory to collect and analyze information on drug use trends, including an early warning system to detect use of new substances and facilitate a rapid public health response. These reforms have resulted in early success at the state level, especially in innovative uses of alternatives to incarceration.

### **4. Corruption**

Mexico does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. President Lopez Obrador has taken legislative and political actions to combat government officials profiting from TCO associations. Nevertheless, TCO affiliation with and influence over senior Mexican government officials continues to significantly impede Mexico's drug control efforts.

A number of high-ranking Mexican officials faced corruption-related charges in 2021, including a former Governor who was a fugitive for three years until his arrest in Miami in 2020. At the time of his capture, he had 21 Mexican arrest warrants and 39 investigations pending, including for aggravated embezzlement and illicit enrichment.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

At a High-Level Security Dialogue (HLSD) in October 2021, U.S. and Mexican officials adopted the U.S.-Mexico Bicentennial Framework for Security, Public Health, and Safe Communities. The framework established a comprehensive, long-term approach for binational actions to pursue the safety and security of our societies. The framework promotes an evidence-based public health and public safety approach aimed at reducing drug demand and overdoses, saving lives, ensuring racial equity, and promoting community-based crime prevention and harm-reduction efforts, while diminishing the capacity of TCOs to traffic in drugs, weapons, and other illicit goods and reducing the ability of TCOs to traffic in and profit from drugs and other illicit activities. Both countries made cross-cutting commitments to protect human rights, increase information sharing, and evaluate and monitor the results of cooperative actions.

The U.S.-Mexico extradition treaty has been in force since 1980. The number of extraditions to the United States had remained steady for years, but the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the pace of extraditions in 2021. A bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty in force since 1991 fosters a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mexico engages with Canada and the United States in the North American Drug Dialogue (NADD) to foster international counterdrug cooperation and in the North American Maritime Security Initiative (NAMSI) to share information, improve response to transnational threats, and develop protocols for maritime interdictions.

### **D. Conclusion**

The volume of dangerous drugs entering the United States from Mexico, and violent crime in Mexico fueled by TCOs, remain alarmingly and unacceptably high. The United States and Mexico committed to broadening bilateral security cooperation around shared priorities and pledged targeted efforts to promote citizen security and dismantle narcotics trafficking TCOs, increase the effectiveness of security and justice sector institutions, stem illegal arms trafficking, and demonstrate tangible results from our cooperative efforts.

## Morocco

Morocco is one of the world's top hashish-producing countries, with Europe a primary market. Cannabis is cultivated in one geographical area located in the northern mountainous Rif region. Traffickers continue to use commercial shipping containers, tractor-trailers, and "go-fast" vessels to smuggle hashish. Due to enhanced detection methods along the Mediterranean coastline, traffickers have expanded internal routes by moving hashish south to Morocco's western coastline for maritime shipment and overland through the Sahel region and into Libya for onward transshipment and distribution. Hashish is increasingly being smuggled to South America and the Caribbean, where traffickers exchange it for cocaine and transport the latter to Europe for distribution. Since the introduction of hybrid strains, THC levels have increased from approximately 15 percent to as much as 40 percent while also significantly increasing production yields. Accurate estimates for cannabis cultivation and hashish production cannot be obtained by using yield estimates associated with traditional Moroccan cannabis seeds. Law enforcement reported seizures of over 460 metric tons (MT) of hashish in 2021; in 2020, 452 MT were seized.

Traffickers smuggle MDMA (ecstasy), originating in Belgium and the Netherlands, into northern Morocco to be sold on the domestic market. Closed borders and increased border controls during the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected the trafficking of MDMA as evidenced by approximately 55,000 tablets seized in 2021 and 159,658 tablets seized in 2020 versus 906,607 reported in 2019. Additionally, significant quantities of diverted pharmaceuticals, predominately Rivotril, are trafficked into the country from Spain and Algeria and abused throughout Morocco. Approximately 1,500,000 tablets of pharmaceuticals were reported as seized by law enforcement in 2021. The increased trafficking of pharmaceuticals and cutting agents has presented a need for rapid identification analyzers to be utilized more frequently by law enforcement authorities in the field.

Morocco remains a significant transit point for the maritime shipment of cocaine smuggled into Europe, mostly via commercial shipping containers and merchant/fishing vessels. However, the country has made significant progress in countering trafficking activity. In 2021, Moroccan law enforcement seized almost 1.4 MT of cocaine from two shipping containers transiting the Port of Tanger-Med destined for Europe. Also, in 2021, authorities seized approximately 81 kilograms of cocaine during several investigations where traffickers attempted to smuggle cocaine into Morocco from Europe and the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla.

Morocco has a bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty with the United States but does not have a bilateral extradition treaty with the United States. Morocco is a party to several multilateral law enforcement conventions that also permit mutual legal assistance with the United States.



## Mozambique

Mozambique is a transit point for drugs trafficked primarily from Afghanistan and Iran to Europe. Traffickers have easy access to the country's interior due to its infrequently patrolled 1,600-mile coastline, weak law enforcement, and porous borders. Traffickers from South Asia typically transport opioids and methamphetamine in motorized dhows to the coast of Mozambique, where they are offloaded to local fishing vessels, taken to the mainland, repackaged, shipped to African cities, and transported on to European markets. Drug traffickers often exchange drugs for other illicit goods such as poached wildlife products, illegally mined gemstones, and illicitly harvested exotic timber, which they ship to Asia. Mozambique is not a significant producer of illicit drugs or precursor chemicals. Drug production consists mainly of cannabis cultivation. Cannabis consumption and addiction rates are high, especially among youth and in poorer regions. Corruption and lack of local and border law enforcement capacity make it difficult for the government to crack down on illicit drugs.

In 2019, Mozambique, South Africa, and Tanzania signed a trilateral strategy to counter maritime trafficking of heroin, including establishment of a planning body in Maputo with support from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Development of the physical office was delayed by the pandemic, although coordination took place virtually. As of October 2021, staff from the three countries were in place and began conducting joint training.

The government also established a cargo control unit at Maputo International Airport consisting of officers from Mozambique's Tax Authority, Police of the Republic, National Criminal Investigation Service (SERNIC), and National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC). UNODC provided trainings for more than 130 officers of SERNIC, the Mozambican Navy, the Maritime Authority, Mozambique's Anti-Narcotics Agency, and various seaports on maritime-related issues. In May 2021, the United States and Mozambique signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a vetted unit to combat large-scale drug trafficking organizations. The United States also trained members of SERNIC and Mozambique's Prosecutor General's Office in border interdiction, undercover operations, and conspiracy investigations.

In January 2021 the French navy seized 444 kilograms (kg) of methamphetamine and heroin valued at approximately \$48 million from a dhow in the Mozambique Channel. Also in January, Mozambican police detained a man in possession of 61 kg of heroin and five kg of methamphetamine in Nampula province. In March 2021 SERNIC announced the seizure of 440 kg of heroin and 103 kg of heroin, "crack" cocaine, and hashish. In mid-2021 a Mozambican court found twelve Iranians guilty on terrorism and drug trafficking-related charges following their 2019 arrest in a boat with over one metric ton of heroin.

The United States provides maritime training on a range of issues to the Mozambican Navy and support to Mozambique to improve port security.

The United States has neither a bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty nor an extradition treaty with Mozambique. Some mutual legal assistance requests are processed under multilateral conventions that enable such cooperation.

## The Netherlands

The Netherlands is a significant country in the European and global illicit drug industry due to its historically lax enforcement of drug-related offenses, relatively light levels of punishment, and position as both a transit state and digital gateway to European narcotics users and suppliers. The Netherlands is also home to a growing pool of specialists with deep expertise in the production of illegal chemicals as well as an increasing number of operators building/managing criminal marketing and distribution enterprises on illicit “dark-web” technology platforms. It remains a major site for global synthetic drug manufacturing and distribution including multiple amphetamine-type stimulants.

The country’s maritime ports serve as major transit hubs for illicit substances, especially cocaine from South America. The Netherlands’ flagship Port of Rotterdam, Europe’s largest port, serves as a major conduit between narcotics suppliers and European consumers. The National Police of the Netherlands and Port police cooperate closely with U.S. authorities to exchange information and conduct joint operations. The Port is also focused on anti-corruption efforts. Port of Rotterdam authorities seized a record 44.6 metric tons of cocaine in the first eight months of 2021, a significant increase from 42 metric tons seized in all of 2020.

The Ministry of Justice and Security continues to develop its Multidisciplinary Intervention Team (MIT) which focuses on cross-government, counternarcotics investigations. The MIT’s remit will also include elements of anti-corruption, money laundering, and the strengthening of judicial systems. Progress has been slow as officials grapple with structural and strategic issues on how to effectively build and deploy this initiative. The United States and the Netherlands have fully operational extradition and mutual legal assistance agreements.

The Netherlands hosts a large number of criminal enterprises and actors engaged in drug trafficking operations using online technology. Authorities have worked to disrupt these activities, together with the United States, Europol, and partner countries. Joint operations with a significant Dutch nexus in 2021 included the takedown of the SKY ECC platform (a company that provided a secure encrypted messaging platform to criminal organizations across the world) and Operation Trojan Shield, both of which were aimed at disrupting criminal activity using exploited encrypted communications. The Dutch High Tech Crimes Unit remains a partner of choice for U.S. law enforcement authorities.

# Nicaragua

## A. Introduction

Nicaragua is a transit country for drug trafficking organizations using land, maritime, and air routes to smuggle cocaine from South America to the United States. The country's long coastlines, porous borders, and sparsely populated Caribbean region provide a favorable environment for moving people and contraband. Nicaragua has limited technical and logistical capacity to conduct interdiction operations, including a lack of dedicated air assets. The country also has limited mobility and communications to patrol the Caribbean region, where some traffickers operate freely. Corruption and the diversion of resources to persecute political opponents, members of civil society, and journalists limited Nicaragua's effectiveness in countering drug trafficking during 2021.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Nicaraguan National Police and the Nicaraguan military are the primary institutions responsible for countering drug trafficking and have attempted to do so by implementing their "Containment Wall State Strategy," as established under the Nicaragua Sovereign Security Law. The strategy consists of land-based, air, and maritime patrolling from bases at border crossings and transit routes. Nicaragua's limited interdiction capacity, institutional inefficiency, and corruption hobble its efforts against drug trafficking.

Despite the economic downturn and a reduction in foreign aid, the budgets of the police and the Nicaraguan military have remained the same. Nevertheless, budgetary stability has not increased the government's effectiveness in countering drug trafficking. The government has prioritized a crackdown on political opposition groups, reallocating resources to this end.

Most foreign aid to Nicaragua supports the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While security assistance has diminished since 2018, Russia maintains a counternarcotics police training center in the country. Media reported in July 2021 that Nicaragua received a helicopter donated from Russia as well as a smaller Taiwanese donation of beacons for the Navy.

Nicaraguan cooperation with U.S. law enforcement remains limited. The United States and Nicaragua are parties to a bilateral extradition treaty; however, the Nicaraguan constitution bars the extradition of Nicaraguan nationals, including dual nationals. If Nicaragua chooses to cooperate with the United States, they instead expel the fugitive. In such instances, Nicaragua will often require a Red Notice from the International Criminal Police Commission (INTERPOL) before expelling non-Nicaraguan citizen fugitives or assuming domestic jurisdiction in cases against Nicaraguan citizens. If the United States seeks extradition or expulsion of a Nicaraguan citizen, Nicaragua will often instead assume domestic jurisdiction over the case against the Nicaraguan citizen and refuse to extradite or expel. There is no bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty between the United States and Nicaragua, but both countries are parties to the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

Despite policy restrictions on bilateral cooperation, the police generally respond to requests for security assistance for operations and participate in limited coordination on criminal investigations and interdictions.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

In the first eight months of 2021, Nicaraguan security forces reported conducting 56 operations that targeted international drug trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime, up from 43 in 2020. They also carried out 8,656 domestic operations, a decrease from 13,824 in the first nine months of 2020. The significant decline is due to the decrease in operations targeting neighborhood drug dealers, dropping from 10,307 operations during the first nine months of 2020 to 4,589 in the first eight months of 2021.

Nicaragua reported seizing 4 metric tons (MT) of cocaine in the first eight months of 2021, an increase from the 1.2 MT seized in the first nine months of 2020. Authorities reported seizing 4.7 MT of marijuana in 2021, up from the 2.2 MT seized in 2020. In addition, Nicaraguan authorities reportedly destroyed 15,380 marijuana plants growing in the northern regions and along the Caribbean coast, dramatically less than the 124,017 plants destroyed in 2020. Cash seizures dropped significantly from over \$15 million in 2020 to \$5.7 million in 2021. Nicaragua also reported seizing 141 weapons and arresting 3,494 people, thanks to operations targeting local and international drug trafficking.

Over the previous two years, Nicaragua reported few arrests during many of its largest narcotics and cash seizure operations. There appears to be selective targeting of traffickers and geographic areas and relatively few arrests compared to the amount of drugs and cash seized. Some of this imbalance is probably due to corruption. Nicaragua does not share information regarding methods of destroying illicit drugs with the United States or other national or non-government entities. Although the police share information on the arrest of nationals from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, law enforcement shares little information on the arrest of Nicaraguans. The quality and quantity of intelligence shared decreased during 2021.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The lack of reliable national statistics on drug consumption makes it difficult to measure the effect of prevention and treatment programs. Studies show a low use of rehabilitation services, possibly due to lack of awareness or limited availability of services in communities.

Nicaraguan authorities reported providing services to 284,205 youth during the first eight months of 2021. However, the government shut down several independent public health and civil society organizations working with vulnerable youth, likely due to their criticisms of Nicaragua's handling of the COVID-19 health pandemic. Nicaragua implemented national and local strategies to address drug use through community-based activities at the primary level (focusing on youth before they try narcotics), secondary level (focusing on youth with addictions), and tertiary level (focusing on youth who have overcome addictions). The government reported 46,485 children and youth attended 1,740 primary prevention-based activities and transferred 186 youth with substance use disorders to 12 treatment centers.

The Government of Nicaragua has shut down several civil society organizations implementing drug prevention strategies. The organizations that remain report an increase in drug consumption among youth, putting the government's effectiveness into question.

#### **4. Corruption**

As a matter of policy, the Government of Nicaragua does not encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution. However, rampant corruption hinders the effectiveness of security forces, the Prosecutor's Office, and the implementation of relevant legislation.

In 2021, under Executive Order 13851, the U.S. Department of the Treasury sanctioned four government officials: Camila Ortega, daughter of President Daniel Ortega; Leonardo Ovidio Reyes Ramirez, President of the Central Bank of Nicaragua; Edwin Ramon Castro Rivera, Nicaraguan National Assembly deputy; and Julio Modesto Rodriguez Balladares, a Brigadier General in the Nicaraguan Army. Since 2017, the Department of the Treasury has sanctioned 31 high-profile Nicaraguan individuals, including Vice President and wife of Daniel Ortega Rosario Murillo, and eight entities for involvement in illicit activities and human rights abuses.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States provides no assistance to the Government of Nicaragua but assists the people of Nicaragua through the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). CARSI supports capacity building for security and judicial institutions in Central America. It supports the United States' Strategy to Address the Root Causes of Migration in Central America by tackling the underlying security and governance factors driving such migration. CARSI funding is aimed at fighting illicit drug production and trafficking and combatting corruption and transnational criminal organizations, which are among the key such drivers, complementing other U.S. efforts such as those focused on assisting vulnerable populations displaced due to drug trafficking, violence, and crime.

The United States and Nicaragua maintain a bilateral agreement to reduce illicit trafficking by sea, including by ship boarding, ship riders, pursuit, entry into territorial waters, overflight, order to land, and international maritime interdiction support. U.S. foreign assistance has diminished over the last decade. Joint, proactive investigations, as seen routinely between the United States and counterparts in Central and South America, do not occur with Nicaragua.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The authoritarian government, the political crisis, and corruption have hindered Nicaragua's ability to effectively address drug trafficking. So long as the Government of Nicaragua prioritizes repressing political opponents over law enforcement efforts, it will limit its success in countering drug trafficking and organized crime. A stronger and more sustainable effort against drug trafficking organizations would require a substantial change in government policy and the professionalization of security forces.

## Niger

Niger is primarily a transit country for illegal drugs, which are routinely shipped through Niger to consumer nations in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. Tramadol is the exception to the rule; Nigerien citizens and migrants traveling through Niger consume significant quantities of this opioid, much of it having entered the country from neighboring Nigeria. Illicit drugs such as cocaine, heroin, cannabis, and synthetics, arrive from South America at West African ports for transshipment through Niger to European and Middle Eastern markets. Hashish from Morocco is trafficked to Libya and Egypt, then onward to Europe and the Middle East.

Trafficking, not just of drugs but also of weapons, wildlife, and people, is a long-running issue in Niger, and the remote northern part of the country is crisscrossed by trade routes that have been used for centuries. Networks of Arab, Tuareg, and Toubou cooperate with violent extremist groups to provide safe passage for traffickers using these routes en route to the Maghreb.

The Government of Niger's main body for countering transnational organized crime and drug trafficking is the Central Office for the Prevention of Narcotics Trafficking (French acronym "OCRTIS"). With 221 officers are posted throughout the country, it significantly increased both arrests and seizures in 2021. According to Nigerien authorities, arrests for drug crimes increased by 37 percent during the first six months of 2021 compared to the previous year. Seizures of tramadol and hashish during this six-month period already surpassed the volume of drugs seized during all of 2020. More than three million tramadol tablets were seized in the first six months of 2021, a three-fold increase over the nearly one million tablets that were confiscated in 2020.

OCRTIS also had some notable success dismantling two international drug trafficking rings operating in Niger in 2021. Niger is one of several countries that participated in INTERPOL's Operation Lionfish; the Operation Lionfish investigations resulted in several large seizures, including approximately 17 metric tons of cannabis in Niamey in March 2021.

Government corruption, including drug trafficking, is a significant problem in Niger, and many of Niger's narcotics traffickers are known or suspected to have close links with the political elite. OCRTIS investigations in 2021 resulted in the arrest of two judicial officers and a member of the defense forces, but authorities tacitly acknowledge that trafficking investigations are hampered when they extend to high-level government officials.

U.S. support to OCRTIS in 2021 included training and development in advanced narcotics investigations, policy and procedure, and public outreach. OCRTIS also receives funds and training from the European Union, Germany, and France, as well as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

The United States has neither a bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty nor an extradition treaty with Niger. Some mutual legal assistance requests are processed under multilateral conventions that enable such cooperation.

# Nigeria

## A. Introduction

Nigeria is a significant source country for cannabis cultivation and methamphetamine production, and a major hub for transnational drug trafficking networks. Seizures of “crack” cocaine were documented in 2021, having been converted locally from cocaine hydrochloride. Nigerian-based drug trafficking organizations are entrenched throughout the world and are active in supplying cocaine to Asia and Europe, heroin (likely from Afghanistan) to Europe and North America, and methamphetamine to South Africa, Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. Nigerian trafficking networks also have become involved in the transportation, facilitation, and distribution of illicitly diverted tramadol, a synthetic opioid. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect drug trafficking in Nigeria and the government’s efforts to address it.

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) is Nigeria’s dedicated counternarcotic agency, with responsibility for eradicating illicit drug trafficking and reducing drug demand. NDLEA’s mission is hampered by both a lack of political will to support the agency and endemic corruption. President Buhari appointed a new Chairman at the beginning of 2021.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Budgetary issues hampered Nigeria’s institutions in 2021, including delays in the Nigerian Congress passing the national budget and delays in the government for appropriating and disbursing departmental funds. NDLEA’s recruitment drive for new officers that began in 2019 continued to experience delays due to the COVID 19 pandemic. However, approximately 5,000 new Narcotics Assistants and Narcotics Officers passed the recruitment process and NDLEA commenced training them in late July 2021. From January to September 2021, NDLEA promoted 3,506 officers and other officials, clearing a long-standing promotion backlog, and paid outstanding funeral expenses for 188 officers who died in active service.

In 2021, NDLEA reorganized the agency, adding five new directorates (planning research and statistics; special duties/strike force; internal affairs; airport operations; and media and advocacy) and 14 zonal commands.

The U.S. and United Kingdom-sponsored vetted units continue to achieve impressive results. However, these specialized units total approximately 50 trained investigators in an agency of approximately 10,000 officers.

### 2. Supply Reduction

NDLEA carried out operational and interdiction efforts in 2021, which included randomized searches of vehicles, cargo containers, and persons travelling in and out of the country. The deployment of new intelligence management systems and the establishment of a “Strike Force” combining various tactical law enforcement units contributed to additional targeted

enforcement efforts. During the first nine months of 2021, authorities seized more than 2,700 metric tons (MT) of illicit drugs, including 79 MT of amphetamines (fenethylamine HCl), 1,994,400 capsules of tramadol, 22 MT and an additional 144,400 bottles of codeine syrup (an opiate), 130 kilograms (kg) of cocaine, and 50 kg of heroin. NDLEA estimated the value of cash and drug seizures at over \$240 million. NDLEA arrested 8,634 suspects, including five major drug cartel leaders in Nigeria. Authorities filed more than 2,000 court cases, resulting in more than 600 convictions and over 1,500 ongoing cases. NDLEA seized millions of dollars of assets from drug traffickers, including one money laundering scheme involving more than \$73 million from suspected exporters of controlled drugs to the UK and United States.

Nigerian-based criminal groups operate in or with networks from South America, southwest Asia, Mexico, India, and China with the intent to traffic drugs to the United States. Nigerian authorities cooperate with U.S. authorities and other international partners in efforts to combat these groups and the threats they pose to the United States. Nigeria's efforts to curtail the activities of these drug traffickers and other criminal groups were impeded due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The Nigerian Government and United Nations estimated in 2016-17 that approximately 14 percent of the population age 15-64 used a psychoactive substance in the preceding year for non-medical purposes; authorities believe this number has increased considerably because the COVID-19 pandemic restricted access to essential services for at-risk groups. In June 2021 NDLEA launched its National Guidelines for the Treatment of Substance Use Disorders, with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as the primary implementer. This effort also provided the platform to unveil the Standard Policy and Practice Guidelines for NDLEA drug use counseling centers. NDLEA registered 21 NGOs working on drug demand reduction during the first nine months of 2021, bringing to 117 NGOs officially registered in this field. In addition to school outreach programs, NDLEA organized 38 programs for out of school youth, involving over 18,000 participants. NDLEA provided counseling to 723 individuals in its treatment centers during the first nine months of 2021 and referred over 3,500 individuals arrested during operations for treatment. NDLEA conducted over 500 media appearances on drug use prevention and launched a new magazine NDLEA Today to assist with public outreach.

### **4. Corruption**

Nigeria does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, Nigeria does not enforce its laws consistently to investigate corrupt officials. The Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU) officers remain most accountable of the NDLEA officers, as well as those who have passed through the SIU in recent years and are now in different commands. The lack of adequate remuneration and other benefits lures officers to receive bribes. Information on government officials arrested or prosecuted was not available. NDLEA upgraded its internal affairs unit to a full directorate and appointed a Provost Marshall and Special Monitoring Task



Force to both improve disciplinary issues and ensure compliance with standard operating procedures on reporting drug seizures and care and custody of evidence.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiative**

The United States provides equipment and training to the SIU within NDLEA. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the SIU in collaboration with the United States and United Kingdom arrested twelve suspects, including eight Nigerian nationals, with seizures of cannabis (268 kg), cocaine (87.6 kg), liquid codeine (8,050 liters), heroin (511g), methamphetamine (3.5 kg), tramadol (23.6 million tablets), fenethylline HCl (451,807 tablets), and tapentadol HCl and carisoprodol HCl (3.72 million caplets). Seizures of tapentadol HCl and Carisoprodol HCl is a relatively recent development, with intelligence pointing to traffickers switching from tramadol, which has been banned in Nigeria, in an attempt to evade detection or to exploit a loophole in the law. These seizures are due largely to current ongoing investigations by the SIU. Additional arrests and seizures are expected.

The United States and Nigeria signed a bilateral letter of agreement in 2014. U.S. assistance has included support to intelligence gathering and analysis, investigations, and operational support. In addition to the SIU, the U.S. supports an antinarcotics advisor position to work with NDLEA. NDLEA participated in virtual meetings and trainings on investigation with regional and other international partners. The United States, Interpol, and UNODC trained NDLEA officers in combating organized crime and corruption, regional investigative, and analytical case training.

Extradition between Nigeria and the United States is governed by the 1931 U.S.-U.K. Extradition Treaty. The United States and Nigeria are parties to a bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty.

### **D. Conclusion**

The naming of a new NDLEA Chairman has resulted in increased operational tempo and other changes within the organization. The COVID-19 pandemic hampered overall operations and court proceedings through September 2021, with the courts at times closing or limiting in-person hearings. The Nigerian government should provide additional resources to NDLEA and address drug use in the country. NDLEA should continue its hiring of additional staff and continue to enforce professional standards among its employees. NDLEA should also improve remuneration and other benefits to reduce incentives for corruption, as corrupt officers and lack of prosecutions and sanctions continues to hamper the work of NDLEA. The following actions will improve NDLEA effectiveness: strengthening and expanding specialized units within NDLEA to conduct complex investigations; expanding cooperation with international partners; enhancing forensic and intelligence analysis capabilities; and developing the capacity to investigate, prosecute and otherwise hold accountable officers inside NDLEA and criminals involved in the production or transportation of drugs.

# Pakistan

## A. Introduction

Pakistan is one of the world's top transit corridors for opiates and cannabis products, which are trafficked through its porous borders with Afghanistan and Iran. Pakistan's seaports, airports, postal services, and unpatrolled coastal areas allow illicit drugs to be distributed globally. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates Pakistan is the transit country for 45 percent of the opiates produced in Afghanistan. Precursor chemicals used to produce heroin and methamphetamine also transit Pakistan before global distribution.

Pakistan lacks the capacity to provide effective, non-residential substance abuse treatment and to incorporate a scientific approach to drug prevention education systematically. Opium poppy cultivation continues in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) of the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Government officials publicly deny poppy cultivation exists in Pakistan but express a commitment to drug prevention and narcotics interdiction.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Pakistan's National Anti-Narcotics Policy outlines supply reduction, demand reduction, and interagency and international cooperation as its main objectives. In August 2021, the National Assembly amended the Control of Narcotics Substances Act of 1997 to increase monetary and imprisonment penalties for offenders arrested near educational institutions.

In September 2021, Prime Minister Khan chaired a meeting of the National Antinarcotics Council, created under the Anti-Narcotics Policy, and tasked all federal and provincial agencies to present a comprehensive drug awareness and treatment policy by the end of 2021. Khan's administration said it would draft legislation to improve substance use disorder treatment in Pakistan and present it to the National Assembly after a consensus is reached among all provincial and federal stakeholders.

The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) is Pakistan's lead drug enforcement entity. ANF's funding (\$16.75 million in 2021) is insufficient, with 66 percent of its budget covering the salaries of its 3,100 employees deployed across 40 stations and field offices, a slight increase from 2020. Seventy-seven percent of the staff is dedicated to interdiction and 13 percent to investigations. ANF chairs the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF), which includes 32 agencies and met three times in the first 10 months of 2021. ANF coordinated drug investigations with the United States and the United Kingdom in 2021. Pakistan hosts drug liaison officers from 35 countries as part of its Paris Pact obligations. ANF cooperates with the United States and the UK's National Crime Agency to operate its Special Investigation Cells.

## 2. Supply Reduction

Lack of adequate security prevents reliable ground surveying in KP and the NMDs, Pakistan's primary areas for opium poppy cultivation. The U.S. government's 2016 estimate of opium poppy cultivation indicated approximately 1,400 hectares were under cultivation. Pakistan depends heavily on foreign assistance to implement and monitor alternative livelihood and development programs, which have discouraged poppy cultivation in some communities. The United States has provided more than \$84.4 million to these programs since 1982, contributing to an estimated 88 percent decrease in poppy cultivation between 1988 and 2016.

Most drugs trafficked through Pakistan are destined for global markets. Pakistani security forces and law enforcement interdict only a small fraction of that traffic. In 2021, Pakistan's law enforcement agencies reported they disrupted five drug trafficking organizations and made 21 arrests. National seizures during the first nine months of 2021 included four metric tons (MT) of morphine; six MT of heroin; 27 MT of opium; 71 kilograms (kg) of cocaine; and 111 MT of hashish. ANF reported a decline in trafficking through airports and an increase in containerized consignments through sea and land ports. Pakistani agencies reported a slight increase in synthetic fentanyl seizures, and authorities seized one MT of methamphetamine and 1.7 MT of amphetamine.

The ANF comprises less than half of one percent of law enforcement personnel in the country. Other forces lack rigorous drug interdiction training and tend not to prioritize countering narcotics. ANF's own capacity to conduct complex drug investigations is limited. During the first eight months of 2021, Pakistan registered 61,794 drug-related arrests, mostly street-level retail traffickers. ANF reports a conviction rate of 85 percent, a statistic questioned by the Pakistani media. ANF data suggests, however, that the higher overall conviction rate could be related to a higher conviction rate in the lower courts, since most prosecuted cases were low-level possession or small-quantity courier trafficking. Pakistan has a conspiracy law, but it is rarely used to successfully prosecute leaders of criminal organizations.

## 3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment

Pakistan allocated \$67,535 to drug abuse awareness and prevention in 2021. Pakistan continues to raise public awareness about the dangers of illicit drug use as the media reports increasing synthetic drug use in educational institutions. ANF conducted 4,865 public awareness-raising activities, including school lectures, in the first nine months of 2021. For more than a decade, ANF has managed four drug treatment centers with a total bed capacity of 218 and provided free treatment to 874 individuals as of September 2021. With fewer than 100 clinics operating nationwide, Pakistan's drug-treatment capacity is insufficient. Nongovernmental organizations operate most detoxification centers, serving mostly male patients as they make up nearly two-thirds of the drug-user population. Pakistan could make better use of provincial-level institutions, such as hospitals and schools, to provide non-residential treatment options.

## 4. Corruption

The Government of Pakistan does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is there evidence of its involvement in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs, but corruption remains a concern. Pakistan's capacity to prosecute complex financial crimes is low and corruption cases are often used to prosecute political rivals.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) is Pakistan's main antigraft agency responsible for eliminating corruption. The NAB claims to have recovered more than \$4.8 billion since it was established in 1999, but the consequences for convicted perpetrators are rarely severe. Corruption undermines the government's ability to address illicit drugs, as bribed public servants may facilitate movement of contraband or otherwise interfere with arrests and prosecutions. Media sources regularly report that police officers are involved in drug trafficking or selling seized drugs.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States is committed to a comprehensive approach to countering narcotics in Pakistan. To counter illicit drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, the United States supports building collaborative, intelligence-driven, and corruption-free law enforcement. The United States helps Pakistan develop its capacity to conduct sophisticated operations, such as controlled deliveries, financial crime investigations, customs matters, and container profiling. The U.S. government also supports multi-year training programs and initiatives to promote Pakistan's interdiction at seaports and land borders, with a focus on the land border with Afghanistan. The United States funds programs to build agricultural capacity and enforce nationally standardized drug-use disorder treatment standards and is funding the second national drug-use survey to take place in 2022, so the government has updated estimates on drug use and accessibility to treatment services.

Extradition between the United States and Pakistan is governed by the 1931 Extradition Treaty between the United States and the UK, to which Pakistan acceded following its independence from the United Kingdom. The United States and Pakistan do not have a bilateral treaty on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, though Pakistan is a party to relevant multilateral law enforcement conventions with provisions requiring international cooperation.

### **D. Conclusion**

Pakistan faces economic and security challenges that often supersede drug trafficking in national security priorities. Pakistan could more effectively reduce drug trafficking by coordinating engagement and sharing information across law enforcement agencies, focusing on the financial aspects of the drug trade, and targeting high-level kingpins rather than lower-level couriers and possession cases. Greater mobilization of provincial institutions could provide a multiplier effect for efforts on interdiction, prevention, and delivery of public services. Pakistan should continue to strengthen anti-narcotics cooperation with neighboring countries.

# Panama

## A. Introduction

Panama continues to make significant progress in limiting the transit of illegal drugs and estimates for 2021 seizures exceeded Panama's previous record number of seizures in 2019.

Panama is not a major consumer or producer of illicit drugs, but its over 1,500 miles of coastline, nearly 500 rivers, the Panama Canal, and proximity to Colombia make it a prime sea and land passage for drugs, primarily cocaine, flowing from South America to North America and Europe. Up to 30 percent of cocaine produced in neighboring Colombia passes through Panamanian waters, transported by transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) and their associates off both the Pacific and Caribbean coasts. Probably less than five percent of Colombian cocaine flows overland across the border due to dense jungle and lack of roads, although land routes are often combined with maritime transportation to move cocaine through Panama. Drug traffickers also take advantage of the millions of shipping containers passing through the Panama Canal.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacted a significant toll on Panama, including one of the region's highest case rates per capita, an 18 percent economic contraction in 2020, an 18.5 percent unemployment rate this year, and significant reductions in the 2021 budget for many ministries, including the Ministry of Security. The Government of Panama, however, maintained its robust counternarcotics efforts during the pandemic and continued to advance major security-related projects with the United States to increase its enforcement capacity. Panama is a committed partner for information sharing with the United States and its regional partners, and its cooperation with Colombia and Costa Rica continues to yield impressive results.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Panamanian President Laurentino "Nito" Cortizo's administration continues to focus on addressing drug trafficking. Panama has no standing military; the Ministry of Public Security (MINSEG) oversees counternarcotics through its three principal law enforcement agencies: the Panamanian National Police (PNP); the National Air and Naval Service (SENAN); and the National Border Service (SENAFRONT).

In February 2021, MINSEG codified a U.S.-led initiative via a resolution to restructure the GOP's maritime security with the design and construction of a Joint Regional Air and Navy Operations Center (CROAN) and the formation of a Joint Maritime Force (JMF-Panama) – a concept based on the U.S. military equivalent.

### 2. Supply Reduction

Preliminary figures show Panamanian authorities seized at least 128 metric tons (MT) of narcotics in 2021, breaking the 2019 record of 91 MT. Although COVID-related movement restrictions contributed to slightly reduced drug trafficking and related seizures in 2020,

Panama's drug seizures of more than 84 MT were second only to its 2019 record. With U.S. support, Panamanian law enforcement authorities arrested approximately 3,722 persons for drug offenses, weakening local drug trafficking gangs.

Cocaine or cocaine base seizures comprised 80 percent of all seizures by weight; the remainder were marijuana. From January to October of 2021, SENAN conducted approximately 65 percent of Panamanian narcotics seizures (estimated 38 MT of cocaine seized), followed by the PNP with approximately 25 percent (estimated 20 MT cocaine seized) and SENAFRONT with just over 10 percent (estimated 7.8 MT cocaine seized). Of note, both SENAN and SENAFRONT set institutional records for narcotics interdictions in 2021 with the latter resulting from increased inter-service collaboration through the CROAN initiative. SENAN's higher interdiction numbers are due to its larger maritime mission and asset capabilities.

More than four million containers are transshipped (transferred from one vessel to another) at Panamanian ports each year, where they are vulnerable to narcotics traffickers. Panama's Port Task Force, a collaborative effort between the United States and Panama, seized nearly 28 MT of illicit drugs, a record in 2021, up from 9.3 MT in 2020 and 14 MT in 2019.

Panama's counternarcotics efforts are yielding significant results. With strong U.S. support, in 2020 Panama experienced the lowest level of suspected cocaine shipments into its territory in the last five years. Panama is no longer the first-stop country for cocaine flows from Colombia.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Drug abuse in Panama is not as common as other Central and South American countries. According to the Organization of American States 2019 Report on Drug Use in the Americas (the most recent report), Panama has the third lowest rate of marijuana consumption and the lowest rate of cocaine consumption of 15 Central and South American countries studied. Panama has not updated its strategy on demand reduction since 2012 and has not conducted a drug demand study since 2015.

The United States supports anti-drug programming such as the modernized Drug Awareness and Resistance Education program and the Gang Resistance Education and Training program. In 2021, these programs benefitted 3,116 students.

### **4. Corruption**

Panama does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs, and within the current administration no senior government officials have been identified as being engaged in such activity.

In April 2021, the Minister of Security Juan Pino introduced an asset forfeiture bill to the National Assembly after President Cortizo fully endorsed the bill and his cabinet unanimously approved it. The bill remains pending before the Assembly, where it has not yet been scheduled for debate.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States supports capacity building for Panama's security and judicial institutions through the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). CARSI supports the United States' Strategy to Address the Root Causes of Migration in Central America by tackling the underlying security and governance factors driving such migration. CARSI funding is aimed at fighting illicit drug production and trafficking and combatting corruption and transnational criminal organizations, which are among the key such drivers, complementing other U.S. efforts such as those focused on assisting vulnerable populations displaced due to drug trafficking, violence, and crime.

Panama shares U.S. national security goals, including dismantling transnational criminal organizations. The newly established CROAN coordinates JMF maritime operations among SENAN, PNP and SENAFRONT. U.S. law enforcement agencies cooperate with PNP, SENAN, and SENAFRONT in support of Panama's counternarcotics missions. SENAN and the United States also collaborate operationally on maritime interdictions under the 2002 Salas-Becker Agreement. In 2021, Panama and the United States continued to strengthen law enforcement cooperation through mutual assistance and extradition, although Panama has not changed its laws to allow for the extradition of Panamanian citizens.

The JMF has fully integrated the implementation of the Maritime Interdiction Case Package as a standard operating procedure for the presentation of evidence of maritime interdiction operations and their judicialization. Thus far, the JMF has conducted over 100 maritime interdiction operations capturing over 65 MT of illicit substances and more than 100 detainees.

### **D. Conclusion**

Panama's new maritime security strategy, which maximizes its economy of force, demonstrates that Panama is among the region's most capable partners in countering illicit narcotics, drug trafficking organizations, and TCOs.

Panama's foremost priority should be passing the asset forfeiture law through the National Assembly to deter drug trafficking, money laundering, and corruption and sustain future law enforcement activities. Other recommendations include increasing anticorruption efforts to promote the rule of law and transparency; developing a citizen security strategy that expands community policing programs and provides a whole-of-government response to reduce violence in crime-ridden communities by using prevention programs; and budgeting to sustain security-related assets, both national and donated, to maintain and increase its capacity to counter TCOs and deter narcotics trafficking throughout Panama.

# Peru

## A. Introduction

Peru is the world's second largest cultivator of coca and producer of cocaine, with an estimated 88,200 hectares (ha) under cultivation in 2020, the most recent data available. Potential pure cocaine production in Peru rose 25 percent in 2020, to 810 metric tons (MT). Peruvian cocaine is trafficked throughout South America for shipment to Europe, East Asia, Mexico, and the United States. Peru also is a major importer of precursor chemicals for cocaine production. Peru has the highest cumulative COVID-19 death rate per capita globally, and health restrictions paired with the political uncertainty of an election year severely hindered eradication efforts in 2021. Interdiction results recovered in 2021 after the strict lockdowns of 2020.

Former President Francisco Sagasti's government published a new 2021-2030 Drug Control Strategy in December 2020. The government of President Pedro Castillo, who took office in July 2021, continues to implement it. As of November 4, 2021, Peru reported eradicating 2,594 ha of coca. Peru has a small but growing domestic drug consumption problem. The military and Peruvian National Police (PNP) anti-narcotics unit (DIRANDRO) conducted joint interdiction operations in the Valley of the Apurimac, Ene, and Mantaro Rivers (VRAEM) and throughout the country. The terrorist group Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) remains active in the VRAEM region producing, trafficking, and protecting cocaine shipments. Through September 2021 the group killed 20 people in the VRAEM area: four people in Huarcatan in March, and 16 men, women, and children in San Miguel in May.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Peru's 2021-2030 Drug Control Strategy includes goals for interdiction, eradication, alternative development, and drug demand reduction. It also addresses precursor chemicals, rule of law, and public infrastructure. In 2021, Peru's anti-drug agency's (DEVIDA) appropriated budget was \$79 million, more than the previous year of 2020 (\$76 million).

In 2021, Peru budgeted \$23.2 million for eradication and aviation support – more than the \$11.8 million in 2020, yet less than the pre-pandemic budget of \$31.7 million in 2019. In June 2021, Peru completed its transition from an inquisitorial criminal justice system to an oral, adversarial system. Under the new system, average case duration decreased from 44 to 13 months.

### 2. Supply Reduction

The U.S. government estimates 88,200 ha of coca were cultivated in Peru in 2020, a 22.5 percent increase from the 2019 estimate of 72,000 ha. The U.S. estimate for pure cocaine production potential increased 25 percent, from 649 MT in 2019 to 810 MT in 2020.

In 2021, Peru's coca eradication organization (CORAH) conducted eradication from mid-March to early April, when it halted after a spike in COVID-19 cases among workers. Eradication



restarted in Ucayali in September after field personnel received COVID-19 vaccines and was ultimately conducted in two additional areas, Huanuco and Puno. CORAH manually eradicated 5,711 ha, surpassing the goal of 5,000 ha, which represented a reduction from the original goal of 25,000 ha due to the pandemic-related pause. Peru did not eradicate in the VRAEM in 2021, where it started eradication for the first time in 2019. The VRAEM and Puno account for the majority of Peru's total potential cocaine production. Peru reported eradicating 6,273 ha in 2020 during strict COVID-19 lockdowns.

DIRANDRO's budget was \$8 million in 2021, \$400,000 less than in 2020. As of September 2021, DIRANDRO reported seizing 49.5 MT of narcotics, 11 MT more than in 2020. Seizures included 18.7 MT of cocaine paste and 14 MT of cocaine hydrochloride. DIRANDRO also destroyed 261 cocaine base and hydrochloride labs. In the first nine months of 2021, VRAEM cocaine seizures totaled 13 MT, up from 11 MT during the same period in 2020. In the first nine months of 2021, PNP and Customs officials at air and seaports and other strategic checkpoints seized 8.1 MT of narcotics, up from 1.4 MT in 2020, an abnormally low amount due to COVID-19 border closures that year. Authorities reported destroying 145 clandestine runways as of September 2021, compared to 51 for the same period in 2020.

Traffickers ship cocaine to Europe, East Asia, Mexico, the Caribbean, the United States, and other Western Hemisphere countries. Small aircraft moving cocaine to Bolivia and Brazil remain a significant concern. Peru and the United States undertake joint maritime operations that permit U.S. authorities to board Peruvian-flagged vessels in international waters. Peru and the United States have no formal agreements between their navies for ship riders, but take part in joint maritime operations and exercises, including counternarcotics operations.

With U.S. assistance, DEVIDA invested \$35.9 million in 2021 toward alternative development. From October 2019 to September 2020, U.S.-supported alternative development efforts generated \$83 million in sales of licit products, a \$17 million increase from 2019 sales over the same period.

Peru is not a significant source of synthetic drugs.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

DEVIDA's last national drug use survey in 2010 estimated 240,000 Peruvians frequently used illicit substances. A 2017 DEVIDA study of the school-age population indicated that 4.6 percent (60,388 students) use illegal drugs. DEVIDA continued its 2020 suspension of the "Protected Schools" prevention program due to nationwide COVID-19 school closures. DEVIDA's online drug counseling program served 7,661 people in 2021. In 2021, the United States concluded a pilot project providing substance abuse treatment and alternatives to incarceration for juvenile offenders after Peru published regulations that allow judicial districts nationwide to implement the program.

Due to COVID-19-related budget pressure and the Health Ministry's expanding role in treating substance use disorders, DEVIDA's projected 2021 budget for drug abuse prevention was \$5.5 million, 47 percent less than in 2020. Simultaneously, the Health Ministry continued expanding

community mental health centers, which include treatment for substance abuse, from 197 centers in 2020 to 206 in 2021. Peru has only 24 private therapy centers that meet public health legal standards. The United States supports the drug demand reduction programs Guiding the Recovery of Women (GROW) Substance Abuse Training Program, and the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Program. The programs provide substance abuse treatment focusing on women, adolescent girls, and the LGBTQI+ community. In total, 16,688 healthcare professionals received GROW or SOGI training, providing services to 39,186 persons.

#### **4. Corruption**

The Government of Peru does not encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. However, corruption is a significant challenge, eroding faith in Peru's institutions. Corruption scandals have ensnared many political figures. Peru continues to implement its 2018-2021 National Plan on Integrity and Combating Corruption and has a special court system for corruption-related crimes.

According to the 2021 Americas Society's Capacity to Combat Corruption Index, Peru now ranks fourth in the region with a score of 5.66 out of 10; in 2020, Peru ranked fifth with 5.47. In September, two former police officials received 16-year prison sentences for drug trafficking.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

U.S. assistance supports Peru's drug control strategy through technical assistance, capacity building, information sharing, and provision of training and equipment. The United States and Peru jointly finance coca eradication and alternative development efforts. The United States provides aviation support to eradication and interdiction. The United States, in partnership with the Colombian National Police, provided virtual diploma programs on narcotics production and control to 75 PNP officials during 2021. The United States and Peru enjoy a strong extradition and mutual legal assistance relationship.

#### **D. Conclusion**

According to U.S. government estimates, Peru's coca cultivation and cocaine production potential increased significantly between 2018 and 2020, increasing 69 percent and 54 percent, respectively. While recognizing that Peru was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to a reduction in eradication operational capacity, and that political turnover also slowed counterdrug operations, the U.S. government is concerned with these increases. To combat this troubling trend, Peru should return to its countrywide coca eradication operations, consider expanding eradication operations in high-yield areas such as Puno and the VRAEM, and ensure immediate provision of alternative development assistance to farmers following eradication. Responding to the small but growing drug problem in Peru, the government increased the number of mental health centers which treat substance abuse disorders.

## Philippines

The Philippines' large archipelago makes it a transshipment and destination country for illegal drugs. The drugs most frequently confiscated include methamphetamine hydrochloride (local name 'shabu'); cannabis; and MDMA ("ecstasy"). Chinese transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) active in the Golden Triangle (where the borders of Thailand, Laos, and Burma meet) are the main source of methamphetamine found in the Philippines. Precursor chemicals found in country originate in the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte was elected in 2016, in part due to a strict stance on illegal drugs. His administration, now in its final year, continues an extensive campaign to eradicate illegal drugs. The methods for eradication have, however, evolved over the last five years from an approach strictly focused on supply reduction and punishment to one that includes drug demand reduction initiatives, including evidence-based prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation training for health practitioners, law enforcers, and educators. Human rights violations, and accompanying international criticism, persist.

### **B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends**

#### **1. Institutional Development**

The Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), comprising 61 member agencies, oversees the Philippine Anti-Illegal Drugs Strategy (PADS) – the guiding strategy for all drug-related policy in country. Despite extensive COVID-19-related closures of Philippine government agencies in 2021, the DDB continued to operate and issued new regulations on drug control. A stated objective of one of the new regulations is to “realize drug-resilient and self-policing communities and produce stigma-free rehabilitated persons,” including through increased support for treatment and recovery services.

Despite the potential for reform, the Duterte Administration's controversial anti-drug campaign continues, with 23,591 cases filed against defendants on drug-related charges through July 2021. Prosecution and adjudication of drug-related cases continue to face significant delays due to COVID-19, regional court backlogs, and insufficient law enforcement and judicial resources.

Key counternarcotics agency leaders were replaced during late 2020 and in 2021. Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Guillermo Eleazar took office May 7; Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) selected Secretary Diosdado Carreon as the Deputy Director General for Administration September 1; and the DDB installed retired Police Major General Gilberto Cruz as a permanent board member December 2, 2020. The new PNP chief signed a memorandum between PNP and PDEA July 9 to strengthen cooperation on anti-illegal drugs operations via the adoption of unified operational guidelines. The PDEA intensified its collaboration with the Bureau of Customs to fight against the trade of illegal drugs and precursors by bolstering the exchange of intelligence information and strengthening border control measures. The PDEA also established seaport interdiction units to combat maritime trafficking and engaged the National Coast Watch Center to maximize maritime domain awareness efforts.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

During the first nine months of 2021, PDEA conducted a total of 27,535 counternarcotics operations, resulting in the arrest of 38,672 individuals and seizure of 1.7 metric tons (MT) of shabu, and 165 grams (g) of cocaine (down from 973 g in 2020). There were no large-scale drug lab seizures or significant seizures of precursor chemicals this year.

A joint U.S.-PDEA investigation of a Chinese TCO led to a series of seizures totaling 1.6 MT of Burma-sourced methamphetamine and the arrest of several Chinese nationals.

The Philippines' Barangay (neighborhood) Drug Clearing Program aims to ensure communities remain drug free through supply and demand reduction initiatives. As of August 22, 2021, 858 or 54 percent of the 42,045 barangays/villages in the country reported they were drug-cleared while 6,710 (16 percent) reported they were drug-unaffected.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

The Department of Health (DOH) established two new drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation centers in 2021. DOH also created a Resource Stratified Framework to augment the provision of care for persons who use drugs, including through community-based drug rehabilitation programs, outpatient drug rehabilitation centers, and advanced services in residential drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation centers.

Public awareness campaigns included the launch of a PDEA-sponsored animated anti-drug video, the production of infomercials, and dissemination of anti-drug use flyers.

## **4. Corruption**

The Philippines does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. The Comprehensive Dangerous Act outlines penalties for government officials and members of the security forces involved in narcotics trafficking. Counternarcotics operations led to the arrest of 22 elected officials, 17 uniformed personnel, and 49 government employees in 2021.

## **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States works with bilateral and multilateral partners to strengthen Philippine capacity to counter transnational drug trafficking and reduce the demand for illegal drugs. United States drug demand reduction initiatives support policy development and provide evidence-based courses and resources to support drug prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation as an alternative to incarceration or extrajudicial punishment. In late 2020, the United States sponsored the Philippines' first National Substance Use Policy and Information Forum which provided a platform for researchers, health practitioners, community leaders, and drug policy makers to present evidence on health-centered, effective, and human rights-based approaches to remediating drug use. The U.S. government, with the support of an international organization

partner, also piloted a program in 20 cities to support families at risk of drug use due to the effects of COVID-19.

Support for law enforcement and health agencies on institutionalizing best practices for drug prevention programs is underway. The United States trained 67 PDEA and PNP officers and staff on the Colombo Plan's internationally recognized drug prevention and treatment curriculum. The PNP plans to incorporate the skills developed in this training into its community education interventions.

Due to continued U.S. concerns related to human rights practices connected to the drug war, support for counternarcotics operations in the Philippines is limited to transnational interdiction efforts. The PDEA and the Bureau of Customs cite U.S. drug analyzer donations to their airport and seaport interdiction task forces as a factor in their increased operational effectiveness and proficiency in intercepting drugs coming into the country, particularly MDMA originating from Europe.

In addition to the PADS, the legal landscape includes extradition and mutual legal assistance treaties with the United States; bilateral cooperation at times is strong, though often slow bureaucratically. In late 2020, the United States proposed to the Philippines initiating discussions on the terms of a possible maritime shiprider agreement to bolster cooperation on law enforcement operations.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Although interdiction efforts were hindered by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Philippine progress on the adoption and implementation of public health approaches to reducing the demand for drugs has been significant. The United States is working with the Philippines to further institutionalize evidence-based drug demand reduction programming, including establishing training for teachers on school-based prevention interventions. At the request of the Philippine government, the United States will also work with the Philippine Department of Health to develop a national credentialing system for substance use prevention service providers.

## Senegal

Given its strategic location and transportation infrastructure, Senegal is a major transit point on the cocaine trafficking route from South America to Europe. In October 2021, the Senegalese Navy seized two metric tons (MT) of cocaine off the coast of Dakar aboard the “La Rosa” vessel while the National Gendarmerie seized 675 kilograms of cocaine in Ngaparou in December 2020. Senegal is also the third-largest cannabis-cultivating country in West Africa. Cannabis is cultivated in the southern Casamance region, but is also trafficked into the country from neighboring countries. According to Senegal’s Customs Service, law enforcement officers seized 1.7 MT of cannabis in the Fatick and Kaolack regions in 2021. Additionally, in June 2021 the national navy seized 8.3 MT of hashish aboard a ship sailing without a national flag.

Senegal's 1997 Drug Law, amended in 2007, is under revision to strengthen the powers of the Central Office for the Repression of Illegal Drug Trafficking and criminalize other types of drugs, including khat and new psychoactive substances. The criminal code and criminal procedure code were amended in June 2021 to introduce provisions for asset recovery and special investigation techniques.

Senegal’s national strategic plan against drug trafficking (2021-2025) aims to strengthen the legal and institutional framework to combat drug abuse and trafficking, reduce the supply and demand for drugs, improve communication on the national anti-drug system, and strengthen the capacity of various stakeholders. The previous plan achieved only partial success.

Senegalese law enforcement personnel lack sufficient forensic capacity to reliably identify and seize illicit drugs. The Directorate of the Central Office for the Repression of Illegal Drug Trafficking is tasked to coordinate interagency collaboration in criminal investigations and proceedings but lacks sufficient mechanisms to effectively accomplish this.

Senegal is working to improve its law enforcement capacity and professionalism by participating in multilateral efforts with partners from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to combat cross-border drug trafficking. Cooperation and information sharing between Senegalese law enforcement and their Gambian and Bissau Guinean counterparts have improved since execution of a memorandum in 2018.

The United States continued to assist Senegal in 2021 to strengthen the capacities of the Gendarmerie, the Navy, and the National Police to monitor, detect, and interdict drug traffickers in Senegal's maritime approaches and territory. The United States and Senegal do not currently have a bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty or an extradition treaty. However, Senegal is a party to multilateral law enforcement conventions that have mutual legal assistance provisions.

The Senegalese have identified their greatest vulnerabilities as a continued lack of modern equipment, minimal cross-border information sharing, and inadequate training to reliably identify and seize illicit drugs and conduct effective investigations and prosecutions. The Government of Senegal has the political will to fight drug trafficking, but limited infrastructure and funding impedes its efforts. Incremental improvement is taking place, but continued support from the United States and other international partners remains critical.

## Spain

Spain is a primary transit point in Europe for cocaine originating from South America and for hashish from Morocco. Cocaine arrives in Spain in large, containerized shipments and in lower-volume shipments via recreational boats, within parasitic devices attached to cargo ships, and in semi-submersibles. Transnational criminal organizations frequently ship cocaine in raw or liquid form mixed within cargo to avoid detection. Traffickers also ship methamphetamine through Spain via containerized shipments. Some amphetamines enter Spain through its land borders. Domestic drug production is minor. There is small but increasing cannabis cultivation. There are also illegal labs involved in cutting, mixing, and reconstituting cocaine, as well as heroin and methamphetamine labs. Additionally, U.S. and Spanish law enforcement have seized synthetic drugs, including ketamine and MDMA (ecstasy), transiting from Spain to the United States.

Spanish law enforcement's counternarcotics efforts have resulted in significant drug seizures due to strong border control and coastal monitoring, sophisticated geospatial detection technology, domestic police action, internal affairs investigations, and international cooperation. In 2020, the most recent year for which data is available, drug seizures totaled 103.2 metric tons (MT), including 63.6 MT of hashish and 39.6 MT of cocaine. These seizures constituted the largest quantity of drugs confiscated by Spanish law enforcement in international waters since 2011.

The Spanish government continued to implement its 2017-24 national strategy to fight addiction. The strategy prioritizes treatment for minors, women, and the elderly. In the 2021 report on alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs, Spanish health authorities estimate that 8 percent of Spaniards consume cannabis and 2.5 percent consume cocaine. Authorities registered 1.7 percent of the population as having consumed synthetic drugs like ketamine and synthetic cannabinoids, although those substances did not evoke name recognition for 81.1 percent of the population.

Spain enjoys excellent bilateral and multilateral law enforcement cooperation with international partners. Cooperation on European Union operations in the Mediterranean continued, and U.S. law enforcement agencies maintained strong working relationships with Spanish authorities leading to significant drug seizures and arrests. For example, on September 27, the Spanish National Police announced the culmination of a complex, three-year operation, resulting in 61 arrests and the seizure of 4 MT of cocaine and more than 600,000 euros. Spanish officials said the investigation disrupted the "largest cocaine distribution network in Europe" and credited the investigation's success to collaboration between Spanish law enforcement agencies and their counterparts from the United States, EUROPOL, Germany, Colombia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia.

# Suriname

## A. Introduction

Suriname is a transit country for South American cocaine en route to Europe. Cargo containers carry most illicit drugs smuggled through Suriname, though cocaine is also smuggled via commercial and private flights and human couriers. Suriname's sparsely populated coastal region and isolated jungle interior, compounded by weak border controls and a lack of infrastructure, make illicit drug detection and interdiction efforts difficult.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Government of Suriname is officially opposed to illicit drug trafficking, but its practical ability to apprehend and prosecute drug traffickers is inhibited by drug-related corruption, bureaucratic hurdles, and the lack of financial and material resources. The Suriname Police Force (KPS) is responsible for the detection and combating of drug-related activities, with four units that have drug control responsibilities. The KPS Narcotics Brigade investigates and arrests individuals involved in trafficking illicit drugs. The Combating International Drug Trafficking Unit (BID) screens airport passengers on outbound flights. The canine unit (Honden Brigade) assists the BID team through luggage inspection. Finally, the Container Control Unit (CCP), supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, has drug control responsibilities at Suriname's shipping ports, using risk analysis and other proactive techniques to target high-risk containers. Surinamese Customs authorities oversee inspections.

In February 2021, President Chandrikapersad Santokhi formed a special unit, the Flying Brigade for Price Control, consisting of members of security services including the Directorate of National Security (DNV), to which it reports. In April 2021, the Brigade prevented the export of 100 shipping containers concealing illegally harvested wood and, in collaboration with Guyanese and Brazilian counterparts, discovered 895 kilograms (kg) of drugs at a Table Mountain airstrip.

In October 2021, the Office of the Attorney General announced establishment of a Judicial Intervention Team (JIT). The JIT will combat all forms of cross border crime and transnational organized crime. It will complement rather than replace the police and includes members of the police, Military Police, Customs, the DNV, and experts from the public and private sector. Its Investigation and Arrest Working Groups are exclusively staffed by police and Military Police, while the Intelligence Gathering Working Group and the logistical and administrative JIT duties are staffed by police, Military Police, Customs, and other experts. The JIT is investigating alleged involvement by members of the Arrest Team of the Police (A-Team) regarding 400 kg of cocaine confiscated in June at Kaaiangrasie. On June 14, near Goliath Mountain, authorities confiscated 400 kg of cocaine at Kaaimangrasie and discovered a burned-out plane in the vicinity. A second plane, believed linked to this case, was found burned out in Guyana.

Suriname is a party to the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and Migrant Smuggling and the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters. Since



1976, Suriname has shared drug-related information with the Netherlands as part of a mutual legal assistance agreement among former Dutch colonies to exchange crime-related data. Suriname has also signed bilateral agreements to combat drug trafficking with Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia. In 1999, the United States and Suriname entered into a comprehensive bilateral maritime counternarcotics enforcement agreement that remains in force.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

Suriname is not a source country for illegal drugs or precursor chemicals but is a transshipment point for illicit drugs. From November 2020 to September 2021, the Narcotics Brigade of the Police destroyed 2.2 metric tons (MT) of cocaine, 4 liters of liquid cocaine, and 7 kg of marijuana. The last disposal event was on September 11, 2021. A shipment of 4 MT of cocaine was confiscated at the port in Rotterdam, Netherlands in September 2021.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Illicit drug use is relatively rare in Suriname, with marijuana being the primary drug consumed locally. The country's current financial situation in combination with the global COVID-19 pandemic hampers efforts and intentions to ensure basic services for the population, limiting significant efforts towards prevention or treatment programs.

## **4. Corruption**

As a policy matter, the Government of Suriname does not encourage or facilitate illegal activity associated with drug trafficking. However, widespread and credible allegations suggest that drug-related corruption pervades many government offices, including the police.

## **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States supports a range of efforts designed to address crime and violence in Suriname, primarily through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). CBSI is a security partnership between the United States and Caribbean nations that seeks to reduce drug trafficking, advance public safety and citizen security, and promote social justice. CBSI support to Suriname includes training and equipment – primarily to the KPS and justice sector actors – to prevent and interdict drug trafficking and combat money laundering and corruption. The United States also provides training and assistance on trafficking in persons.

## **D. Conclusion**

Suriname is a transit country for illicit drugs originating in South America. The United States is encouraged by the Santokhi administration's public statements and urges the Government of Suriname to continue its efforts to combat corruption and take further steps to increase the effectiveness of drug interdiction, investigations, and prosecutions.

## Syria

Drug trafficking through Syria and drug production in the country is of increasing concern to the United States. Exports of Syrian-origin drugs have wide-reaching impact across the Middle East, Europe, North Africa, and Asia. Narcotics trafficking from Syria also threatens regional security and obstructs efforts to resolve the Syrian conflict.

Elements affiliated with the Assad regime, Hizballah, ISIS, and other terrorist groups in Syria and Lebanon have been associated with illicit narcotics production and trafficking in Syria, particularly of an amphetamine-type stimulant known widely as Captagon. Entities with known or suspected links to Assad regime officials and Hizballah are reportedly producing the drug in both Syria and along the border in Lebanon. A broad range of drug traffickers then smuggle the Captagon tablets to consumer markets in the Gulf, Mediterranean region, and Europe hidden amongst commercial goods and agricultural products in cargo containers.

The United States estimates that over \$3 billion of Captagon coming from or transported through Syria totaling over 28 metric tons (MT) has been seized globally since January 2021. Captagon originating in the Levant and seized by partner nations over the past six years reportedly totals nearly 115 MT, with larger quantities seized from 2019 to the present. Based on the number and size of Captagon seizures in the region in 2021, the potential magnitude of funds from this trafficking – which likely benefits malign actors - is of high concern to the United States.

Cooperation with international partners to address trafficking is essential in the Syrian context. Without international coordination, production and trafficking likely will continue to grow, increasing instability and negatively impacting public health across the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. The United States is working with partners to address Captagon originating in Syria and the Levant and will use multiple tools to address it.

# Tajikistan

## A. Introduction

Tajikistan serves as a main transit country for drug trafficking in Central Asia. Opiates and cannabis products, mostly hashish, are trafficked from Afghanistan across the 835-mile shared border with Tajikistan, through Central Asia (known as the “Northern Route”) to markets in Russia and Belarus and onward to Western and Central Europe. According to a 2021 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in 2019 the Russian Federation identified Tajikistan among the three main departure countries of heroin found on its territory.

The number of registered drug users in the country remains at similar levels as previous years, with a slight decrease, though these figures likely do not reflect the actual number of drug users in the country given that not all drug users will register because of potential personal and employment repercussions. The government asserts that it is committed to countering drug trafficking, but resource limitations and pervasive corruption present obstacles to effective counternarcotics operations.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Tajikistan’s drug enforcement activities focus on combating the sale and distribution of narcotics for use on the local market. Tajikistan’s drug investigation and interdiction agencies have the necessary legislative tools and have benefited from years of international donor support. However, Tajik law enforcement and border protection authorities are not fully effective at interdicting drugs transiting Tajikistan to foreign markets. In 2021, the U.S. government’s support for counternarcotics focused on Tajikistan’s Drug Control Agency (DCA) through financial assistance and law enforcement training.

Tajikistan is a member of the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center for Combatting Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Their Precursors (CARICC). Tajikistan assumed a two-year term as CARICC Director on February 2, 2020.

### 2. Supply Reduction

According to statistics provided by the DCA, in the first nine months of 2021 Tajik law enforcement agencies seized a total of 3,322 kilograms (kg) of illicit drugs, including 509.4 kg of opium and 239.7 kg of heroin, an 88.3 percent increase over the same period in 2020. Seizures of heroin, hashish, and synthetic pills accounted for the bulk of the increase, amounting to a gain of 135 percent, and totaling 2,485 kg. The total amount of opium seized by the Tajik government decreased by 7.7 percent to 509 kg, and the total amount of synthetic pills seized increased by 175 percent to 21,443 pills. Seizures of synthetic opioid analgesic drugs (such as Tramadol) in tablet form saw a drastic decrease from 3,484 tablets in the first nine months of 2020 to 34 tablets in the same period in 2021. (In comparison, the number of such tablets seized in the first nine months of 2020 was ten times more than during the same period in 2019.)

In October 2021, Tajik law enforcement agencies exposed a large transnational criminal network that had long been engaged in drug trafficking from Afghanistan through Central Asian countries to Europe. According to the media, this was one of the largest drug seizure operations in over five years, which resulted in a seizure of more than 473 kg of drugs (79 kg of heroin, 169 kg of opium, and more than 225 kg of hashish), with a street value exceeding \$6 million.

Despite these successes, opium seizures remain relatively low, and the spread of synthetic drugs is of increasing concern.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

During the first nine months of 2021, 4,840 Tajik citizens registered their substance abuse with the government, including 105 women. These numbers are slightly lower compared to the first nine months of 2020 (5,130 people registered in 2020, 111 of which were women). Persons with substance use disorders can elect to register for five years, allowing them to receive methadone through internationally funded HIV prevention projects. However, registration denies the drug user government employment, a driver's license, and, because a marriage permit requires a drug test, the ability to marry. The consequences of registration likely lead to an undercount of actual narcotics use.

Illicit drug use awareness efforts are funded by Tajikistan and international donors, including the United States. Educational campaigns increase awareness of drug harm through theater in schools, the media, articles in newspapers, and sporting events among students, military personnel, and populations living in remote areas.

### **4. Corruption**

As a matter of policy, the Government of Tajikistan does not encourage or facilitate illegal activity associated with drug trafficking. Tajikistan has enacted anti-corruption legislation, but enforcement is selective and generally ineffective in combating corruption of public officials. There was no reporting on significant prosecutions or convictions related to corruption involving illicit drugs during this period. Extremely low salaries for state workers, the profitability of narcotics transactions, and the dearth of other profitable activities increase the risk of drug-related corruption.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States has a Letter of Agreement in place with Tajikistan that outlines U.S. support for projects to enhance the counternarcotics and law enforcement capability of the DCA and the Border Forces under the State Committee for National Security through training, equipment purchases, and infrastructure projects. The United States has effective relationships with both agencies. During the first nine months of 2021 the United States provided \$213,604 in financial assistance to the DCA.

Tajikistan does not have an extradition or mutual legal assistance treaty with the United States of America, although Tajikistan is party to multilateral conventions that enable law enforcement cooperation.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Tajik authorities attribute the overall increase in drug seizures to more interdiction efforts, including increased Tajik-Afghan border security along the Northern Route. Authorities emphasize the need to combat the use and smuggling of synthetic pills, which saw a significant increase in 2021, while the quantities of seized opium continued to decline. It is possible that the previous year's overall low drug seizures were due to COVID-19-related disruptions. This year's increase may demonstrate that drug trafficking is back to its usual pace and possibly accelerating. Political instability in neighboring Afghanistan, which is the world's largest opium producer, may create new challenges. Tajikistan should continue to build on its work in investigating and dismantling transnational drug smuggling operations that exploit Tajikistan's territory to facilitate the trafficking of drugs from Afghanistan to Europe.

## Tanzania

Tanzania is a significant transit country for illicit drugs in East Africa. International drug trafficking organizations and courier networks transport illicit drugs via maritime vessel through Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania for destinations in Europe and North America. The most significant threat Tanzania faces is the illicit trafficking of heroin and, increasingly, methamphetamine, transported via the Makran Coast from Afghanistan. Tanzania cultivates cannabis and khat for domestic consumption and regional and international distribution. Porous borders and inadequate port security present considerable challenges to drug interdiction efforts.

In April 2021, Tanzania's Drug Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA) seized 494 kilograms (kg) of heroin and 355 kg of methamphetamine from a flagless dhow (traditional sailing vessel), arresting seven Iranian nationals. The seizure was one of the largest in Tanzania's history, and the expediency and effectiveness of the response underscored the Tanzanian government's commitment to the operation. In June, the DCEA seized 85 kg of heroin and approximately 75 kg of methamphetamine from a land-based stash cache. Six individuals were arrested. These DCEA-led investigations remain active and ongoing.

Domestic drug use continues to increase, including methamphetamine use. In September 2021 the DCEA opened the most recent methadone clinic in Songwe region, which borders Zambia and Malawi. The tenth methadone clinic in Tanzania, it serves a growing number of people suffering from substance use disorders, the increase resulting from traffickers who pay employees in drugs instead of cash.

The United States promotes improved interdiction operations through law enforcement cooperation and encourages the Tanzanian government to further pursue its commitment to drug interdiction, combatting corruption, and improving criminal justice and rule of law. The DCEA, Tanzania Police Force, Tanzanian People's Defense Force, and Tanzanian Maritime Police contribute to Tanzania's fight against illicit drug trafficking. These agencies work with U.S. and other international law enforcement partners. Regional cooperation on drug interdiction is improving. Extradition between Tanzania and the U.S. is governed by the 1931 U.S.-U.K. Extradition Treaty and implemented pursuant to Tanzania's domestic Extradition Act. There is no U.S.-Tanzania bilateral mutual legal assistance treaty, though both countries are parties to various multilateral conventions with provisions for assistance and Tanzania has a domestic law on mutual assistance in criminal matters.

The Tanzanian government does not encourage or facilitate the production or trafficking of illicit drugs as a matter of policy. However, drug traffickers use financial incentives to influence politicians, law enforcement, and others in positions of power.

## Thailand

Thailand does not cultivate or produce significant quantities of opiates, methamphetamine, or other illicit drugs, nor is it a significant source or transit country for drugs entering the United States. However, transnational narcotics traffickers smuggle a significant quantity of illegal drugs through Thailand, bound for markets in the Indo-Pacific region. Thailand's foremost drug control challenge is addressing the surging inflow of methamphetamine from neighboring Burma, most of which transits through Thailand to other markets. Heroin, also largely from Burma, continues to threaten Thailand and the region as well.

In December 2020, Thailand legalized the use of some cannabis plant parts including hemp seed, bark, stem, and leaves to produce medicine, health products, food, cosmetics, and other industrial uses. However, marijuana seeds and flowers remain listed as Class 5 narcotics and the recreational usage, cultivation, and possession of cannabis are still illegal. In August 2021 Thailand legalized the growth, consumption, and sale of kratom leaves (which come from a Southeast Asian evergreen tree and can be consumed as a sedative or stimulant) to non-pregnant adults.

During the first nine months of 2021, Thai authorities seized approximately 15.3 metric tons (MT) of crystal methamphetamine, 367.6 million methamphetamine tablets, 3.7 MT of heroin, 17.2 kilograms (kg) of cocaine, 738.3 kg of ketamine, 91,733 MDMA (ecstasy) pills, 13.9 MT of kratom, and 36.4 MT of marijuana.

Criminal penalties vary by narcotics classification, ranging from monetary fines to life imprisonment. The death penalty exists but is rarely imposed.

Substance abuse has been a high-profile social and public health problem in Thailand for decades. "Yaba," a tablet containing methamphetamine, caffeine, and other stimulants, is the most widely abused drug in Thailand. Thailand carries out demand reduction, drug treatment, and rehabilitation programs.

Thailand's Office of the Narcotics Control Board has overall responsibility for the prevention and suppression of illegal drug use and works with the Royal Thai Police Narcotics Suppression Bureau to enforce drugs laws.

The United States and Thailand enjoy a close relationship on law enforcement, including through bilateral extradition and mutual legal assistance treaties. With U.S. assistance in facilitating and enhancing cooperation, Thailand is an effective and cooperative partner. The United States works closely with Thai counterparts on investigations and provides specialized training and equipment through the International Law Enforcement Academy and other assistance programs.

# Trinidad and Tobago

## A. Introduction

Trinidad and Tobago (TT) is a transshipment point for illegal drugs destined for Europe, North America, and the rest of the Caribbean. Drug trafficking organizations take advantage of the country's proximity to Venezuela, porous borders, vulnerabilities at ports of entry, limited law enforcement capacity and resources, and corruption to traffic illicit drugs. Nevertheless, Trinidad and Tobago continues to make progress in its efforts to investigate and dismantle drug networks and seized more cocaine and marijuana in 2021 than it did in 2020.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Trinidad and Tobago's drug control institutions are challenged by deficiencies in staffing, interagency coordination, and funding. However, authorities are making progress on breaking down silos within law enforcement and intelligence agencies and improving coordination on counternarcotics efforts. The government of Trinidad and Tobago is working to develop a comprehensive border management policy, including the creation of a specialized multi-agency border/port interdiction unit, to tackle the illegal importation of narcotics, illegal firearms, and contraband via ports of entry. The judicial system suffers from lengthy delays, and drug-related prosecutions can take years to be resolved.

The National Drug Council, the body responsible for coordinating Trinidad and Tobago's anti-drug policy, received \$182,000 in the proposed 2021-2022 budget. The National Drug Council worked with national stakeholders in 2021 to advance several anti-drug priorities, including the National Drug Policy 2021 and Operational Plan 2021-2025 that were approved by the Cabinet. The plan focuses primarily on strengthening institutions and international cooperation, supply reduction, control measures, research, and demand reduction. The National Drug Council, in collaboration with national stakeholders responsible for drug control and intelligence gathering, supported the implementation of an Early Warning System that detects new psychoactive substances and other emerging substances. Trinidad and Tobago provides guidance to other Caribbean countries that are in the process of developing their respective Early Warning Systems and has been approached by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to provide similar assistance.

Trinidad and Tobago has been granted provisional approval to participate in the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP) administered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, which was scheduled to begin at the end of 2021. The project will provide funding for training and interdiction exercises to be conducted at the country's two international airports. Trinidad and Tobago also participates in the European Union-funded Seaport Cooperation Project (SEACOP), which provides funding for training and interdiction exercises to be conducted at seaports in TT. The fifth phase of the project began in November 2021.



Trinidad and Tobago has mutual legal assistance and extradition treaties with the United States, which are used periodically. The country is also party to a drug control and law enforcement letter of agreement with the United States; a maritime law enforcement agreement that enables the United States to patrol Trinidad and Tobago's waters and detain vessels suspected of trafficking drugs; a ship rider agreement that allows U.S. law enforcement detachments aboard Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard vessels; and a customs mutual assistance agreement.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

Trinidad and Tobago law enforcement reported seizing 177.35 kilograms (kg) of cocaine and 2.15 metric tons (MT) of marijuana during the first nine months of 2021, compared to seizures of 119.6 kg and 1.94 MT respectively over the same period in 2020. In April 2021, the Trinidad and Tobago Customs and Excise Division intercepted a boat in the Gulf of Paria transporting over \$800,000 worth of marijuana and cocaine. In August, local law enforcement seized over 434 kg of marijuana and 126 kg of cocaine in intelligence-led operations. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago successfully denied \$7,212,715 in revenue to transnational crime groups during the first nine months of 2021.

Marijuana is the only known locally produced illicit drug in Trinidad and Tobago. Though not a significant area of focus, Trinbagonian authorities periodically eradicate cannabis. There has been a decrease in the number of arrests for the possession of marijuana due to the decriminalization of the possession of quantities equal to or less than 30 grams. However, local authorities reported an increase in the number of cannabis seedlings destroyed in the previous reporting period, an indicator of rising local demand for marijuana.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Information about drug use in Trinidad and Tobago remains limited and largely anecdotal. However, in collaboration with the University of the West Indies, the government is pursuing a national household consumption study that seeks to obtain empirical data on drug use to allow for evidence-based policy making on drugs in Trinidad and Tobago through the development of valid, reliable, and timely research on drug consumption and its consequences. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago completed the 2020 Report of the Drug Information Network of Trinidad and Tobago (DIN-TT). DIN-TT provides data on the extent, distribution, and volume of the national drug problem that is collected from stakeholders and analyzed.

There are several drug treatment programs in Trinidad and Tobago supported by the government – primarily the health ministry – as well as programs administered and privately funded by nongovernmental organizations, religious groups, and hospitals. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, in collaboration with the Organization of American States, launched the U.S.-funded Case Care Management Program in October to address substance use disorders and provide alternatives to incarceration for individuals referred from the drug treatment courts, as well as persons on community service orders and other probationers.

#### **4. Corruption**

As a matter of policy, the government of Trinidad and Tobago does not encourage or facilitate illegal activity associated with drug trafficking or the laundering of proceeds from illicit drug transactions. Nonetheless, there are persistent reports of drug-related corruption in the ranks of law enforcement, border security entities, and the postal system, which facilitates the transshipment and distribution of illicit drugs. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has passed several laws to address corruption concerns, including the passage of a Proceeds of Crime Act and the partially adopted civil asset forfeiture law.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States and Trinidad and Tobago law enforcement maintain a cooperative relationship, including collaborating closely with local authorities on improving security at legal ports of entry.

The United States supports a wide range of efforts designed to address crime and violence affecting citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, primarily through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI). CBSI is a security partnership between the United States and Caribbean nations that seeks to substantially reduce illicit drug trafficking, advance public safety and citizen security, and reduce youth crime and violence. The United States provides, via CBSI, counternarcotics training and capacity building for relevant institutions, which contributed to the seizure of significant amounts of illicit drugs in 2021.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Cooperation between the United States and Trinidad and Tobago on drug trafficking and transnational crime was overall productive in 2021. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago should continue to develop strategies to strengthen border security, including finalizing the deployment of a multi-agency border security unit to improve narcotics detection and interdiction at official ports of entry. The government should also increase its efforts to combat public corruption that facilitates transnational crime, including utilizing its civil asset forfeiture law and unexplained wealth order provisions.

## Turkey

Turkey's location at the crossroads of Asia and Europe and its inadequate controls for addressing illicit finance make it a significant transit country for illicit drug trafficking, particularly for opiates smuggled from Afghanistan to Europe and synthetic drugs produced in Europe and shipped to Asia. According to U.S. law enforcement sources, both the number of drug seizures in Turkey and the quantities seized, particularly of heroin and cocaine, have greatly increased this year compared to 2020, possibly reflecting 2019-2020 COVID-19 related losses.

Terrorist groups operating in and around Turkey provide logistics, protection, and other support to drug smugglers. Transnational criminal networks reportedly have interests in heroin conversion laboratories near the border with Iran. Criminal organizations facilitate large shipments of heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine from South America and Mexico to Europe and Asia. Syrian drug traffickers play a significant role in Turkey's drug trade. Illegal drug use in Turkey is relatively low compared to countries in the region, although cannabis is imported or grown domestically for local consumption.

In June 2021, Turkey announced its largest ever cocaine seizure – 1.1 metric tons (MT) hidden among bananas on a ship from Ecuador – at a port in Mersin province. Following nine months of surveillance, in October 2021 authorities uncovered a cocaine pipeline involving a Colombian cartel and Turkish drug barons who shipped cocaine in planes containing flowers, coffee, or strawberries. The Turkish National Police (TNP) Counter Narcotics Department, working with customs officials at borders and ports, reportedly conducted 143,787 operations between January – September 2021, seizing 13 MT of heroin, two MT of methamphetamine, two MT of “super strength” marijuana (“skunk”), 1.9 MT of cocaine, one MT of synthetic cannabinoid (bonsai), and over 19 million amphetamine tablets (including ecstasy and Captagon).

The United States sponsored four TNP officers to the Drug Unit Commanders course at the International Law Enforcement Academy in September 2021, resuming training that had lapsed since 2018. However, Turkey's conviction of a local DEA staff member on spurious charges has impeded U.S.-Turkish counternarcotics cooperation. As a result, Turkish authorities did not accept invitations from the United States to cooperate on drug-related investigations in Turkey. U.S.-supported training and equipment that strengthened Turkish border enforcement and the participation of Turkish customs officers has had a positive effect on seizures.

Turkey strictly controls licit opium poppy cultivation and pharmaceutical morphine production, with no apparent diversion into the illicit market; however, rumors of corruption abound, spurred by YouTube videos by reputed mafia boss Sedat Peker alleging a Venezuela-Turkey cocaine connection close to the nation's ruling AK Party. No Turkish government officials have been charged with complicity in drug trafficking or the laundering of drug proceeds in 2021. Turkey's drug policy under-emphasizes treatment and prevention in favor of aggressive drug seizures. The government focuses mostly on terrorist networks' heavy involvement in heroin trafficking, especially from Iran and Afghanistan, while pursuit of the large Turkish criminal organizations receives considerably less scrutiny, interdiction, and prosecutions.

# Turkmenistan

## A. Introduction

Turkmenistan is a transshipment route for narcotics traffickers attempting to smuggle Afghan opiates to Turkey, Russia, and greater Europe, either directly from Afghanistan or through Iran. It is not a major producer or source country for illegal drugs or precursor chemicals. Most illegal drug seizures have occurred along Turkmenistan's rugged and remote 500-mile border with Afghanistan and its 713-mile frontier with Iran. Turkmenistan's airports were closed to commercial traffic in 2021 and its land borders, including with Afghanistan, were mostly closed to non-commercial traffic in 2021, limiting the extent to which drugs could enter the country. The government of Turkmenistan has not indicated a significant shift of resources to address the increased risk of drug smuggling related to the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Turkmenistan recognizes the threat of illegal drugs flowing from Afghanistan, Iran, and other neighboring states and directs law enforcement resources and personnel toward stopping drugs at the borders with these countries. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 into the country, the government maintained strict restrictions established in 2020 at all border checkpoints, including sea, air, and land. No international commercial flights landed in Turkmenistan throughout 2021. These measures likely limited the ability of drug traffickers to transport drugs into the country or transit its territory via air. The land borders with Iran and Afghanistan, while closed to normal citizen crossings, remained open for commercial traffic, however, as did commercial Caspian Sea ferry traffic with Azerbaijan and Russia, providing avenues for smuggling.

### 2. Supply Reduction

As Turkmenistan does not share official statistics on its anti-drug efforts, it is difficult to analyze notable trends or accomplishments in reducing the supply of illegal drugs. There were virtually no reports in Turkmenistan's state-controlled media of detentions and arrests related to drug trafficking crimes in 2021. The government normally holds two "drug burn" ceremonies per year in winter and summer to destroy seized drugs and tobacco products, but no reporting on such events in 2021 has been observed. There is no evidence of synthetic drug production in Turkmenistan.

### 3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment

Turkmenistan does not appear to have a serious internal problem with illicit drug abuse. The government administers an uncompromising policy against illicit drugs, with even slight drug offenses punishable with years of jail time. Although it does not appear Turkmenistan invests heavily in anti-drug media campaigns, schools do provide basic education warning students about the dangers of illegal drugs.

Local law enforcement entities possess broad authority to initiate drug-related cases and send individuals to rehabilitation. The Ministry of Health operates six drug treatment clinics: one substance abuse out-patient facility in Ashgabat, a hospital treating drug abuse patients in the Ilyaly district of Dashoguz province, and one treatment clinic in each of the other four provincial administrative centers. Patients can receive free detoxification treatment at these clinics without revealing their identity, as clinic visits are kept confidential. The government also maintains a post-treatment rehabilitation center for alcohol, drug, and tobacco users in the Altyn Asyr district of Ahal province. Patients undergo rehabilitation for up to three months and the center can accommodate up to 120 patients at a time. Turkmenistan has not published any drug abuse-related statistics since 2006.

In June 2021, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, held a press conference in Ashgabat dedicated to the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. A large-scale operation was announced at this event to identify the illegal cultivation of plants used to produce narcotics and psychotropic substances. Results of the operation have not been announced.

#### **4. Corruption**

Turkmenistan does not, as a matter of government policy, encourage or facilitate illicit drug production or distribution, nor is it known to be involved in laundering the proceeds of the sale of illicit drugs. There were no official reports in 2021 of prosecution of law enforcement or other government officials for narcotics-related corruption.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States continues to cooperate with Turkmenistan in the training of law enforcement personnel. The level of this cooperation was not as high in 2021 as in previous years, however, which Turkmenistan has attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The United States continues to finance a project, implemented by UNODC, to help the forensics lab of the Ministry of Health obtain accreditation in accordance with standards set by the International Organization for Standardization. In 2021, the program trained 20 Turkmen forensic experts on international standard requirements, developed documentation to establish a new quality management system for forensics laboratories, and arranged an inter-agency coordination meeting on forensics with counterparts from Uzbekistan.

The United States also funds a project implemented by UNODC that provides English language training for law enforcement personnel. The first seven-month course concluded in September 2021.

At the Turkmenbashi seaport, the United States provides funding for the UNODC Container Control Program to improve security and interdiction efforts. The United States, in cooperation with UNODC, is implementing a project to strengthen the capacity of Turkmenistan's Special Services to effectively interdict the illegal movement of drugs and other goods across the border by creating three Border Liaison Offices at border crossings with Afghanistan and Uzbekistan.

These offices will improve cross-border cooperation and exchange of information between special agencies on both sides. Under this project, UNODC conducted two five-day online trainings on search operations on vehicles, trains, and goods crossing land borders with a focus on identifying cash smuggling.

Turkmenistan does not have an extradition treaty or mutual legal assistance agreement with the United States but is a party to multilateral conventions that enable law enforcement cooperation.

#### **D. Conclusion**

It remains to be seen to what extent Turkmenistan will augment or recalibrate its anti-drug trafficking efforts to counteract a possible increase in drug smuggling from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Strict border controls and a lack of commercial flights provide a certain degree of built-in prevention. However, Turkmenistan should improve its border security at green borders (weakly protected sections of the national border) and official border crossing points. Turkmenistan's official border crossing points have some of the most advanced screening technologies in the region, including biometric recognition and advanced x-ray technology. The government's policies, procedures, and training curriculum, however, are too antiquated to fully utilize these technologies and interdict smugglers. Observational data suggests that the current heavy, top-down approach of command and control within the Customs and Border Guards prevents low-level line officers from taking the initiative when conducting inspections of vehicles and personnel. Additionally, Turkmenistan should take further steps to increase communication, coordination, and intelligence sharing with its neighbors through participation in regional training events.

## Ukraine

Ukraine is a transit country for illicit drug trafficking due to its location astride several important trafficking routes into western Europe. Ukraine's numerous ports on the Black and Azov seas, its extensive river routes, and its porous northern and eastern borders make it an attractive route for drug traffickers into the European Union's (EU) illegal drug market. Russia's continuing conflict in eastern Ukraine has created an area vulnerable to exploitation by transnational criminal organizations (TCOs).

Before transiting Ukraine, TCOs traffic opium and heroin from Afghanistan through Central Asia, the Caucasus, Iran, Russia, and Turkey. Ukraine is a convergence point for the Northern and Balkan drug trafficking routes. South American cocaine is primarily moved through Ukrainian seaports and airports.

Local clandestine amphetamine and methamphetamine laboratories supply the domestic market. The use of new psychoactive substances (NPS) has been rapidly increasing in Ukraine over the past decade, following international trends. NPS are trafficked to Ukraine primarily via postal shipments from China. The amount of NPS available for widespread consumption has reportedly been increasing, as many NPS have an undefined legal status and are relatively cheap. "Designer" drugs remain popular, particularly among youth. Domestic seizures of NPS are usually in small quantities ranging from several grams to several hundred grams.

Fentanyl and fentanyl analogues are an emerging threat to Ukraine. In 2021, the National Police of Ukraine executed Ukraine's largest-ever seizure of carfentanyl-based designer opioids when they seized 21 kilograms of carfentanyl and five liters of liquid carfentanyl solution pursuant to a joint investigation conducted with the United States.

Most domestic drug abuse continues to come from regional illicit drug crops (cannabis and opium poppy). These account for more than 90 percent of the total drug market in Ukraine.

The United States provides assistance to help Ukraine bring its law enforcement institutions up to Western standards and facilitate Ukraine's integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. U.S. bilateral investigative cooperation with the National Police of Ukraine, the State Border Guard Service, and the State Security Service resulted in the seizure of 372 kilograms (kg) of cocaine, 1638 kg of heroin, 56 kg of fentanyl analogues, 880 kg of amphetamines, 3545 kg of synthetic cathinones, and over \$1.1 million in assets in 2021.

## United Kingdom

The United Kingdom (UK) is a consumer and transshipment country, though not a source country, for illicit drugs. In 2021, transnational criminal organizations trafficked cocaine, opiates, heroin, and synthetic drugs to the UK for domestic consumption, some of which transited to other countries in Europe. UK criminal organizations engage in domestic drug trafficking, as well as violent and financial crimes. Drug use is linked to serious violence, as drug supply groups establish transnational networks to exploit existing drug markets. The United States and the UK work closely bilaterally and multilaterally on drug enforcement efforts.

UK authorities estimate that 117 metric tons (MT) of cocaine and 38 MT of opiates are consumed in the UK each year, which places its cocaine and heroin consumption rates among the highest in Europe. Cocaine and heroin purity levels are high. However, some reports indicated decreasing heroin purity in parts of England. The prices for cocaine and heroin increased during the COVID-19 pandemic but returned to pre-COVID-19 prices in 2021. Crack cocaine is a growing problem. Long-term heroin users are using crack cocaine due to rising production and purity of cocaine and much more aggressive marketing of both substances together.

The Scottish government reported 1,339 drug-related deaths in 2020, a five percent increase from 2019 and the largest number since 1996. This is more than three times that of the UK as a whole, and higher than that of any country in Europe. In July 2020, public health authorities issued an alert regarding the harm caused by illicit or fake benzodiazepines. This stemmed from the increasing availability and use of “street” benzodiazepines and their analogues, which are often sold as diazepam and alprazolam. In 2021, authorities reported over 65 percent of drug-related deaths in Scotland in 2020 resulted from benzodiazepine use, while over 36 percent of drug-related deaths in Northern Ireland in 2019 resulted from diazepam use.

Cannabis is one of the largest drug markets in the UK, where the annual consumption is approximately 240 MT. The UK receives cannabis via mail, fast parcel, and air freight shipments, particularly from U.S. states where it is legal. Media reported a new trend involving professionally packaged cannabis edibles marketed as “cannabis” or “THC” infused products, which resulted in hospitalizations of four school-aged children.

Reported use of fentanyl has declined since 2017, but the UK government acknowledges the true extent of fentanyl use is unknown, as submission policies and testing standards vary across the country. Nonetheless, fentanyl remains a concern due to the impact it can have on public health. In 2021, the UK identified new synthetic opioids (etonitazene and isotonitazene) with potency equal to or greater than fentanyl, which had been used to adulterate tablets and heroin. Authorities are working to determine if this is an emerging trend or the result of isolated importations of drugs adulterated with these substances.

The United States conducts coordinated drug trafficking and money laundering investigations with the UK National Crime Agency, Metropolitan Police Service, UK Border Force, Police Scotland, Police Service of Northern Ireland, and other UK law enforcement agencies. The United States has provided the UK with lead information on drug shipments bound for the UK including couriers, parcels, and containerized cargo.



# Uzbekistan

## A. Introduction

Uzbekistan is a transit country for bulk opium, heroin, and hashish coming from Afghanistan and through Tajikistan to Kazakhstan, Russia, and Europe. Cannabis and opium poppy are cultivated in rural households for personal use and sale. Increasing drug production, deterioration of the political situation in Afghanistan, and growing cross-border movements with neighbors, especially Tajikistan, have heightened the risk of narcotics smuggling in Uzbekistan. Countering the trafficking from Tajikistan and Afghanistan is a priority for authorities.

In 2020, the latest period for which data is available, seizures of heroin, opium, and marijuana all decreased, whereas confiscation of hashish, poppy straw, and synthetic narcotics increased significantly. The government's latest narcotics data shows a decline in consumption of opium drugs and cannabis. In the first 10 months of 2021, law enforcement and media reports suggested that internal consumption and seizures of opium and cannabis-based narcotics were on the rise as well as attempts to smuggle heroin and hashish to Uzbekistan via Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

Uzbekistan prioritizes countering the smuggling of narcotics mainly from Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Its law enforcement bodies conduct biannual cross-country anti-drug Black Poppy operations. In 2020-2021, these operations primarily detected illicit cultivation of cannabis and opium poppy on household plots in the countryside. The government did not adopt any significant legislation in 2021.

Government officials regularly participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's working group meetings under an agreement on fighting drugs, psychotropic substances, and their precursors. The country is negotiating its membership in the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Uzbekistan is one of the founding members of the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center for Combatting Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Their Precursors based in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The Government's counternarcotics policy is led by the State Commission on Drug Control headed by the Prime Minister. The Commission is an inter-agency body for developing, coordinating, and executing anti-drug activities as well as implementation of international obligations. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), State Security Service, including Border Troops, and State Customs Committee are the front-line law enforcement bodies overseeing seizures and field operations.

The country's major obstacles in implementing effective counternarcotics policies are a lack of regional and international cooperation, a shortfall of technical and analytical capacities due to insufficient funding, and law enforcement's need for advanced investigation techniques.

In 2021, the Prosecutor General Office's Financial Investigations Unit joined the government's Japan-funded Interagency Mobile Teams task forces of customs, state security, law enforcement, and border control officials to conduct financial investigations related to drug trafficking proceeds. Uzbekistan strengthened its border control in collaboration with other Central Asian countries and enhanced technical capacities of its customs and law enforcement officials through U.S.-funded Port Control Units, Border Liaison Offices, and the Container Control Program.

## **2. Supply Reduction**

There is no evidence of large-scale illicit cultivation in Uzbekistan, though Uzbek media reports on cultivation of opium poppy and cannabis for personal use in rural areas of Ferghana, Bukhara, and other southern and eastern provinces. Law enforcement seized small amounts of marijuana, hashish, and occasionally synthetic opioid medications, opium, and heroin. Relatively low levels of heroin seizures indicate that smuggled bulk heroin is intended for other markets.

The NCDC recorded 973 cases of illicit cultivation of mainly cannabis and some opium poppy in 2020, a 38 percent increase from 2019. The eradicated plants were grown within an area of 2,215 square miles, a 78 percent increase from 2019. In 2020, the authorities registered 6,032 drug-related offenses, a 20 percent growth from 2019. Offenses included drug sales, smuggling, illicit cultivation, and operating drug dens. Law enforcement agencies seized over 1,542.3 kilograms (kg) of various narcotics in 2020, a 28.5 percent increase from 2019. Seized narcotics had the following breakdown in 2020, the latest period for which data is available: 28.4 kg of heroin; 124.1 kg of opium; 223.9 kg of hashish; 127 kg of hashish oil; 692.8 kg of marijuana; 323.9 kg of poppy straw; 279.4 g of cocaine; 1.2 kg of synthetic drugs; and 19.9 kg of medications containing narcotic substances.

The quantity of heroin and opium seized dropped by 30 and 40 percent respectively and marijuana decreased slightly in 2020. However, the quantities of hashish more than doubled, poppy straw increased fivefold, and synthetic drugs rose more than sixfold. Law enforcement detained 55 foreign nationals for drug-related crimes. This reflects a 50 percent decrease likely due to travel restrictions.

## **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

Uzbekistan lacks current data on drug use among the general population for no such survey has been conducted in the country. Government authorities manage around 20 specialized drug treatment and rehabilitation centers under the Republican Center for Narcology which have limited capabilities.

The NCDC reported that the number of registered drug users dropped to 5,252 in 2020, from 5,698 in 2019. Uzbekistan's law enforcement and government agencies hold outreach activities such as thematic meetings, sports events, TV shows, articles in printed media, and visual aids aimed at preventing drug use among youth (reached over 2.4 million students in 2020).

#### **4. Corruption**

Uzbekistan's government policy does not encourage or facilitate illicit narcotic activities, nor is there evidence of senior government officials' engagement in such activities. Although there are media reports of pervasive public corruption at multiple levels, high-profile convictions of senior officials have typically not involved drug-related crimes. The Anticorruption Agency will not have authority to investigate and prosecute drug-related corruption cases until a law governing the agency is adopted. Corruption cases are generally handled in closed court hearings with little information made public.

#### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

The United States and Uzbekistan agreed, in a 2001 Letter of Agreement, to cooperate to enhance Uzbekistan's law enforcement capabilities in detecting and interdicting cross-border illegal drug shipments and investigating drug crimes.

There is minimal direct bilateral cooperation on counter-drug operational activities. The United States funds three counternarcotics assistance programs through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: 1) anti-money laundering (AML) and countering financing terrorism (CFT) training programs for law enforcement and financial institution officials; 2) a survey on drug use in Uzbekistan to establish baseline data and, 3) assistance to state forensic laboratories in obtaining international accreditation. The AML/CFT program has helped Uzbekistan prepare for assessment from the Eurasia Group, a regional body which is similar to the Financial Assistance Task Force. The forensics program successfully improved quality control and procedures in Uzbek labs. The drug use survey program has struggled to find a company with the technical capacity to conduct the survey.

Uzbekistan does not have agreements on mutual legal assistance and extradition with the United States, although it is party to multilateral conventions that enable law enforcement cooperation. The United States maintains a largely dormant Memorandum of Understanding with the MIA, the Prosecutor General Office's Financial Intelligence Unit, and the National Center for Drug Control (NCDC) but hopes to rebuild working relationships through training activities.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Uzbekistan is willing to report on drug seizures, particularly those involving smuggling along the border, and conducts wide outreach prevention activities among youth. However, Uzbekistan's reluctance to share information with foreign governments on its counternarcotics operations and activities makes it difficult to evaluate the country's drug control efforts and to determine the severity of its drug problem. Uzbekistan should introduce more transparency for all its counternarcotics efforts, including narcotics data, anti-corruption cases, and operational activities. Such transparency would facilitate bilateral and multilateral cooperation and strengthen efforts to combat narcotics trafficking.

# Venezuela

## A. Introduction

Venezuela is a major drug transit country and a preferred trafficking route in the Western Hemisphere for illegal drugs, predominately cocaine. On January 10, 2019, Nicolás Maduro began a second term as president. Juan Guaidó, as President of the National Assembly, invoked the Venezuelan constitution on January 23, 2019, to assume the role of Interim President, but Maduro refused to cede power.

Guaidó has condemned the Maduro regime's complicity with illegal armed groups, including the National Liberation Army (ELN) and dissident elements of the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-D). He has characterized the regime as a drug trafficking cartel lacking full control of Venezuelan territory, running the risk of turning Venezuela into a "failed state" and a "sanctuary for organized crime." The regime's practically nonexistent international drug control cooperation, usurpation of the judiciary and military services for its own illicit ends, corruption, and cooperation with criminal elements provide ideal conditions for drug trafficking and associated violence. Given the economic crisis due to its corruption and mismanagement, the regime increasingly depends on illicit proceeds from drug trafficking.

The regime took no action in 2021 against persons and companies designated as Specially Designated Narcotics Traffickers or indicted by the United States for drug trafficking. Designees and those indicted include Maduro himself and members of the regime's cabinet.

## B. Drug Control Accomplishments, Policies, and Trends

### 1. Institutional Development

The Guaidó interim government's Commission on Security and Intelligence continued to enhance international cooperation to combat narco trafficking and terrorism in 2021.

The Maduro regime is not committed to narcotics control. In May 2020, Maduro announced the National Anti-Drug Superintendency (SUNAD) via the Organic Drug Law of 2010, replacing the National Anti-Drug Office. Maduro's National Assembly is currently discussing reforms to the SUNAD, headed by Admiral Remigio Ceballos since August 2021. Ceballos previously served as Commander of the Strategic Operational Command of the Armed Forces and has been sanctioned by the United States for corruption and human rights abuses.

### 2. Supply Reduction

Venezuela is a major transit country for cocaine via aerial and maritime routes. Most flights suspected of trafficking drugs depart from states bordering Colombia, primarily Zulia.

Unreliable statistics make it difficult to assess 2021 regime seizures. In a 2020 report, the SUNAD claimed 69 percent of the seized drugs came from Colombia and were seized in the bordering states of Amazonas, Apure, Táchira, and Zulia. By August of 2020, a U.S. operation

targeting drugs flowing from Venezuela had seized more than 100 metric tons of cocaine and denied the Maduro regime roughly \$3 billion in illicit revenue.

Trafficking by maritime conveyance includes the use of large cargo containers, fishing vessels, and “go-fast” boats. There are signs of connections between drug and human trafficking groups, particularly on the maritime routes between Venezuela and the islands of Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, and Trinidad and Tobago. In southern Venezuela on the border with Brazil, Venezuelan gangs called “sindicatos” work with Brazilian armed groups to traffic drugs and illegally mined minerals such as gold. In Bolívar and Amazonas states, there are credible reports of Colombian terrorist groups active in illegal mining and drug and arms trafficking, forcing displacement of indigenous communities. Along the border with Colombia, Venezuelan gangs smuggle drugs from the Norte de Santander department in Colombia. These irregular armed groups have taken advantage of migrants that use illegal paths to cross the border, sometimes recruiting them for drug smuggling purposes.

Illicit drugs transiting Venezuela in 2021 via aircraft were largely destined for Mexico and Central America while those aboard maritime vessels predominantly transited through the Caribbean or Atlantic for delivery to U.S. and European markets. Aerial trafficking routes to Mexico and Central America are favored by drug trafficking organizations. Colombian drug trafficking organizations – including FARC dissident factions, the ELN, and other criminal groups – facilitate the shipment of illicit drugs through Venezuela. These illegal armed groups that are regularly present in Venezuelan border states such as Zulia, Apure, Táchira, Bolívar, and Amazonas have expanded their influence into Mérida, Trujillo, Barinas, Lara, Portuguesa, Aragua, Guárico, Monagas Anzoátegui, Delta Amacuro, Falcon, and the Caracas capital district. During 2021, the United States received credible reports from civil society of coca cultivation inside Venezuela in Zulia, Apure, and possibly other states.

The Maduro regime occasionally reports drug seizures, arrests, and destruction of illicit airstrips publicly. These apprehensions are likely aimed at those who fail to bribe or work with regime officials. Venezuela is not a member of the Cooperative Situational Information Integration System through which countries share information on suspected drug trafficking with the United States and regional partners. Regime authorities do not share evidence about destruction of illicit drugs with U.S. officials.

### **3. Public Information, Prevention, and Treatment**

While recent data is not available, the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation reports that between 1990 and 2018, drug overdoses in Venezuela increased more than 350 percent and drug use increased more than 200 percent. The regime’s mismanagement of the economic and humanitarian crises, worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic, has deteriorated medical care in Venezuela, with frequent power outages, shortages of basic supplies, and insufficient staffing.

### **4. Corruption**

Corruption is endemic in Venezuela, facilitating the operations of drug-trafficking organizations. Armed gangs originating in Venezuela’s prison system, known as “pranes,” as well as the

regime's armed "colectivos" (pro-regime armed groups), are deeply involved in drug trafficking, as are the regime's military and security services.

Since 2017, the United States has made over 350 Venezuelan-related designations pursuant to various Executive Orders (E.O.), the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, and the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act. In addition, in March 2020 the United States announced criminal charges against Maduro and members of his inner circle for participating in a narco-terrorism conspiracy, conspiring to import cocaine into the United States, and firearms-related charges.

### **C. National Goals, Bilateral Cooperation, and U.S. Policy Initiatives**

Drug control cooperation between Venezuela and the United States has been limited since 2005, when officials refused to sign a negotiated addendum to the 1978 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Narcotics Cooperation.

The United States works with Interim President Guaidó and his team on various areas of mutual concern, including counternarcotics initiatives and reestablishment of the rule of law. In December 2020, the United States and the Guaidó interim government issued a joint communiqué reaffirming their commitment to stem the transshipment of drugs through Venezuela, prevent illicit drug cultivation and consumption, combat the endemic corruption of regime officials, and impede the money laundering and criminal networks related to the illegal trade of commodities. Following the joint communiqué, in April 2021 the United States and the Venezuelan interim government negotiated an arrangement that provides U.S. law enforcement with an expedited authorization process to more effectively conduct counterdrug operations and boardings of Venezuelan-flagged vessels suspected of illicit narcotics trafficking beyond the territorial sea of any State.

The United States and Venezuela are parties to an extradition treaty that entered into force in 1923 and a mutual legal assistance treaty that entered into force in 2004. The 1999 Venezuelan Constitution bars the extradition of Venezuelan nationals. There is no cooperation with the regime on extradition and mutual legal assistance. There is robust information-sharing for investigative purposes between the United States and the Guaidó interim government.

### **D. Conclusion**

The Maduro regime failed to make any meaningful efforts to combat illegal drug activity or prosecute corrupt officials or suspected drug traffickers, including those sanctioned by the U.S. government. The interim government, led by President Juan Guaidó, has repeatedly condemned the close relationship between armed criminal elements and the regime and has called on democracies in the region and internationally to work together to prosecute and sanction the regime's criminal activities.

## Vietnam

Vietnam is not a significant source or transit country for illegal drugs entering the United States but remains a transshipment and destination country for drugs of all types. Large quantities of heroin flow into Vietnam from the “Golden Triangle” (Thailand, Laos, and Burma) for both local use and shipment onward to other countries in Southeast Asia and Oceania. Smugglers bring large quantities of methamphetamine and amphetamine type stimulants (ATS), predominantly from Burma, into Vietnam for local consumption. Cocaine from South America comes to Vietnam for local consumption and further distribution throughout Southeast Asia and Oceania.

Vietnam’s borders with Laos, Cambodia, and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) are poorly secured, with thousands of jungle trails and mountain roads. Most of the official border crossings are insufficiently guarded, with limited personnel and equipment. Transnational criminal organizations exploit this weakness to smuggle drugs into and through Vietnam. For example, traffickers bring heroin and methamphetamine across the Vietnam – Laos border for distribution in Vietnam or onward shipment to Taiwan and the PRC. Cocaine arrives in Vietnam via sea freight containers or inside air shipments as well as concealed by human couriers for distribution outbound to countries like Australia and Japan where profit margins soar. Vietnam’s counternarcotics police receive little to no formal training and lack the resources and skill to conduct complex investigations.

According to data from the Government of Vietnam, from January to October 2020, the most recent period for which data is available, Vietnamese law enforcement investigated 25,767 drug-related cases, arrested 38,303 drug dealers, and seized 841 kilograms (kg) of heroin, 3.95 metric tons of methamphetamine, 2,436,507 ATS and MDMA (Ecstasy) tablets, 13.4 kg of opium, and 274 kg of marijuana. In comparison with the same period in 2019, seizures of MDMA tablets rose by 113 percent, while seizures of heroin decreased by 47 percent; methamphetamine by 37 percent, and marijuana by 55 percent. Vietnam also reported providing treatment to 64,549 drug addicts.

The United States promotes and supports counternarcotics information sharing, coordination of operations, and capacity building with Vietnam’s Ministry of Public Security. In April 2021, the United States supported a tactical medical training for 20 drug police officers in Da Nang province, the third in a series of courses for drug police to provide lifesaving skills. Further training was planned but not possible due to COVID-19 outbreaks in Vietnam.

