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ARGENTINA

Introduction: Over the last six months the mini Dublin Group in Argentina has noted the continuation of policies to boost anti-drug trafficking initiatives and resources, and an intensification of measures against criminal gangs. This increase is in line with the inclusion of the problem as one of three main political priorities of the government.

1. GENERAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

The importance that the national government places on combating crime, and in particular the issue of drug trafficking in Argentina, has manifested itself in a significant increase in initiatives to tackle the problem. In recent months the law enforcement authorities have stepped up their action against criminal gangs. The Argentinian authorities have recognised Argentina's importance as a cocaine exporter/transit country. Publication of statistics on these issues has resumed, and thus the new series of statistics are gradually being consolidated.

(a) Institutional framework: The 11th Ameripol summit took place in Buenos Aires from 31 July to 2 August under the slogan 'the road to institutionalisation'. It was inaugurated by the Minister for National Security, Dr Patricia Bullrich, in the presence of the Interior Ministers of Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Panama. This police organisation is highly important in the fight against organised crime in the region, since it encompasses several police institutions that are perfectly organised and coordinated with each other, which is essential in order to effectively combat serious crime, and especially drug trafficking and money laundering.

An extraordinary contribution to this achievement is made by SIPA I (Ameripol's police information system), an IT tool that allows for increased collaboration and data exchange between the different national police forces, and while it currently focuses on the problem of drug trafficking, in the near future it will include data on trafficking in human beings, gender-based violence and illegal immigration.

On 28 August 2018, Commissioner-General Néstor Roncaglia, head of the Argentinian federal police, was put forward for the vice-presidency of the Interpol Executive Committee for the Americas region. This position is very important given the prominent global role that Interpol plays in the proper management of international police cooperation on drug trafficking and other organised crime.

(b) Consumption: The most recent study on the consumption of psychoactive substances, published by the Argentinian Secretariat for Comprehensive Drug Policies (Sedronar) in June 2017, contained the following main conclusions:

The consumption of illegal substances among those aged between 12 and 17 has increased. Pre-teens and teenagers have the impression that access to drugs is easy, and many say they are curious to try drugs. Marijuana consumption remains stable. There is a high level of drug consumption within the social networks of children and teenagers: more than 25 % of those aged between 12 and 17, or around 398 000 children and teenagers, said they have two or more friends who consume drugs.

This trend of increased consumption is in line with the results of the 'Barometer of drug trafficking and addictions in Argentina' for 2016, produced by the Catholic University of Argentina. It shows a direct link between greater addiction and lower socio-economic position, with particular reference to Greater Buenos Aires. There has also been a marked increase in the number of places in which drugs are sold, and while there are more of them in the most vulnerable sectors, they are not limited to those sectors, and have spread to different areas of the city at different socio-economic levels.

(c) Combating supply: Seizures increased up to August 2018: 137 757 kg of marijuana, compared to 82 745 kg over the same period the previous year. Seizures of cocaine amounted to 5 563 kg and seizures of synthetic and semi-synthetic drugs to 54 939 doses.

There was likewise a significant increase in the number of arrests for reasons related to drug trafficking, rising from 13 000 arrests in 2016 to 18 475 in 2017. The number of operations in which drugs were seized also rose, from 10 188 in 2017 to 17 942 in 2018 over the same period (January-June).

The main points of entry for cocaine and marijuana continue to be on the northern border (Bolivia and Paraguay respectively). The exit routes are primarily the ports (containers: 75-80 % of traffic according to the Ministry of Security) and Ezeiza airport ('mules'). The province of Buenos Aires, and the country's northern provinces (Jujuy, Salta, Formosa, Chaco and Misiones) are where most seizures take place. There is evidence of local production and importation from Europe of ecstasy, LSD and hallucinogenics. The law enforcement authorities consider that synthetic drugs are the market with the highest growth potential in Argentina.

2. SUMMARY OF THE ANTI-DRUGS STRATEGY

(a) Use of the armed forces to combat drug trafficking: In August 2018 the government announced that the armed forces would be deployed on the northern border, between Quiaca and Puerto Iguazú, in order to help the National Gendarmerie combat smuggling and drug trafficking. The force consists of 500 troops, which will be increased to 4 000 by the end of the year.

(b) Safe neighbourhood programme: The implementation of this programme (entering neighbourhoods with high levels of violence so as to prevent drug trafficking gangs from taking control of territory) is being consolidated with major operations.

(c) Joint border operations (OCAF): As part of the fight against drug trafficking, smuggling and trafficking in human beings over the border, mechanisms for cooperation and collaboration between the federal and provincial forces are being consolidated so that coordinated action can be taken to tackle these types of crimes. Operations are ongoing in the provinces of Formosa, Chaco, Entre Ríos, Corrientes, Jujuy, Salta and Misiones.

(d) Commitment to an 'Argentina free of drug trafficking': Presented by the president in 2016, the commitment has been implemented throughout this year. It is the strongest evidence of the political importance the Argentinian executive places on this issue.

(e) Political debate on the new Criminal Code as regards drug trafficking and consumption: The possibility has been raised that the new Criminal Code, which will be presented shortly, could decriminalise the consumption of drugs. In addition, it is expected that the penalties for drug trafficking will increase substantially, especially for those who organise, finance, lead or manage criminal organisations.

(f) Corruption: There are major ongoing legal proceedings that demonstrate the deep connections that have existed between various law enforcement authorities and drug trafficking gangs in recent years. In this context, the authorities of the province of Buenos Aires, where there have been a large number of these cases, is carrying out an in-depth process of staff renewal within the law enforcement authorities.

(g) Updated list of illegal drugs: Decree 852/18, approved in August 2018, updated the list of drugs, adding 22 new illegal substances to raise the total number to 328.

3. COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

Spain: On 21 June the Spanish national police handed over the 'GATI' anti-drug-trafficking IT programme to Argentina. At an official event attended by the Minister for Security, the director-general of the Spanish national police and the four directors of the federal police signed the MoU for the handover.

United States: Since 2015 Argentina and the United States have been collaborating closely on different projects, co-financed by the two countries, to build up the state's institutional capacity and to combat drug trafficking and organised crime more effectively. To that end the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) provides training to different public security bodies for the fledgling intelligence fusion centres, giving them additional tools to improve their capacity for strategic and tactical analysis. Similarly, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), alongside the Ministry of Security, is involved in training the law enforcement authorities and judicial officers (such as prosecutors) in the use of practical tools in complex drug trafficking investigations in the north of the country. This assistance has been particularly focused on supporting the joint operational group for north-west Argentina (GOC-NOA), which is composed of different national and provincial law enforcement authorities. Consideration is being given to establishing a similar model in north-east Argentina in 2018, to counter crime originating along the Triple Frontier.

Japan: Through the Inter-American Development Bank, the Japanese special fund for poverty reduction (JPO) supports the Dr Plácido Marín Foundation, in collaboration with the University of San Isidro, in financing training for teachers in the prevention of drug addiction, with projects implemented throughout the year in 60 schools. On that basis a qualitative assessment of the prevention projects was carried out, and workshops were held to share what had been learned. In addition, research is being done into addiction prevention and best practices for labour market inclusion of people who suffer from addiction problems.

European Union: The PAcCTO cooperation programme was launched on 10 April 2018, with the aim of reinforcing the fight against organised crime. The programme is financed by the EU's Development Cooperation Instrument and will last for 60 months. Its main objective is to provide Latin American countries with technical assistance to effectively fight organised crime, by strengthening the criminal justice system. One of the first practical results was the signing on 3 August of the Buenos Aires agreement, Ameripol's first police cooperation agreement on the fight against transnational organised crime. Signed by an initial group of five countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Panama) and open for other countries to join, it will help integrate operational information in joint investigations and enable data to be securely stored and exchanged between those involved.

4. LOCATION AND DATE OF DUBLIN GROUP MEETINGS

The mini Dublin Group in Argentina met in the Spanish embassy in Buenos Aires on 26 September.

Commander General Raúl Silvino Contreras, Anti-drugs Director of the National Gendarmerie was present before the meeting, and participated in discussions on the drug trafficking situation in Argentina.

5. IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE AREAS FOR EXTERNAL COOPERATION

- Extend police and judicial capacity-building programmes.
- Provide the tools (IT, equipment, etc.) to combat drug trafficking.
- Continue to strengthen international cooperation at operational and institutional level.

6. ASSESSMENT BY THE MINI DUBLIN GROUP

6.1 THREATS AND EMERGING TRENDS

- The proliferation of synthetic drugs, both for local consumption and for regional distribution, is one of the main trends, on which the Argentinian authorities are taking specific action.
- Intensification of clashes with criminal drug-trafficking gangs.

6.2 POLICY INITIATIVES

- The political and operational impetus in the fight against drug trafficking is being maintained and even increased, with measures adopted and objectives set in line with the recommendations given in previous reports. A noteworthy development in this six-month period is that the armed forces are starting to be used in the fight against drug trafficking.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the significance of the problem, and the major political impetus to combat it, the following challenges can be highlighted:

- Continue to reinforce judicial and police capacities and to improve the associated socio-economic conditions. The group notes that significant progress has been made in this respect, highlighting the fact that most new resources assigned to law enforcement authorities are intended mainly for the fight against drug trafficking.

- Continue to reinforce international cooperation at institutional level. Continue to include on the bilateral agenda the issue of new flows of synthetic drugs from Europe for local consumption and regional distribution.
- Enhance internal coordination by building up a central authority. The Internal Security Council is proving to be an important and valuable body in which to discuss the measures used and to explore new possibilities, with the inclusion all of the institutions involved. In its second year of operation the Joint Institute for Strategic Cooperation (Ministry of Security) has reaffirmed its readiness to bring together the various entities involved in the fight against complex crime. Drug trafficking and money laundering remain the primary objectives in these meetings.
- Combat the economic power of the organisations engaged in drug trafficking and related offences, focusing resources on larger-scale investigations and making use of international cooperation. Special attention should be paid to tackling money laundering in order to remove capital from such organisations and eliminate their ability to regenerate.
- Continue the prevention and drug rehabilitation programmes: (i) greater awareness-raising concerning the harmful effects of drugs, (ii) presenting life choices that offer alternatives to the social mobility which drug trafficking offers and (iii) monitoring new synthetic drugs.

BOLIVIA

1. General situation in the Plurinational State of Bolivia

Since 2017, a **new legal framework on drugs** has been put in place: General Law 906 on coca and Law 913 on combating illegal trafficking of controlled substances, as well as their implementing regulations. The offences relating to drug trafficking were going to be covered by the new penal system code, which was eventually repealed; they continue to be covered by Law 1008 dating from 1988. Implementation/application of the new tools established by the law on combating drug trafficking (wiretapping, paid informants and effective cooperation) has not yet taken shape. There has been some progress on forfeiture of assets.

Law 906 is the subject of civil protest by some of the country's coca-farming sectors, especially in the indigenous and ancestral area of leaf cultivation (Yungas, in the department of La Paz), where ADEPCOCA (the local coca-growers' association) maintains that the amount of legal cultivation allocated to its area (14 300 hectares) is insufficient and that the new areas of the Cochabamba Tropics established in Law 906 use their crop for illegal purposes, since it is not leaf suitable for traditional chewing. The representatives of ADEPCOCA claim that Chapare (Cochabamba Tropics) benefits not only from this Law but also from other infrastructure and industrialisation projects, and the traditional area of Yungas receives less assistance. The social unrest in the Yungas area, in response to the control measures put in place by the government to implement the Law, has caused the death of one police officer and two coca farmers, and resulted in the imprisonment of a number of people including the leader of the Yungas Coca Farmers' Association, Franklin Gutierrez.

In August 2018, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) published its Bolivia Coca Crop Monitoring Survey for 2017. According to the report, coca cultivation in Bolivia rose 6 % in comparison to the data for 2016. The area under cultivation increased by 1 400 hectares: from 23 100 hectares in 2016 to 24 500 hectares in 2017. Rationalisation/eradication activities were carried out on 7 237 hectares, up from 6 577 hectares. 78 % of the eradicated area was in the Cochabamba Tropics, Yungas, and northern La Paz and 4 % in the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni.

When this report was drafted, the results of the 2017 report by the US Office of National Drug Control Policy had not yet been made available.

In July, the UNODC released a [validation report on the information on the incineration and destruction of seized illicit drugs](#) for the first half of 2018. From January to June 2018, the Bolivian anti-drug agency FELCN – in collaboration with the public prosecutor's office – seized 7 070 kg of cocaine base, 3 274 kg of cocaine hydrochloride, and 5 019 kg of marijuana for retail sale. During this period, the UNODC participated for the first time in the dismantling of a laboratory for crystallising cocaine base, and an operation to eradicate, quantify and destroy/incinerate marijuana plantations, in which 47 tonnes of marijuana plants were destroyed.

At the request of the Bolivian government and with EU financing, the UNODC is conducting two studies: one on coca crop yield in Bolivia (lasting 15 months), and the other on coca-cocaine efficiency in Bolivia (lasting 12 months). These studies are due to be concluded in the second half of 2019.

With regard to **drug trafficking**, there are no proper studies determining the origin of illicit substances, especially in the case of cocaine base paste. Government representatives claim that product is seized in Bolivia while in transit from Peru to other countries in the region, but what is certain is that no chemical analysis is carried out that could accurately determine its origin.

The **study of illegal drug demand** is an area that still has significant weaknesses, in both institutional and budgetary terms. This is despite the fact that some progress has been made: (1) demand reduction has been included as a pillar of the National Strategy Against Drug Trafficking and for the Control of Surplus Coca Cultivation 2016-2020; (2) there is a Bolivian Observatory on Drugs and Public Safety; (3) in 2017 a regulatory body was established for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, under the auspices of the Ministry of Health; (4) a new demand reduction plan for 2018-2020 is due to be drafted in the coming months. There is a lack of overall population analysis data with regard to drug consumption, although several sector studies have been carried out, especially among university students.

2. Brief update on the drugs strategy in Bolivia

2.1 Changes to the institutional landscape

The failure to adopt the Penal System Code at the end of 2017 created a legal vacuum in the fight against drug trafficking, as a large proportion of the penalties relating to drug trafficking offences were intended to be covered by that Code. These offences continue to be covered by Law 1008, which dates from 1988. However, a new development is the planned adoption of two 'short' laws – definitely before the end of the year – which will amend the existing legislation as regards criminalising drug trafficking offences and pre-trial detention, in accordance with the 2017 draft Penal System Code.

Law 906 and its Supreme Decree establish that the implementation of control and registration systems for producers and traders falls under the remit of the Ministry of Rural Development and Land.

The police intelligence exchange centre, which aims to combat drug trafficking between Bolivia, Brazil and Peru, and which initially had offices in Brazil, will be transferred to Santa Cruz de la Sierra. To date, Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay have shown interest in participating. The UNODC, with the support of the European Union, has a mission scheduled for the end of October involving the Head of the Implementation Support Section of the Division for Treaty Affairs in Vienna, with the aim of strengthening the centre.

2.2 Legal changes including money laundering and chemical precursors

Laws 906 and 913 and their implementing regulations cover the following major areas: (1) the regulation of legal markets and improved control of routes (through a biometric register); (2) the strengthening of the anti-drugs police force and the use of new investigative and intelligence techniques; (3) the control of chemical substances and the updating of the list of precursor agents; (4) the registration, control and administration of seized assets.

The Financial Investigations Unit (UIF), which is responsible for combating money laundering and reports to the Bolivian Ministry of the Economy and Finance, has made significant progress. The UIF is a member of the Financial Action Task Force on Latin America (GAFILAT) and adheres to the FATF (Financial Action Task Force) recommendations. Bolivia will be evaluated by GAFILAT in 2019.

2.3 Assessment of the government's willingness to implement a comprehensive and decisive anti-drug trafficking policy

There have been some **major changes and promising steps forward in the national anti-drug trafficking policy**: (1) the legal instruments (Laws 906 and 913 and their implementing regulations) are broadly satisfactory and largely adhere to recommendations made by the international community (especially the UNODC), including new elements that had previously been missing from the legal framework; (2) the Bolivian authorities have come to prioritise two essential studies (coca crop yield and determination of the coca-cocaine factor); (3) Bolivia has shown an interest in establishing ambitious regional cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking – with the support of the UNODC and EU financing, Bolivia is organising a regional technical-operational meeting with its counterparts from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru – and progress is also being made on the establishment of a Regional Anti-Drugs Intelligence Centre in Santa Cruz (to date Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay have confirmed their participation), for which the UNODC will provide technical assistance, with financial support from the EU; (4) the fight against drug trafficking is being furthered through new focus areas, such as improving criminal investigations.

However, **considerable uncertainties** remain: (1) there are doubts as to the State's true level of resolve, and progress remains slow due to a lack of state coordination and limited budget allocations for the competent institutions; (2) there is still concern over the unjustified increase in the area which may be used for coca cultivation; (3) government and legislative efforts to promote coca leaf exports – contrary to the country's international commitments in the UN – are causing uncertainty; (4) the new National Comprehensive Development Strategy still has not been approved by the government.

3. List of the main multilateral and bilateral cooperation programmes relating to drugs (time frame, activities and outcomes – including programmes that aim to reduce demand)

A **UNODC** programme (co-financed by the **EU** and **Denmark**, 2015-2019), which includes coca crop monitoring, legal assistance to strengthen the national legal framework, technical assistance to strengthen regional cooperation, validation of the destruction/incineration of seized illegal drugs, strengthening of forensics laboratories, a study on coca crop yield in Bolivia, and a study on coca-cocaine efficiency in Bolivia. The EU–UNODC programme has been extended until 2020, with the introduction of two new components relating to the monitoring of eradicated hectares and the implementation of the Global Container Control Programme in Bolivia.

Within the framework of the **UNODC**'s proposals (co-financed by the **EU**), work is being carried out on the implementation of the following projects: (1) the Airport Communication Project (**AIRCOP**): the office for the Joint Airport Interdiction Task Force in Viru Viru international airport will be handed over in October 2018; (2) the **CRIMJUST** project (collaboration on criminal investigation into cocaine routes): a letter of understanding will be signed in November 2018 and capacity-building activities will continue in the area of cooperation between police, judicial and prosecution authorities, forfeiture of assets and paid informants; (3) the Global Container Control Programme: implementation of this project has begun, with the establishment of a Port Control Unit in La Paz and a support unit in the dry port of Tambo Quemado. The technological equipment is in the process of being acquired, with financing from Bolivia, the EU and **Germany**.

Germany has contributed to extending and improving the implementation of the Global Container Control Programme in Bolivia.

UNODC comprehensive development programme. The programme, in place for several years in La Asunta, has begun an 18-month transition phase (July 2018–December 2019) to consolidate the results obtained so far and to gather the input necessary to design and formulate a more far-reaching programme in the medium term (2019 onwards). The UNODC aims to reinforce the focus on the marketing and export of comprehensive development products by strengthening value chains and empowering farmers' organisations through entrepreneurship training. The current transition phase, which is intended to provide support to families whose coca crops have been eradicated or rationalised, is partially financed by **France**.

EU budget support programme to combat drug trafficking (EUR 60 million), 2016-2019. Main results: (a) strengthening of the Bolivian agencies' institutional capacities; (b) promotion of regionalisation in the fight against drug trafficking; (c) regular monitoring of coca crops; (d) gradual modernisation of criminal investigations; (e) development of a new legal framework.

EU programme to support the food security strategy for municipalities experiencing out-migration of workers, 2017-2019 (EUR 27 million), which aims to help mitigate migration to coca-producing areas.

EU regional programmes: as a complement to the UNODC programmes implemented with European financing, Bolivia is also receiving support in the form of technical assistance and capacity building through 'COPOLAD II' and 'EL PAcCTO'.

USA: bilateral cooperation continues in the form of capacity-building programmes for the FELCN and other Bolivian institutions involved in combating drug trafficking. The USA has announced possible UNODC financing, for which it has asked to be sent project proposals.

Spain is an active participant, co-financing (through the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation) the EU programme providing technical assistance to the International and Ibero-American Foundation of Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP), within the framework of the 'PAcCTO' regional programme, as well as through training courses under the general bilateral programme of cooperation and technical assistance in providing specialised training to police units in the fight against transnational organised crime, and the Knowledge Transfer, Exchange and Management Plan for the Development of Spanish Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean.

4. Location and date of recent mini Dublin Group meetings in La Paz

The mini Dublin Group meets once every six months in the Spanish embassy; Spain chairs the group in Bolivia. The last meeting took place on 3 October 2018. The next meeting will take place on 4 April 2019.

5. Identification of needs requiring external assistance

It is considered necessary to continue the comprehensive and alternative development activities, and to focus on support for the marketing of those products on the internal and external markets.

There is concern over the increase in crop cultivation and the sale of drugs. An essential area of cooperation is assistance to ensure the traceability of drug production and sales in the country.

Improvement is needed in the following areas: (1) criminal investigations and intelligence systems; (2) drug demand reduction strategies.

6. Assessment of needs identified by the mini Dublin Group

6.1 New trends and/or threats

Specific cases of coca crop identification. Through field missions the UNODC has established that in certain areas, principally in the Yungas region (La Paz), there are crops such as stevia that have similar characteristics to a coca crop, although these cases are very rare. In areas of the Cochabamba Tropics region, some coca crops have also been observed growing under trees or alongside cassava and citrus crops, which leads to a different assessment of coca crops in satellite images.

Related offences. Trafficking in human beings has become more complex. It would also appear that, because of its geographical location and multiple borders, the east of Bolivia could be in the process of becoming a safe haven for criminal organisations from neighbouring countries linked to drug trafficking, weapons trafficking, or other illegal activities.

Crossing of the land border with Peru. Trafficking of drugs by light aircraft between Bolivia and Peru has fallen significantly, but is being replaced by the movement of cocaine base paste by vehicle or on foot through the border crossing between the two countries.

Increased crop cultivation and trafficking of other illegal drugs. The primary crop in Bolivia is coca leaf. However, information is being received about small cannabis plantations in the Cochabamba Tropics. Synthetic drugs have been detected in recent months and, for the first time, preliminary investigations indicate that they may have been produced within Bolivia.

6.2 Policy initiatives

The new comprehensive development strategy for coca leaf-producing areas needs to be adopted as soon as possible.

There needs to be greater monitoring of eradicated areas. The Bolivian government has agreed to the UNODC carrying out monitoring of eradicated hectares of coca.

6.3 Recommendations

- Expedite the implementation of the regulations implementing the new laws, and the approval and launch of the strategy for comprehensive development and the sector plan for judicial reform.
- Implement and improve the supervision of legal markets for the sale of coca leaf. According to the UNODC coca crop monitoring survey for 2017, just 52 % to 65 % of national coca leaf production is sold on the authorised markets of Villa Fátima in La Paz and Sacaba in Cochabamba. Most of the coca leaf sold on those markets continues to come from the Yungas region. A more detailed explanation is needed of the uses of legal coca in this area and of its traceability from and to the Sacaba market.
- Place a stronger focus on prevention and treatment, in line with Bolivia's commitments in UNGASS (Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the world drug problem) and ensure the effective functioning of the regulatory body.
- Reinforce the idea that comprehensive development policies are necessary for eradicated coca plantation areas, and recommend greater budget allocation in this regard. Focus action to reconstruct the social fabric on areas where there is conflict with coca farmers, such as La Asunta, which are seriously affected by eradication activities.
- Although the UNODC coca crop monitoring survey for 2017 notes a slight increase in the area eradicated/rationalised, this is not proportional to the increase in crop cultivation. Consequently, increased eradication/rationalisation efforts by the government are recommended.

BRAZIL

1. THE GENERAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

Brazil is the largest country in South America, with a population of 208.725.660 million people (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística) and 8,5 million km². Bound by the Atlantic Ocean in the east, it has a coastline of approximately 7,000km stretching from French Guyana in the North to Uruguay in the South. It is bordered on the north by Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname and French Guyana, in the northwest by Colombia, in the west by Bolivia and Peru, and in the South by Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. It has borders with all South American countries except for Ecuador and Chile, which involve 16.800km of borderline.

Brazil is the 9th largest economy in the world and the 27rd largest export economy, focused on oil, petrochemical products, ores, iron and steel, vehicles, machinery, sugar, soya, meat and coffee. Roughly 90% of external trade is by maritime transport. The large volume of maritime exports to Europe as well as the diverse deep water ports, including Santos, Rio de Janeiro, Itajai, Vitória, Suape, Paranagua, Navegantes and Belem, provides opportunities for organised criminal groups to conceal drugs.

Because of Brazil's extensive open borders with the three main cocaine producing countries, Peru, Bolivia and Colombia, large quantities of cocaine are brought into Brazil by land, river and air. Much of this is consumed internally within Brazil, and Brazil is the world's second biggest consumer of cocaine after the EEUU. Large quantities are also exported to Europe via the Atlantic coastal ports¹. Brazil is therefore of great importance with regard to the trafficking of drugs to Europe by sea.

¹ According to mass media publications, the port of Santos led the interceptions in cocaine cargo in current 2018, seized by 17,2 tonns, compared with 11,5 in 2017 and 10,6 in 2016.

In relation to consumption, as pointed out in previous reports, the lack of recent, reliable, nationwide statistics (the last ones date from 2005) constitutes a significant obstacle to analysing the challenges that the country faces in this field. The vacuum is only partially filled by sectorial studies, like the ones of consumption of crack and cocaine (2013) and of consumption in schools or the prison system. The third House Survey commissioned by SENAD to the Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz) should shed some light on the current situation. Nevertheless, this study has not been published yet. The results of the last UN World Drug Report (2017) seem to reflect a decrease of cocaine and cannabis consumption in Brazil.

Regarding synthetic drugs, Brazil is an expanding market, and the EU is the main synthetic drug provider. This is an issue of serious concern in the consumption of methamphetamine and ecstasy, as well as the misuse of new chemical substances for the production of drugs.

As regards the fight against drug trafficking, according to the Federal Police data, in 2018 it has been significantly increased the number of seizures of cocaine (54,202 tonnes up to September), as compared with 2017 (48,047 tonnes) and 2016 (40,404 tonnes). The seizures of cannabis (183,162 tonnes) decreased remarkably if compared with 2016 (230,206 tons). These data only reflect the seizures from the Federal Police and do not include seizures from the states' civil police because of the lack of a unique and integrated statistic police system², however the data show the main effort in the national fight against drug trafficking leaded by the Federal Police.

² Last June the Federal Government adopted the SUSP (Unique Public Security System) and defined the National Policy in Public Security and Social Safety, focusing on the joint and integrated job among Federal and State Administrations, on behalf of the reduction on violence rates and fighting against criminal organizations. Nevertheless, the system is still in its early beginnings, as well as the implementation of the Regional Police Intelligence Centers.

As a consequence of enhancing protocols, ways and means of the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking, the Directorate of the Federal Police established an initiative based on the prosecution and apprehension of all goods related to drug trafficking as the main measure to dismantle criminal organizations. Therefore, we can find a significant increase regarding the amounts of all types of goods apprehended in the last few years, particularly in 2017, with 665.071.513 apprehensions³.

2. SHORT UPDATE ON THE COUNTRY'S DRUGS STRATEGY

2.1. Changes/additions to the drug related institutional framework.

The Federal Police leads the Brazilian public policy on drug supply reduction and the National Council on Drugs Policies (CONAD) leads the one on drug demand reduction. It is assisted by the the National Secretariat on Drugs Policies (SENAD). The CONAD is composed of representatives from the Government and civil society. These institutions have traditionally depended on the Ministry of Justice, but the recent creation of the provisional Ministry of Public Security has placed the Federal Police and other institutions like the National Penitentiary Department (DEPEN) under it. This new Ministry will deal with matters regarding organized crime and therefore drug trafficking. The government actions are coordinated within the framework of the Multi-year plan 2016-2019, which targets the reduction of social impact of the use of drugs through preventive, care and social rehabilitation programs. Some federal and local authorities also implement drug related social projects, which offer housing, work, and other care activities in open community services, on a voluntary basis. The results of the presidential elections of 2018 (second round will be held on the 28th October) could lead to major changes in drugs policies if the conservative candidate wins.

Regarding the prevention of drug use, the Brazilian government, with the assistance of UNODC, has invested in pilot projects, targeting families and schools, based on prevention methodologies from the United States and Europe. The three main projects are “Tamo Junto”, which focuses on school children aged 12 and 13, “Elos” for children between 6 and 10 years old, and “Famílias Fortes”, which works with both children and adults in the family environment.

³ Data related to 2018 were not facilitated by the authorities.

2.2. Legislative changes

The Federal Supreme Court (STF) is currently judging the constitutionality of article 28 of the law 11.343/06, which criminalizes the possession of drugs for personal use, although no prison sentences are contemplated. The court may establish quantitative parameters to distinguish drug possession for personal use and possession with the intent to trafficking in this judgement. This decision has been adjourned for the past year, due to the political and judicial circumstances which have resulted on an overworked Federal Supreme Court. The results of this decision could have a great impact on prison releases (some studies state it could affect up to 70% of population imprisoned for matters related to drugs.), but there is no prevision for the conclusion of the judgement.

The STF decided on June 2016 to stop considering first time trafficking a serious offence, as long as the offender has no criminal record. This decision might have a very direct relation with a large number of releases from prison, especially in the case of women.

Law 13.257/16, which regards rights of the child, establishes special treatment in some cases for mothers involved in drug crimes.

On July 2016 the Senate passed a project which establishes preliminary hearings should not take place later than 24 hours after detention. The implementation of this measure, which has already started in São Paulo, could have a great importance in crimes related to drugs, from the point of view of procedural guarantees, although the existence of institutional support and mechanisms for social rehabilitation for the arrested would also be essential for the success of the measure. The results of the elections could affect preliminary hearings, since the conservative candidate has attacked them and would probably try to revoke them.

On March 2018, CONAD passed a resolution that could mean a new approach in public drug policy, promoting abstinence treatments and easing the work of “therapeutic communities”, many of them religious. O Projeto de Lei Complementar (PLC 37), is being analysed at the Senado Federal, and includes the possibility of compulsory hospitalization. Both these measures are controversial, and a part of civil society and health professionals think it could work against harm reduction policies and represent a step backward on former achievements.

The designation of legal and illegal drugs in Brazil depends on an administrative body, the Agencia Nacional de Vigilância Sanitaria (ANVISA). This agency authorised the legal use of cannabidiol, a derivative of cannabis, for therapeutic use.

2.3. Assessment of the government’s political will to conduct a comprehensive and resolute drug policy

Given the size of the country and the multiple bodies involved (various Federal Ministries, state and local authorities, police, civil society, etc.), articulating a comprehensive and coherent drug policy remains a challenge. The political instability of the past two years together with budget cuts due to the adverse economic situation has not helped to develop new policies. The Minister of Justice has changed twice in the past six months, and the Federal Police has been linked to a new Ministry. The results of the presidential elections will be crucial for the establishment of the model of drug policies.

3. ENUMERATION OF MAJOR BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION DRUGS PROGRAMMES.

In the international arena, Brazil was very active in the preparation of the Special Session of the General Assembly on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS), in April 2016. Brazil held an innovative approach at the UNGASS, regarding the drugs problem from a public health point of view, supporting harm reduction policies and the exclusion of death penalty. On the regional front, Brazil is satisfied that the different regional fora have been able to produce common declarations on the issue: CELAC (Quito Declaration, May 2015), UNASUR (Montevideo Declaration, August 2015) and Mercosur (Brasilia Declaration on May 2015, under the Brazilian pro tempore presidency). At the UNGASS, the debate and discussion regional networks were reinforced. These declarations, while respecting the framework of the current international conventions, call for a regional approach to drug policies based on a human rights perspective.

On the side of drug demand, The 5th EU-BRAZIL Expert meeting on Drugs was held in Vienna on 16 March 2018. The EU and Brazil exchanged views on post-UNGASS developments and the road to the 2019 global drug policy review, developments in drug situations and policies and cooperation under EU supported initiatives such as COPOLAD II, EUROSOCIAL+ and EL PACTO, including AMERIPOL. There are new possibilities of strengthened cooperation, including the ratification of the Strategic Cooperation Agreement between EUROPOL and the Brazilian Federal Police, signed in April 2017, and approved by the European Parliament.⁴ Cooperation between Brazil (ANVISA/SENAD) and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) was also discussed. Brazil's participation in the various EU programs (COPOLAD, SEACOP) has been very positive. For the next five years, FIIAP and Spain's Government Delegation for the National Plan of Drugs (DGPNSD), will be managing phase II of the COPOLAD Programme. The primary objective is to boost cooperative work on drug policy between the countries of CELAC and the EU.

FIIAPP and Expertise Française have also developed EL PACCTO, an Assistance Programme against Transnational Organised Crime focused on giving technical assistance to Latin America countries for an effective fight against organised crime, by strengthening the entire criminal justice system.

The United States and Brazil have a longstanding program of cooperation, including information sharing and investigative support as well as capacity building for Brazilian law enforcement. These activities are mainly aimed at supply interdiction and countering the operations of transnational criminal organizations.

Brazil conducts its cooperation with its neighbours within a framework of joint commissions on organised crime. In August 2017, Brazil and Paraguay signed an agreement on border security and drug trafficking. Brazil has also signed a number of Memoranda of Understanding with institutions from at least 17 different countries.

As a succeeding and updated cooperation scheme with neighbourhood countries, Brazil has assisted the Paraguayan government on a number of drug plantation and lab destroying programmes, mainly on lands of marijuana, as well as illicit cocaine labs in Peru and Colombia.

⁴ The ratification of the Brazilian Congress is still pending, however.

Brazil maintains informal cooperation with some African countries as well, particularly with the Portuguese-speaking ones. Due to this cooperation, in 2017, Brazilian federal police joined Airport Communication Programme (AIRCOP), as a multi-agency, anti-trafficking initiative in order to strengthen detection, interdiction and investigative capacities of participating airports.

Moreover, Brazilian federal police joined Seaport Cooperation Project (SEACOP), which seeks to build capacities and strengthen cooperation against maritime trafficking in countries on the trans-Atlantic cocaine route (West Africa, and the Eastern Caribbean).

On the internal and operational side, the INTERCOPS program, implemented by the Brazilian federal police in Guarulhos airport since November 2014, has strengthened capabilities in the exchange of information in criminal investigations and working methodologies with the participating countries obtaining very promising results on cocaine human couriers.

As a result of 2016 Mini Dublin Group recommendations, from June 2017, a pilot scheme led by Brazilian Federal Police and Receita Federal is being implemented in main Brazilian shipping and cargo ports to improve national capacities to tackle maritime trafficking.

4. PRIORITIZED IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS FOR EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

The efforts made by Brazil on drug plantation and lab destroying programmes could be supported by external cooperation, as well as some other initiatives, such as criminal analysis training. Also, cooperation on the grounds of fighting transnational organized crime should continue, by means of technical assistance and other projects. Operative coordination and cooperation between the Dublin Group countries and Brazil and among the countries of the group could be enhanced. The improvement of international cooperation with countries in the region is crucial to address the regional drug problem. The active dialogue with Brazil in the UNGASS and periodic dialogues and expert meetings EU-Brazil on drugs should be maintained.

5. MINI DUBLIN GROUP ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

5.1. Emerging threats/trends.

Independently of the oscillating consumption levels of cocaine, cannabis and synthetic drugs, the development of public policies on demand reduction should continue and expand, involving social inclusion policies. In this sense, the publication of Fiocruz third House Survey would be helpful to know the actual figures and consumption patterns in Brazil.

5.2. Political initiatives

The approach on drugs policies of the next government might mean a major shift from damage reduction policies to abstinence - based programmes. Nevertheless, the unstable political situation in the country for the past year and October presidential elections make it difficult for new political initiatives to come up. Major changes should be expected on drugs demand policies, procedural guarantees and even penitentiary measures.

5.3. Recommendations

- On the demand side, the main challenge will be to successfully implement prevention and rehabilitation programs in different social and geographical contexts. It would be useful to continue the exchange of experiences in innovative methodologies in the field of drug prevention and the evaluation of public policies dealing with drugs. The creation of a “best practice” list could help with information on what works in the areas of prevention, treatment, harm reduction and social reintegration.
- On the supply side, the continuation of reinforced border control, using advanced technologies and increasing the allocated human resources, including municipal, state and federal police institutions in integrated drug policies would be extremely positive. The creation of Regional Police Intelligence Centres by the new Public Security Ministry will certainly help to develop the efforts made on this ground.

- On judicial grounds, a decision which establishes quantitative parameters to distinguish consumption from trafficking, based also on drug nature, would be helpful.
- The lack of drug seizures official data, commits Brazilian government to make efforts in consolidating the National Statistics System on Public Safety (SINESP), especially in its capacity to aggregate the drugs seizures carried out by state police forces.

CHILE

General situation:

Like other countries where drugs are consumed, Chile has been experiencing an increase in drug trafficking, above all in cocaine hydrochloride, cocaine base, cannabis and synthetic drugs, as demonstrated by the increasing number of seizures carried out by the police forces: the '*Carabineros*' (national police force) and the Criminal Investigation Police Department (PDI).

Though Chile is not regarded as a producer country, it is considered to be one of the source countries for the chemical substances that are used to produce illegal drugs and to increase their volume and the associated profits.

The origin of cocaine-based drugs is countries such as Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, and no consignments of opium, whose main source is Afghanistan, have been reported.

Chile is considered to be a transit country that has other markets, such as Europe and Asia, as a destination, since its ports, in particular, are used to send drugs using the '**rip-off**' method, which consists of hiding large bags containing drugs in properly sealed cargo containers.

Cannabis remains the drug that is consumed most around the world, and Chile is no exception. Cannabis is grown between regions IV and VIII, mainly from September to April, however some smaller-scale production takes place throughout the year using **indoor** cultivation methods (in homes or closed facilities) which allow the drug to be produced in all seasons.

A brand of cannabis from Colombia, known as '**creepy**', deserves particular attention since it has a high concentration of THC and its value on the black market is equivalent to that of cocaine hydrochloride, thus increasing the profits made by traffickers.

As far as synthetic drugs are concerned, there do not seem to be any small laboratories producing such drugs, which have mostly been identified on their arrival in the country in parcels and double-bottomed luggage, generally through Arturo Merino Benítez airport (Santiago); they tend to come from Spain, the Netherlands, Canada and Germany, as well as the South American countries of Peru and Argentina.

The supply of such drugs has diversified and the now traditional types – **LSD, MDMA** and **NBOMe** – have been supplemented by a different kind, **new psychoactive substances (NPS)**, which have very dangerous effects owing to the toxic chemicals and precursors used to produce them, such as **methamphetamine**.

Institutional framework:

To combat this social problem, the Chilean government established the **National Anti-Drug-Trafficking Plan 2014- 2020**, which aims to enhance the country's ability to reduce the distribution and availability of illegal drugs, and the misuse of chemical products to produce them.

Since the previous report, announcing the revision of **Law No 20.000** which penalises illegal trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances, there has been no news of any amendments.

In terms of anti-drug-trafficking plans, we would highlight the PDI's Microtrafficking Zero Plan and its Cannabis Plan. The latter is based on analysis and police intelligence; knowledge of the localities and situations it is targeting for eradication, i.e. illegal cannabis-growing practices, identification of areas at risk, and introduction of disincentives for illegal production of this hallucinogenic substance.

International cooperation:

International cooperation is clearly essential in this area, as reflected in the cooperation carried out by the national police force through its anti-drugs department O.S.7, which implemented the **'1st Joint Trinational Operation'**, involving police institutions from **Argentina, Bolivia and Chile** and coordinating control points in those countries, achieving some important results.

That operation was preceded by three meetings of the **anti-drugs chiefs of South America, the Caribbean and North America**, which were also attended by representatives of the **Spanish** and **Italian** police authorities; the meetings provided an opportunity to strengthen links and exchange experience and knowledge in connection with the fight against illicit drug trafficking in each country.

For its part, the PDI organised the first meeting of **international police investigating maritime drugs trafficking**, with participants from Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Panama, the UK and Chile.

The joint committees with Peru, Argentina and Bolivia were also continued.

Recommendations:

- Promote international cooperation between the institutions in charge of controlling supply of and demand for drugs.
- Establish technical channels for effective and efficient transmission of information that will enable real-time exchanges of information, and so support anti-drug investigations in the context of transnational drug trafficking.
- Promote bodies for exchanging experience concerning drug trafficking, with a view to shedding light on new ways in which criminal organisations are operating.
- Strengthen existing bilateral police relations with bordering countries, so as to provide real-time access to information on activities connected with the influx of drugs, thereby establishing effective mechanisms that can, at the very least, make bringing drugs into Chile more difficult. An example of such reinforcement could be setting up centres at strategic border crossing points for cooperation in police and customs matters between police forces in Chile and neighbouring countries.
- Establish a coordination centre or central office for combating drug trafficking, bringing together all the relevant players.

DUBLIN GROUP STATISTICS FOR OCTOBER 2018

CARABINEROS (national police)

Seizures by the Chilean national police in 2017

<i>Chilean regions</i>	<i>Cocaine hydrochloride (kg)</i>	<i>Cocaine base paste (kg)</i>	<i>Processed marijuana (kg)</i>	<i>Drugs in kilos</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>2 603.839</i>	<i>3 882.900</i>	<i>7 659.852</i>	<i>14 146.591</i>

Arrests and operations carried out by the national police in 2017

<i>Chilean regions</i>	<i>Marijuana plants (units)</i>	<i>Pharmaceutical products checked (units)</i>	<i>Offender apprehensions</i>	<i>Interventions</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>100 055</i>	<i>37 538</i>	<i>34 619</i>	<i>25 624</i>

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION POLICE DEPARTMENT (PDI)

Comparison of seizures made by the PDI between January and September in 2017 and 2018

DRUG TYPE	1 JAN. 2017 to 24 SEP. 2017	1 JAN. 2018 to 24 SEP. 2018
Cocaine-based substances (Cocaine base + Cocaine hydrochloride)	8 578 kg	12 167 kg
THC Substances (Processed cannabis + Colombian 'creepy' cannabis)	7 527 kg	7 527 kg

Drugs seized nationally by the PDI in the course of 2017

DRUG TYPE	WEIGHT (grams)
Processed cannabis	6 757 528.77 g
Cannabis from Colombia (<i>'creepy'</i>)	2 570 912.41 g
Cocaine base	8 659 636.07 g
Cocaine hydrochloride	3 341 430.07 g
TOTAL	21 329 507.32 g

Total seizures by the *Carabineros* (national police) and the PDI in 2017

DRUG TYPE	PDI	National Police	TOTAL
Processed Cannabis	6 757 528.77 g		6 757 528.77 g
Cannabis from Colombia (<i>'creepy'</i>)	2 570 912.41 g		2 570 912.41 g
Cocaine base	8 659 636.07 g	3 882 900 g	12 542 536.07 g
Cocaine hydrochloride	3 341 430.07 g	2 603 839 g	5 945 269.07 g
Processed marijuana		7 659 852 g	7 659 852 g
TOTAL	21 329 507.32 g	14 146 591 g	35 476 098.32 g

COLOMBIA

The statistics and trends recorded show a sombre picture in which, far from improving, some of the constant aspects of the drug trafficking problem in Colombia are worsening: an increase in production (accounting, in part, for the concurrent increase in seizures – which are still modest, since they represent some 10 % of total production); inadequate institutional apparatus, despite the legislative improvements introduced; scarcity of operational resources; and insufficient resources to prevent impunity and re-offending. The Mini Dublin Group is concerned by the figures in the SIMCI (Integrated Illicit Crop Monitoring System)/UNODC report for 2017, published on 19 September 2018, which show stronger growth both in the area under cultivation and in final production, as indicated by the statistics produced by the INL (State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement) in June 2018, according to which the area devoted to coca cultivation in 2017 was 209 000 hectares, compared with 188 000 hectares in 2016. The SIMCI data show a 17 % increase in illicit crop cultivation in 2017, as well as possible failure to reach the Government's target of 70 000 hectares covered by the Voluntary Substitution Programme. On the demand side, the MS in the Mini Dublin Group have observed that cocaine is unusually easy to obtain in those Western countries.

1. General Situation in the Republic of Colombia

The Republic of Colombia remains the world leader in the production and cultivation of cocaine, as the statistics for the area under cultivation show. According to the July 2018 SIMCI/UNODC report presented on 19 September 2018, the area devoted to illicit coca cultivation in 2017 was over 171 000 hectares, 17 % more than in 2016. Potential coca leaf production capacity also increased, by a larger proportion. From 707 100 metric tonnes in 2016, it rose by 32 % to 930 900 metric tonnes in 2017.

The main findings of the report are: 1) Antioquia, Putumayo, Norte de Santander and Cauca saw the greatest increase in coca cultivation: 64 %; 2) Nariño and the municipality of Tumaco remain the areas of the country with the largest quantity of coca, although cultivation in Tumaco fell by 16 %; 3) the largest reduction occurred in Guaviare, where 1 915 hectares less than in 2016 were reported; 4) 80 % of the coca is in the same area as it has been over the last 10 years; 5) 33 % of coca cultivation is in areas less than 10 kilometres from population centres and 34 % in areas which were forested in 2014; 6) 16 % of the coca crops is less than 10 kilometres from a border – primarily the borders with Venezuela and Ecuador; 7) 33 % more coca is being produced now than in 2012; 8) the prices of fresh coca leaf, base paste and cocaine hydrochloride have fallen by 28 %, 14 % y 11 % respectively; and 9) seizures of cocaine increased by 20 % in 2017. Among other action taken in 2017, stronger intervention targeting processing facilities was reported, together with an increase in forced eradication and the signing of the first voluntary eradication agreements with communities.

Since the illicit drug market is one of the main sources of income for organised crime (organised armed groups), insurgent groups, guerrillas and paramilitaries, the growth in production is likely to strengthen these groups and consequently their capacity to do harm.

The figures given in the SIMCI / UNODC report confirm the undesirable scenario of an expansion in cultivation, envisaged in the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)'s 2017 threat assessment. The report attributes this to seasonal factors, the substantial economic benefits for growers and the fact that the extensive crops of coca planted previously will come to maturity in the coming months and be exploited by criminal groups. The DEA sees two main factors as responsible for the phenomenon: the reduction in aerial and manual spraying, and the decision by coca growers to prevent manual eradication.

The UNODC report also assesses potential production of cocaine hydrochloride at 1 379 tonnes compared with 1 053 in 2016, indicating a 31 % increase in the final product. Estimates by the international security agencies vary from 1 000 to 1 200 metric tonnes of potential cocaine production in 2017, with more than 200 000 hectares under cultivation. The average yield of fresh coca leaf remains unchanged at 4.8 tonnes per hectare per year.

These figures imply a significant increase in the quantity of the drug available on the international markets. That is reflected in the record figure for seizures of cocaine hydrochloride in the countries of origin and destination in 2017-18.

The worldwide alarm currently caused by the growth in the cocaine market in Colombia and the failure of the anti-drugs policy have led the incoming Government to consider new measures with the aim of eradicating 110 000 hectares in 2018, through voluntary substitution on 40 000 hectares and forced eradication on 70 000.

Part of strategy for achieving this will be to resume spraying with glyphosate, using drones and small track-laying tractors, which according to the President will ensure the protection of health and the environment, since they make it possible to spray from a similar height as in terrestrial spraying. This would seem to bear out the view that the main and fundamental cause of the spectacular growth in coca cultivation is the Government's decision to suspend aerial spraying with glyphosate.

(a) Drug seizures: Unlike other countries (most obviously, Mexico), Colombia can boast of substantial figures for seizures; the Colombian Drugs Observatory provides information periodically. The figures for 2017 are set out below:

Substance seized	Quantity	Unit of measure
Coca paste/base	46 510.37	Kg
Basuco	2 264.58	Kg
Cocaine hydrochloride	401 839.97	Kg
Heroin	435.45	Kg
Coca leaf	524 752.56	Kg
Pressed marijuana	215 508.62	Kg
LSD	2 042.00	Units

(b) Production facilities dismantled in 2017:

Infrastructure dismantled	Quantity
Laboratory (Heroin)	1
Crystallisation labs (Cocaine hydrochloride)	284
Laboratories (Base paste/Cocaine base)	3 591

As regards production, the low number of crystallisation labs dismantled is due to the fact that a large part of the processing infrastructure has been moved to the highly porous area on the border between Ecuador and Colombia.

As regards transportation routes, the traditional corridors have been maintained (Central America via the Caribbean, especially the ports in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Urabá, the Ecuadorean border with an area for loading vessels anchored off the coast of Esmeraldas, the port of Buenaventura and the Amazon border between Peru, Colombia and Brazil). In addition, there are reports from Peru indicating that there may be a new land corridor through the country.

Lastly, the fight against drug trafficking in Colombia has yielded a significant body of data on the substances seized and infrastructure dismantled. However, according to various international security and intelligence sources operating in Colombia, drug trafficking investigations in Colombia are not as effective as might be expected. Priority is given to seizing the product rather than apprehending those responsible. In many cases, the criminal organisation associated with the consignment of the illicit substance is not broken up. The Colombian prosecution authorities make minimal use of surveillance and controlled delivery.

2. Brief update on the drugs strategy in Colombia

Iván Duque's government seems to have changed direction in anti-drugs policy, adopting a tougher approach. Taking part in the opening of the 73rd United Nations General Assembly Session in New York in the week from 24 to 28 September 2018, Duque expressed this both at the Global Call To Action On The World Drug Problem event promoted by the USA (Trump congratulated Duque) and in a document signed by 130 countries, as well as in the first bilateral Duque-Trump meeting at the United Nations headquarters on Tuesday 25 September, with a firmness which he repeated in his appearance before the UNGA on Wednesday 26 September. Duque publicly committed to achieving, during his term of office, a 70 % reduction in illicit crop cultivation, which the last report by SIMCI (UNODC's Integrated Illicit Crop Monitoring System), on 19 September 2018, assessed at 171 000 hectares in 2017 (17 % more than in 2016, confirming the continued increase from 2012 to 2018).

The Government will use four instruments to achieve this:

- A decree enabling very small amounts of drugs to be confiscated: on Monday 1 October a decree was issued making their possession an offence and allowing the police to seize any quantity of drugs in public spaces, to curb the problem of micro-trafficking and of 'jíbaros' (dealers), who are much in evidence, even in proximity to the youngest, school-age group in the population;
- Reviving aerial spraying with glyphosate, abandoned by Santos as the result of a Constitutional Court judgment in 2015, because of indications that it was carcinogenic – which are still questionable, but now more plausible in the light of the judgment against Monsanto, although glyphosate is used in Europe;

- Forced eradication: This is to be given priority over voluntary eradication – the 'National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Crops (NCPS)' – although rights acquired under the NCPS will be preserved. Under Duque, voluntary eradication has been seriously questioned, owing to the lack of incentives for farmers whose incomes are drastically reduced (as cultivators indicate), or because of its patchy effect (as the Government states), since instead of covering whole regions, as was originally intended, individual families have been benefited – to whom the programme will continue to apply –, but they are surrounded by coca growers, with the threat that this implies. The advantage of the NCPS, unlike forced eradication, is that there is no replanting.

- Action against 'ollas' and other drug outlets.

Colombia's anti-drug policy approach can be analysed from two points of view: national and international.

1. AT NATIONAL LEVEL: Immediate background: more flexible anti-drugs policy under Juan Manuel Santos:

Under the Santos government, Colombia embraced a new philosophy, advocating a balance between three elements: health, human rights and security, on two levels:

(a) At the international level, the softer approach adopted by Colombia, striking a new balance between fighting crime and drug addiction as a public health problem, was supported by many Latin American countries at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on Drugs in April 2016, where they adopted a common position based on the relative failure of the prohibitionist approach. The main point of divergence, however, was whether the UN Conventions should be interpreted literally or flexibly.

(b) At national level, also, this new approach was reflected in the agreements with the FARC (point 4 on 'Solving the problem of illegal drugs'), in three strands:

- The 'National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Crops' (NCPS), which forms part of Colombia's comprehensive rural reform. Voluntary substitution was provided for farmers who undertake to substitute crops and not replant them.

- The drug consumption issue was to be approached from a public health perspective, separating the treatment required by users, including complementary rehabilitation and social integration measures with a focus on gender.

- Fighting drug trafficking, combating organised crime involving the production and sale of drugs, including money laundering, and dismantling criminal organisations, networks and criminal gangs involved in drug trafficking.

2. LATEST FIGURES: further setback

(a) The area under cultivation, according to UNODC's SIMCI – Integrated Illicit Crop Monitoring System – in its report presented on 19 September 2018, increased from 146 000 hectares in 2016 to 171 000 in 2017.

(b) Increase in domestic consumption: As regards the starting point, the main difference in emphasis under Duque is due to the alarm sounded about the increase in national consumption: for the first time, a 'lost generation' has been spoken of. According to the Colombian Drugs Observatory, 484 000 people, or 3.6 % of the population, were addicted to drugs in 2013, and a considerable increase has been recorded since then. The Colombian public health system completely lacks the capacity to offer registered addicts treatment and/or healthcare cover.

3. INTERNATIONAL FACTORS:

(a) US pressure:

After Duque took office on 7 August, the only remaining elements of his predecessor's anti-drugs policy, apparently, are the demand that producers and consumers should share responsibility, partly justifying Colombia's massive supply by the increase in demand globally, and the constant pressure from the United States, with the result that, despite the wish on Colombia's part to diversify them, bilateral relations have once again been focused on drugs.

This renewed focus is based on the demonstrable increase both in coca cultivation (171 000 hectares in 2017 – six times more than in Pablo Escobar's heyday in 1989) and in production, with a justified fear on Colombia's part of being 'decertified' (that is, that the United States will cease to rate Colombia as a loyal partner in the fight against drug trafficking). But, to the relief of the Colombian authorities, this fear was dispelled on 11 September 2018 by the Presidential Determination on Major Drug Transit or Major Illicit Drug Producing Countries for Fiscal Year 2019, which spared Colombia decertification.

During the High-Level Dialogue on 2 March 2018 in Bogota, the USA undertook to maintain unchanged the amount of its aid to Colombia for this purpose, on condition that the country reduce cocaine production and cultivation by half over the next five years (up to 2023).

Drugs were a key topic of the meeting between ex-President Santos and the US Vice-President Mike Pence at the Summit of the Americas in Lima on 13 and 14 April. In his first Latin American tour, after visiting Brasilia, Rio, Santiago and Buenos Aires, the US Secretary of Defence James N. Mattis arrived in Bogotá on 17 August. His meetings with President Duque and his counterpart Guillermo Botero focused on the fight against drug trafficking and bilateral cooperation. On 11 September the Deputy Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), James Carroll, visited Duque in Bogotá. In his conversation with Vice-President Mike Pence, the following day, Duque was congratulated for his early efforts on this 'critical priority'. Both the Trump and Duque administrations doubt the real willingness of some members of the FARC to give up drug trafficking altogether, and fear that the recent Constitutional Court judgment on the statutory law on the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP) will make extraditions difficult.

On Monday 24 September, at the United Nations, Trump presented a document entitled 'Global Call to Action on the World Drug Problem' (attached to this report – it was signed by 130 countries including Colombia), congratulating Ivan Duque.

(b) Colombia's failure to act undermines the effectiveness of the international fight against drugs:

It is also cause for concern that the increase in drug seizures has not been matched by the arrest of the offenders, who enjoy impunity, neither being sentenced nor having their assets confiscated.

Corruption, the inadequate institutional apparatus, despite the legislative improvements introduced, the scarcity of operational resources and the inactivity of the State security forces result in a lack of international police cooperation, despite the notable figures for extraditions (89 to the United States so far this year; Spain is in second place with about thirty).

Some of the current trends which anti-drugs policy will have to tackle include:

- Cocaine supply and consumption is becoming increasingly accessible.
- There is a perception that the State has less control over cocaine production.
- Producers perceive less sense of risk in their illicit activity as a result of the discontinuation of aerial spraying from 2015.
- Increase in the area under cultivation, linked, in the post-conflict situation, to the expectation of receiving subsidies by joining the Government's crop substitution programme.
- Reduced cost of maintaining areas under coca leaf cultivation.
- Increase in the number and productive capacity of crystallisation labs for producing cocaine hydrochloride.
- Extension of the criminal structures to include foreign investors who are partly funding the expansion of the network of laboratories and production facilities.
- Drug production and processing facilities and activities can at times be visible, and even conspicuous, for the population at large.

- Foreign actors are gaining in importance, determining distribution strategies and prices negotiated with their Colombian suppliers in the producing areas and controlling the logistics to transit countries and countries of final consumption.
- Trafficking in cocaine hydrochloride is also experiencing increased growth, with laboratories ranging from small production plants with four employees (producing between 5 and 100 kg of alkaloid a day) to large installations with up to 100 workers (producing a tonne of cocaine hydrochloride per day).
- The peso/dollar exchange rate, owing to the weakness of the peso, increases profits made in US dollars, with the result that traffickers have greater purchasing power in Colombia.
- Increasing incidence of drugs being delivered in contaminated packaging.
- Difficulty, in operational terms, of carrying out controlled deliveries after a suspect has been arrested for drug trafficking.

2.1 Changes in the institutional framework relating to drugs

The new Government of Colombia led by President Iván Duque Márquez, which took power on 7 August 2018, is redefining the fundamental aspects of the country's strategy for combating drug trafficking (see section 2).

2.2. Legal changes including money laundering and chemical precursors

(a) Differential criminal treatment for small-scale illegal crop farmers: In order to overcome the difficulties of implementing illegal crop substitution, with regard to voluntary substitution with legal crops, in March 2018 the Minister of Justice and Law, Enrique Gil Botero, presented the Draft Law on differential criminal treatment for small-scale illegal crop farmers to the Secretariat of the Senate of the Republic, for processing according to the urgent procedure: the purpose of the Draft Law is to decriminalise the activities of farmers who, due to the conditions of marginalisation and structural poverty in the areas in which they live, have been forced to farm illegal crops. The Draft Law provides that the applicable criminal penalty will no longer apply to those who accept voluntary substitution, and for small-scale farmers whose land covers an area that is below a modest threshold (the Criminal Code provides for a prison sentence of between six and 12 years and a fine of up to 1 500 times the monthly minimum wage for this offence).

(b) Money laundering: During the conflict, the close link between the guerrillas and the areas they occupied, and the farming of coca crops and the development of drug trafficking resulted in certain negative consequences in February 2018. The FARC money laundering scandal broke. The Director of Public Prosecutions, Néstor Humberto Martínez, led investigations to uncover a suspected FARC financing network that had not been disclosed by the former guerilla group in the context of its obligation to surrender its assets under the peace agreement. The investigations focused on Henry Castellanos, alias Romaña, a member of the defunct Secretariat and one of the main political leaders of the party that was formed from the former guerilla group (Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (FARC)). The money laundering case demonstrates the importance of the process of forfeiture of assets, which is essential in combating drug trafficking.

(c) Chemical precursors: The 1986 legislation criminalising the illegal trafficking of chemical precursors was supplemented in 1997 (with the addition of chemical substances carrying a criminal penalty), 2000 and 2011. Signs that precursors are being used include a high level of cement consumption, without any other apparent explanation, and the proliferation of petrol stations in coca-growing areas (due to the use of petrol to process the alkaloid).

2.3 Assessment of the government's willingness to implement a comprehensive and resolute anti-drug trafficking policy

The government, taking an approach that focuses simultaneously on health, human rights and security, remains resolute in its anti-drug trafficking policy. It is aware of new threats, of evolving and challenging phenomena, and the necessity of international cooperation, in which the main donor is the USA, although the government has also appealed to other international partners. Although it has abundant human resources, Colombia's anti-drugs policy is very dependent on the contributions of other countries for its operational aspects, particularly for the acquisition and deployment of the latest technical equipment.

With regard to direction, as well as a focus on the three aspects set out above, the incorporation of Colombia's anti-drugs policy into the framework set out in the Final Agreement with the FARC and in the post-conflict setting is key. Both factors involve dealing with underlying issues, such as comprehensive rural reform, which is underpinned by the 'National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Crops' (NCPS).

3. List of the main bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes (time frame, activities and outcomes – including those that aim to reduce demand)

(a) The international ramifications are especially noteworthy, as regards:

- **USA:** The USA is by far Colombia's most important partner in combating drug trafficking, however, both its political will (it has been speculating as to the possibility of decertification since autumn 2017) and its financial contributions to combat drugs are progressively decreasing. The following recent events should be highlighted:

On Monday 9 April 2018, following investigations by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) ordered by a New York court that had issued an international arrest warrant, the prominent former member of the FARC and current member of the Secretariat of the Party Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (FARC) and former Havana peace negotiator 'Jesús Santrich', the nom de guerre of Seuxis Hernández, was arrested for drug trafficking; Santrich had been due to take a seat in the House of Representatives following the legislative elections on 11 March 2018.

President Donald Trump had been expected to visit Bogotá on 15 April 2018 (at the end of the Summit of the Americas in Lima, 13-14 April), however, on 9 April it was announced that Vice-President Mike Pence would attend on both occasions instead. The President would remain at home to supervise the United States' response on Syria.

At the institutional level, the United States has been working to strengthen the Public Prosecutor's Office and, whilst it is satisfied with this progressive strengthening, it detects significant shortcomings in the judicial field (insufficient numbers of judges, inadequate training on drug trafficking, scarcity of material and human resources), all of which result in the accumulation of pending actions, sentences that are inadequate or of which an insufficient amount of time is served and, ultimately, in undesirable impunity.

At the operational level, the conclusion of a bilateral USA-Colombia Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate the detection of containers transporting drugs stands out (it is estimated that 95 % of drugs leave Colombia by sea). Canada also has a port security programme (CAD 6 million for airport interdiction).

The USA maintains its operational commitment to the armed forces and the State security forces (particularly with the former) and its financial commitment via bodies such as the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL).

- **Venezuela:** Venezuela stands out as an exit route for drugs, across its long (2 219 km) and uncontrollable border. Its laxity in dealing with production and transit has worsened markedly in recent years. Suspicions surround figures within the Maduro regime, such as Diosdado Cabello.

- **Ecuador:** Increasing levels of organised crime carried out by dissident FARC guerillas have been seen around the border area in Esmeraldas province. Years of permissiveness under Correísmo have led to the recent flourishing of drug trafficking networks, the opening up of a new route to the Pacific and the development of new patterns of related criminality (e.g. kidnappings, sometimes resulting in death, as in the infamous case of two journalists and a driver from the newspaper 'El Comercio' on 26 March 2018, attributed to the group 'Frente Oliver Sinisterra FARC-EP').

- **Brazil:** The Amazon region, encompassing the border point at Leticia, is becoming established as a drugs route in Brazil, a country in which organised crime groups are gradually becoming stronger (four such groups share the market and have replaced state control with criminal control).

- **Mexico:** While Colombia is the pre-eminent producing country, Mexico occupies this role in the field of distribution. Colombia no longer has its own Colombian cartels: the distribution as well as financial business now takes place more outside than inside its borders, which have been penetrated by the Mexican cartel, Sinaloa.

(b) Bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes include various initiatives covered by the CRIMJUST project financed by the EU under the responsibility of the UNODC; similarly, progress is being made on managing the implementation of the Global Container Control Programme by the UNODC, the World Customs Organization (WCO) and their partners INTERPOL and Transparency International:

- Technical training to strengthen institutions to counter the production and trafficking of cocaine in Colombia (6-10 November 2017).
- Specialist regional workshop on dismantling criminal networks in Colombia (15-18 January 2018).
- Short, three-day course to equip prosecutors and police officers with the tools they need to detect irregular operations using cryptocurrencies, especially Bitcoin (17-19 January 2018 in Colombia).

Amongst the EU programmes, AMERIPOL and 'EL PAcCTO' (Assistance Programme against Transnational Organised Crime) stand out.

As regards international cooperation, donors have been decreasing their financial support for combating drugs in Colombia: this became clear with the creation of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Post-Conflict, which, in theory, includes funds for combating drugs, but which sets aside no funding for the UNODC, conforming to a tendency shared by other international actors. To this negative international dynamic is added the question of whether, at domestic level, the swearing in of the new President on 7 August 2018 will lead to changes such as a return to allowing the use of glyphosate spraying (which was stopped in 2015, without the funds previously used for it being re-allocated), or the reform of differential criminal treatment for small-scale illegal crop farmers.

4. Location and date of the latest mini Dublin Group meetings in Bogotá

(a) 27 September 2017, Spanish Embassy in Bogotá

(b) 10 April 2018, Spanish Embassy in Bogotá

(c) 20 September 2018, Spanish Embassy in Bogotá.

5. Identification of needs requiring external assistance

(a) Institutional strengthening: especially as regards protection of social leaders in voluntary crop substitution programmes; of the Public Prosecutor's Office; of the judiciary; and of the armed forces, which have great potential to dedicate themselves to this work, given their increased margin for manoeuvre since the end of the conflict with the FARC.

(b) Increasing coordination and collaboration at the operational level: bilaterally between each of the Dublin Group member countries and Colombia, and between the member countries.

(c) Improving legislation on asset recovery (confiscation orders and asset forfeiture) as a punitive solution against drug traffickers and as a source of income for the State.

(d) Training on cryptocurrencies generally and Bitcoin in particular, since these currencies are increasingly associated with money laundering.

6. Dublin Group assessment of the needs identified

6.1. Trends:

- The carrying out of activities by the UNODC and other organisations in certain areas of the country that are still experiencing violence increases the vulnerability of their staff to organised crime and other threats.

- There are difficulties fulfilling the provisions of the Final Agreement in areas affected by the presence of illegal crops. With regard to crop substitution, the USA is more focused on forced eradication carried out by the armed forces and the anti-drugs police than on voluntary or assisted substitution which, due to its social dimension and requirement of a certain level of understanding of the communities, as well as verification by the UNODC, presents greater difficulties (as in Tumaco, for example).

This socio-political dimension is particularly visible as it is connected to associated offences such as the murder of human rights defenders and social leaders advocating for the use of alternative crops in coca-growing areas, generally by BACRIM (criminal gangs) or former guerilla fighters of various affiliations in control of drug trafficking networks. As the UNODC points out, these and other difficulties jeopardise prospects of achieving the government's objective of reaching 70 000 hectares of voluntary substitution in 2018.

- Presence of organised armed groups in coca-growing areas.

- Concurrence of adverse weather effects to which the coca-producing areas are especially sensitive due to their inaccessibility, which hampers the evaluation of policies.

- Lack of capacity of the Colombian public health system to offer treatment and/or healthcare cover to registered addicts (according to the Colombian Drugs Observatory they numbered 484 000 people, or 3.6 % of the population, in 2013).

6.2. Political initiatives:

(a) With regard to those focusing on prevention and public health, the main initiatives under the Santos Presidency should be highlighted:

They were inspired by the international guidelines contained in the Sustainable Development Goals, the common position adopted during the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) in April 2016 and the Final Agreement with the FARC and the obligations contained therein.

The main Colombian political initiatives fall within the scope of the national policy to reduce the consumption and impact of psychoactive substances, and the national plan for the promotion of health and the prevention and treatment of psychoactive substance consumption, 2014-2021.

The Ministry of Justice and Law plans to introduce its policy to reduce demand for drugs in 2018.

Furthermore, progress has been made on prevention policies, the beneficiaries of which have increased to include 6 762 600 people (mainly children, adolescents and teachers).

(b) Initiatives that take a prohibitionist approach, in line with the new course charted by Duque, are set out in point 2 of this Report.

6.3. Recommendations:

(a) Specific recommendations:

In addition to the recommendations contained in point 5 of this report, the UNODC recommends strengthening the training offered to public authorities on combating drug trafficking in order to lay the foundations for effective policies that benefit from continuity.

Currently, due to a police cooperation protocol between the Netherlands and Belgium, the liaison officer at the embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands represents Belgium in Colombia. Belgium is considering whether to appoint a liaison officer in Bogotá.

(b) General recommendations:

- Promote the intensification of controls on the corridors used for illicit trade, focussing in particular on border areas, thereby strengthening cooperation between countries in the region.
- Promote increased assistance for the intelligence-gathering and technical resources of the Colombian authorities responsible for the controls carried out on people and merchandise in ports and airports to reduce drug trafficking.
- Promote further improvements to systems that monitor the number of hectares of illegal crops, and their harmonisation with the results of other monitoring systems.
- Promote greater involvement of the European Union Member States in Colombia, both at bilateral level and as a whole, using an approach that combines information analysis with operational aspects.
- Promote the forum offered by the Bogotá Platform as the ideal tool for cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking between the European Union Member States and Colombia.
- Promote support by the members of the Dublin Group for the Colombian government's policies of comprehensive reform of the rural system.
- Promote knowledge of the legal and illegal economies that make up the drug trafficking value chain in order to break its principal links.
- Promote intensified use of tools for the pursuit of illegal assets as a priority in the fight against drug trafficking.
- Promote the strengthening of financial intelligence-gathering as regards the detection and pursuit of property resulting from drug trafficking and knowledge of different types of money laundering.
- Promote an increase in EMPACT funds as an essential tool for European cooperation to combat transatlantic cocaine trafficking.

PARAGUAY

1. General situation

Paraguay is still facing major challenges in the fight against drug trafficking.

In terms of **supply**, it remains a producer country and, together with Colombia, it is the largest marijuana producer in South America. No new data are available on the area under cultivation, which is still estimated to be around 6 000 hectares and to produce approximately 16 500 tonnes, accounting for around 15 % of world production. The annual yield of the crop at local wholesale prices is in excess of USD 350 million. The main market for Paraguayan cannabis is Brazil, to which 80 % of production is sent. There are still no initiatives to map crops or to promote alternative crops. The Paraguayan authorities are concerned about the increasing presence of synthetic substances, some of which they are not even able to identify. With respect to cocaine, there are no indications of a decrease in the transit of cocaine (90 % from Bolivia) to Brazilian ports (from which it is smuggled into Europe via Africa), or of a fall in the number of laboratories. More than 1.3 tonnes were seized in 2017, which is a marked decrease from the 3.3 tonnes seized in 2013. It is estimated that Bolivia produces some 600 tonnes of cocaine per year, of which around a third transits through Paraguay, meaning that seizures do not account for even 1 % of this quantity. Of particular concern is the presence in Paraguay of base paste, which is exchanged for marijuana at the border with Bolivia. The country does not have the means to effectively control its airspace.

On the **demand** side, it should be noted that the Paraguayan authorities are devoting increasing attention to the public health aspect of the drugs issue. Of particular concern is the growing prevalence of the use of base paste, popularly known as 'crack', which has devastating effects on the health of those using it, 80 % of whom are minors. Measures are therefore being taken in the areas of data collection, awareness-raising initiatives and training activities. In addition, a farm school ('Granja Don Bosco') with capacity for 70 young addicts opened in May 2017 in Piribebuy, around 75 km from Asunción, and has received 80 000 dollars through Japanese cooperation. In spite of this, there continues to be a serious shortage of treatment and rehabilitation centres. As well as the Don Bosco centre, there is one national centre with 30 beds. In addition, there are 42 private centres, which are difficult for people with few resources and no official certification to access. Since 2008 there have been minimum standards for building permits, and an authorisation mechanism for the methods used is currently being worked on.

2. Brief update on the drugs strategy in Paraguay

2.1 Changes in the institutional framework relating to drugs

Action against drug trafficking is managed and conducted primarily by the National Antidrug Secretariat (SENAD), which is at ministerial level and reports to the office of the President of the Republic. The National Anti-Corruption Secretariat (SENAC) also plays a growing role in the fight against drugs owing to the interrelationship between politics and drugs. The Secretariat for the Prevention of Money Laundering (SEPRELAD), the national police, the armed forces and the prosecution service complete the institutional framework. Money laundering has been highlighted by SENAD as one of Paraguay's weak points.

In September 2017, a secretariat was established for the management of seized and confiscated property (SENABICO); its tasks were regulated in March 2018 and include provisionally assigning seized assets to the fight against drug trafficking, money laundering and organised crime, and financing (i.a.) rehabilitation projects for addicts with the proceeds from confiscated property. In parallel, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays an active role of interinstitutional coordination in relations with international actors. Major shortcomings as regards interinstitutional coordination remain, though some progress has been made.

2.2 Legal changes including money laundering and chemical precursors

The national drugs policy for 2017-2022, drawn up with the support of the UNODC, entered into force by means of a Presidential Decree in October 2017, although it was officially presented on 26 June 2018 at an event that took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Paraguay supports positions on essential issues such as the abolition of the death penalty, the proportionality of sentences (SENAD recognises that this is an unresolved issue for Paraguay; the average sentence for murder is eight years, while the average sentence for drug trafficking is 15 years), the future of the three UN Conventions, the increased focus on public health, and a better balance between supply and demand policies. The Paraguayan authorities are also opposed to liberalisation of the consumption of marijuana, as it would require a level of state control that Paraguay is currently unable to take on, and would create new problems.

2.3 Assessment of the government's willingness to implement a comprehensive and decisive anti-drug trafficking policy

Officially, the government remains determined as regards anti-drug trafficking policy. In practice, however, there does not seem to be a real willingness to put an end to the business of cultivating and exporting marijuana. With regard to cocaine, the drastic reduction in seizures is due to a relaxation of the checks by the Paraguayan authorities, since the quantity in transit from Bolivia has actually increased.

3. List of the main bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes

UNODC: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime collaborates closely with the Paraguayan authorities on the Transparency and Anti-Corruption Programme (2017-2018), established with the contribution of Germany. The UNODC works directly on technical support for SENABICO, the public prosecutor's office and the judiciary, principally in dealing with the confiscation of assets, and with SENAC on the implementation of the national corruption prevention plan and on its change of legal status to a national body. There are plans to carry out more capacity-building activities with these institutions, and other one-off activities with SENAD, civil society and the private sector.

USA: The USA is working in various areas and particularly on combating transnational organised crime through anti-money laundering programmes (especially in major criminal cases that affect the USA) and the link between terrorist financing and drug trafficking. In 2017 Paraguay made a number of favourable legislative changes, including the abolition of limited companies and the creation of SENABICO. In 2018, the US embassy will continue to support SENABICO with an investment of USD 400 000 to strengthen the institution and prevent criminals from enjoying the proceeds of their crimes. Although the GAFILAT (Financial Action Task Force of Latin America) evaluation of Paraguay has been delayed until 2019, the embassy is continuing to try to improve Paraguay's position in preparation for the evaluation, especially as regards the effectiveness of the institutions in the fight against money laundering.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) supports a Sensitive Investigative Unit (SIU) of SENAD special agents, Paraguayan national police officers and prosecutors from the public prosecutor's office. DEA agents act as advisers to this unit since the DEA supports it with financial resources, training and intelligence in order to carry out international investigations.

Given the strong links between drug trafficking and the use of weapons, the embassy has also been focusing on arms trafficking. Using the eTrace information system to track global weapons, the authorities in Brazil and Paraguay have discovered that a large quantity of US weapons exported from the USA to Paraguay were found at crime scenes shortly after being sold in Paraguay, indicating that imported weapons are being diverted to the black market. After investigating further and finding that security is lax in weapons sales and Paraguayan government agencies exercise little control or supervision over the market, the United States government is considering temporarily suspending the export of US weapons to Paraguay while security and controls are improved in the legal market.

In addition, the embassy continues to coordinate various courses organised by US federal agencies, and other specific programmes such as ILEA (International Law Enforcement Academy) and ATA (Anti-Terrorism Assistance). The courses contribute to greater professionalism among the officials of the police, SENAD, customs, the Supreme Court of Justice, the public prosecutor's office, the State Subsecretariat for Tax (SET), the Secretariat for the Prevention of Money Laundering (SEPRELAD), and the migration department.

CANADA: Canada is supporting Paraguay in its fight against drug trafficking through the UNODC's Container Control Programme and the World Customs Organisation. This support will continue in 2019 with the aim of minimising the exploitation of shipping containers for illegal drug trafficking and other types of transnational organised crime.

JAPAN: The 'Granja Don Bosco' therapeutic centre, mentioned above, was officially inaugurated in May 2017. Work is being carried out on other projects to improve schools in districts with disadvantaged families.

EUROPEAN UNION: EU support in this area is mainly channelled through multi-country programmes in the region, in particular COPOLAD (Cooperation Programme between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union on Drugs Policies), which has been in its second phase since 2016. The specific contributions to Paraguay's anti-drugs policy are coordinated by it within the framework of the actions planned under COPOLAD. For example, the programme organised a peer-to-peer workshop on alternative development and value chains in Asunción in September 2017, in cooperation with Paraguay's National Antidrug Secretariat (SENAD). Paraguayan representatives also participated in regional workshops organised under this programme, which were held in Mexico and Bolivia in October and November 2017. In addition, other EU regional programmes may also have an impact on Paraguay's anti-drugs policy, such as the Europe Latin America Assistance Programme against Transnational Organised Crime (EL PAcCTO), ongoing since 2017, or the future EU programme 'AMERIFRONT' to support improved border management and the fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, which is due to start in 2019.

As part of the EL PAcCTO programme, a regional seminar on preventive administration and confiscation of assets derived from crime will take place in Asunción from 26 to 28 September 2018, with the participation of representatives from the Ministries of Justice and asset management offices of the Latin American countries that have them, as well as European and Latin American experts, during which the Dutch, French and Colombian approaches to the subject will be analysed. The Financial Action Task Force (GAFILAT) is also due to participate.

GERMANY: Germany has provided financing of EUR 700 000 for a UNODC technical assistance project for preventing and tackling corruption. The aim of this technical assistance is to strengthen the enforcement of the national anti-corruption plan, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Following delays in launching the project, implementation has been moving forward positively since March 2018.

FRANCE: In 2017 training was delivered to the national police on investigation techniques relating to new technologies (GSM, IP, etc.). The Paraguayan authorities stressed the importance of the French 'Écouter d'abord' programme as a model for demand reduction.

UNITED KINGDOM: The UK's cooperation with Paraguay is mainly managed from Brazil. In September 2017 an operational visit was carried out to maintain and deepen relations with the relevant authorities in Asunción. A mutual area of interest was the presence and influence of the PCC in the border areas between Paraguay and Brazil. In February 2018, the UK embassy financed a capacity-building workshop to increase the transparency and integrity of the financial sector in Paraguay with regard to the final beneficiaries of limited companies, with the aim of improving Paraguay's position ahead of the GAFILAT evaluation in 2019.

SPAIN: Spain did not take any action with Paraguay on drug trafficking in 2017. Within the framework of the General Cooperation Programme for 2018, managed by Spain's State Secretariat for Security, approval was given to hold an international advanced course on criminal intelligence in tackling organised crime and drug trafficking, which took place from 2 to 13 July on the premises of the Spanish national police academy in Ávila. In addition, the AECID has been cooperating with the Ministry of Justice for a number of years on restorative juvenile justice, providing technical assistance and internships in Spain for Paraguayan officials.

4. Location and date of the mini Dublin Group meeting

In Asunción on 13 September 2018.

5. Identification of needs requiring external assistance

(a) There is a need to control Paraguayan airspace effectively, to increase mapping of areas of marijuana cultivation and to promote alternative crops through international cooperation projects.

(b) Step up demand reduction work via more specialist training of human resources, upgrading treatment and rehabilitation centres, increasing the coverage of school prevention programmes, with more organised civil society participation, and conducting periodic studies of key populations (such as schools, homes, emergency centres, prisons and treatment centres) with regard to the prevalence of and trends in drug consumption, as well as associated risk factors.

6. Mini Dublin Group assessment of the needs identified

6.1. Emerging threats/trends

As mentioned in point 1, the growing presence of synthetic substances from Europe, Argentina and even local laboratories, some of which the Paraguayan authorities are not even able to identify, is the main emerging threat.

Another worrying trend is the growing involvement and influence of Brazilian organised crime groups, such as the so-called 'Primeiro Comando da Capital' (PCC), in drugs and weapons in Paraguay.

6.2 Policy initiatives

As was also mentioned in point 1, the national drugs policy for 2017-2022, drawn up with the support of the UNODC, entered into force by means of a Presidential Decree in October 2017, although it was officially presented on 26 June 2018 at an event that took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

6.3 Recommendations

- (a) There has been some progress as regards interinstitutional coordination, but it needs to be stepped up and made more effective.
- (b) Importance of the entry into force of the law on forfeiture of assets and of the effective implementation of the BIDAL (management of seized and confiscated assets in Latin America) project.
- (c) Importance of stepping up the fight against corruption and promoting transparency and the effective enforcement of laws.

PERU

April-September 2018

1. General situation

The results shown by UNODC on the monitoring of coca crops for 2016 indicate a 9 % rise from 2015. The 43 900 hectares occupied by coca cultivation are mostly located in the coca-growing areas of the VRAEM (46 %) and La Convención y Lares (23 %), which between them account for almost 70 % of the total grown.

Coca leaf: the potential coca-leaf output approached 106 000 metric tonnes (10 % more than in 2015). The VRAEM produced 70 % of that volume, and La Convención y Lares 14 %.

Coca leaf prices: the national annual average price per kilogram of coca leaf for 2017 was USD 3.92 (PEN 12.65). Over the course of the year, prices peaked at USD 4.26 (PEN 13.83) in August and dropped to their lowest point at USD 3.51 (PEN 11.42) in September⁵.

Seizures: the official national police (DIREJANDRO) data at 16 September 2018 indicate that 39 267.35 kg of drugs were confiscated. Of this, 9 885 kg was cocaine base paste; 16 992.57 kg was cocaine hydrochloride; 12388.53 kg marijuana, 0.99 kg heroin and 0.02 kg ecstasy.

Over the same period, more than 8.4 million kg of chemical inputs and controlled products were confiscated, seized or destroyed.

In addition, DIREJANDRO reports that at 10 October 2018 8 927 kg of coca derivatives had been seized in ports, at beaches or in temporary stores and 485.53 kg at airports.

⁵ This information will be updated by UNODC in November 2018 in the presentation of the 2017 monitoring report.

Trafficking: in Peru, illicit traffickers in coca-derived drugs continue to operate in collusion with national criminal organisations ('creole cartels and family clans'). These organisations transfer the drugs from the production areas to interim destinations in towns located in the Peruvian Andes, before moving them on to coastal or border towns. In these places, the shipments are put together and, from there on, controlled by the international cartels.

Consumption: according to DEVIDA's latest study on drug use among secondary students in 2017, the annual prevalence rate of illicit drug use in that population is 4.6 %. In addition, 3.7 % of students consume prescription medicines without prescription and 20 % consume alcohol and tobacco, a rising trend.

2. Institutional framework

The **national anti-drugs strategy for 2017-2021 (ENLD)** is the guiding text shaping the Peruvian state's actions in fighting the illicit drugs trade. The National Commission for Development and Life Without Drugs (DEVIDA) is in charge of its application; DEVIDA's remit is to protect society from the negative effects of illicit trafficking in and consumption of drugs.

The 2017-2021 strategy approaches the drugs issue in a **structured and integrated** way. The Group noted that the government intends to achieve its objective in a structured way, through four lines of action: (1) integrated, sustainable alternative development; (2) supply reduction; (3) demand reduction; and (4) joint and shared responsibility, oriented towards more intensive and effective international cooperation to strengthen national capacities.

The government has taken legislative measures to step up the fight against drugs, notably **Legislative Decree 1241** of 26 September 2015 and its implementing regulation, adopted on 24 June 2016, which strengthens the fight against illegal drug trafficking and authorises the destruction of vehicles transporting illegal substances. It reintroduces the criminalisation of the replanting of coca leaves, which can be punished by imprisonment for three to eight years.

3. International cooperation

International cooperation has continued to support various programmes, particularly in the areas of supply reduction, alternative development, judicial and police cooperation, and demand reduction.

Of the actions taken, the following are worth highlighting:

- (a) The assistance provided by the **US Government's Anti-Narcotics and Application of the (INL) Law Section** in Peru is designed to support the Peruvian government's efforts to reduce coca crops and cocaine production; to interrupt and cut down drug-trafficking routes; to dismantle organised and transnational crime groups; to fight illegal mining and asset laundering; to improve the Peruvian National Police's capacity to investigate crimes; and to strengthen judicial institutions to improve their capacity to bring criminals to justice. INL contributed USD 23 million in 2017 (and expects to do the same in 2018), distributed across seven different sections supporting the following programmes.
- (b) Financial support from the Alternative Development Programme of the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** in 2017 amounted to USD 20.6 million, which supported 49 108 hectares of alternative crops (cocoa and coffee), to the benefit of 25 339 families.

In addition, an agreement with DEVIDA worth USD 19 million was completed this year and a new one worth USD 14.4 million was signed for the next five years. A contract for the institutional strengthening of DEVIDA, worth USD 17 million, was also completed, and USAID is in the process of creating a new USD 25 million mechanism to maintain that support.

In January 2018 a USD 2 million agreement was signed to help farmers and the Peruvian government to comply with European rules on limits on cadmium in cocoa products such as chocolate, applicable from 2019.

- (c) **The European Union (EU)**: new support, worth EUR 12 million, covers training of police, public prosecutors and judges in their own academic institutions, and also institutional support to DEVIDA via enhancement of the Peruvian Drugs Observatory and support for UNODC in coca monitoring, a study on coca productivity and a study on the conversion of coca into cocaine. This project will also address organised crime linked to drug trafficking (asset laundering, environmental crime and human trafficking), with a EUR 5 million increase in its budget. The regional projects with EL PAcCTO and COPOLAD complete the bilateral projects in the region.
- (d) **Japan** is focusing on community development projects, in particular with its contributions to the programme being carried out by the UNODC in Trujillo through its Human Security Fund;
- (e) **Canada** has been funding initiatives by the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the UNODC that benefit Peru (e.g. USD 1.5 million for UNODC's container checking programme, to be implemented in the port of Callao) and providing direct support, such as training for the Peruvian national police by the Canadian mounted police and for the Peruvian customs (SUNAT) by the Canada Border Services Agency in risk assessment.
- (f) The **OAS** provides support through the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) for the 'institutional strengthening' programme supporting national drug commissions in Latin America, which receives financial support from Spain.
- (g) **The United Kingdom** provides technical assistance to the prosecution service, to the judiciary and to the police in matters including oral litigation, mutual legal assistance, prohibition and seizures.
- (h) **UNODC** provides technical assistance via the Integrated Illicit Crop Monitoring System (SIMCI – Peru) for coca, a project that runs on an annual basis. It has also carried out the PREDEM crime prevention project, a project on enhancing the detection and investigation of the diversion of chemical precursors and a project on improving administrative control of chemical precursors.

UNODC and the EU are to sign an agreement to provide finance for SIMICI to complement the activities connected with monitoring of coca crops and will make it possible to carry out studies on coca leaf productivity, conversion factors and on a cross-cutting component to build capacity in national counterparts. This project will run over three years.

5. Venue and date of meeting

The mini Dublin Group meeting in Peru took place on 25 September 2018 at the Spanish Embassy in Lima.

6. Recommendations

- a. Need for a **faster exchange of accurate information** between the Peruvian authorities themselves (given the lack of coordination that at times has been observed between the prosecution service and the Peruvian National Police) and the authorities of the Group's member countries, in particular via the attachés responsible for interior affairs of the various embassies in Lima. That information and the speed with which it is transmitted are vital for achieving success in the fight against drug trafficking and dismantling international networks.
- b. The Group suggests DEVIDA as host for regional dialogues with relevant stakeholders from civil society, the scientific community and academia, to follow on from UNGASS 2016, with a view to UNGASS 2019.
- c. The Group considers it of the utmost importance that **an estimate of the potential cocaine production** be made available as early as possible, taking into account existing legal provisions which allow DIREJANDRO (the Peruvian police anti-drugs directorate) to carry out studies aimed at updating the coca leaf to cocaine conversion factors, which is vital for evaluating real progress in the fight against drugs in Peru.
- d. The Group considers that the government should rapidly implement the **register of coca farmers** and the production of a **new census of coca farmers** linked to ENACO (national company responsible for purchase and sale of legal coca).

- e. The Group recognises the efforts of the Peruvian government regarding **seizures**. However, official statistics still have very little significance. In this regard, the authorities need procedures for recording and analysing data, in order to obtain standardised, reliable data.
- f. The Group believes that a programme to identify drug distribution channels and the import of chemical inputs via land, air or river should be implemented. This includes the identification and measurement of the areas used as secret landing strips.
- g. The Group highlights the importance of effective action in the **VRAEM**. The Group urges the Peruvian government to conduct an assessment of the programme for productive reconversion, as so far there is no evidence of its achievements.
- h. The Group repeats its recommendation that **national technical support should be increased**, with international support whenever possible, for all authorities involved in combating drug trafficking, though they should be subject to specific effectiveness criteria, so as to ensure the continuity of ongoing technical programmes. One of the main problems is the high turnover of senior law enforcement officials, which can make dialogue and staff training difficult.
- i. **The training of judges, prosecutors, public defence lawyers and lawyers throughout the criminal justice system should be stepped up** so that they can carry out thorough investigations, since trials against drug traffickers often pit them against teams of well-paid, well-prepared and well-equipped lawyers. Staff turnover is lower in this area than in the police force, but appropriate measures for improving the effectiveness of such legal proceedings are also recommended. The Group is concerned about the low number of convictions recorded thus far in proceedings against large criminal networks involved in drug trafficking, and considers it vital to secure progress in the courts. Coordination between these stakeholders should not only be based on specific cases, but should be a continuous process of interinstitutional collaboration.
- j. In accordance with the principle of shared responsibility, the Group considers that **the member countries should maintain their international cooperation with Peru on this matter**. The Group also congratulates Peru on its increasing international cooperation with neighbouring countries in the fight against drug trafficking.
- k. The Group urges the Peruvian authorities and institutions to incorporate the gender perspective, the fight against corruption, and good governance into drug policies and programmes.

URUGUAY

1. General situation in Uruguay. Drugs situation including matters linked to production, trafficking and demand

From a regional perspective, Uruguay is not an important country in terms of drug production; however, the introduction of the new law on the regulation, sale and consumption of cannabis means that there is legal, state-regulated and state-controlled production of this substance in Uruguay.

The country's geographical location makes it attractive as a transit point for drug trafficking. The trends in such trafficking persist: cocaine from the Andean region bound for other parts of the world is the main substance that passes through Uruguay.

The porous borders with the neighbouring countries (land border with Brazil and bridges with Argentina) continue to be the main entry points for drugs. There are mounting concerns about traffic on the River Uruguay at the border with Argentina, although bilateral efforts are being undertaken to try to control the problem. Most of the cocaine base paste is entering via Argentina, while cannabis appears to be coming in via Brazil and Paraguay.

The port of Montevideo, a natural entry point for goods entering or leaving Paraguay (drugs are often hidden in containers of Paraguayan goods intended for export), and Montevideo's Carrasco International Airport (where 'mules' operate) remain major transit points for drugs. In September 2018, a container holding 417 kg cocaine bound for Antwerp was seized at the port of Montevideo.

Uruguay intends to agree on a control mechanism, together with Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil and Bolivia, for the Paraná-Paraguay waterways system known as the '*Hidrovia*', to control vessels along the Paraná and Uruguay rivers. Work is also underway to strengthen technical cooperation between customs officials at airports and river ports, particularly regarding the detection of new substances.

Many of those arrested in the context of micro-trafficking operations are women, which, according to the Uruguayan authorities, indicates that gender should be taken into account when considering the problem.

The government maintains that there has not yet been any 'cartelisation' of the groups involved in drug trafficking in Uruguay. Amongst these groups, Mexican, Colombian, Italian and Paraguayan organisations have stood out over the past year.

There has been mounting concern over public safety in the drug 'bocas' (spots where drugs are dealt), leading the government to increase its surveillance (462 'bocas' were dismantled in 2017 and a total of 197 between January and August 2018). Forms of violence have appeared that were previously unknown in the country, such as contract killings and settling of scores, as well as local gangs controlling certain areas of Montevideo. However, the authorities argue that it is difficult to establish a direct link between the rise in crime and the increase in consumption, since decreasing levels of public safety are part of wider and more complex social problems.

As regards the control of supply, in 2017 4 031 people were arrested and 947 were tried. In 2017, 1.89 tonnes of marijuana were seized (compared with 4.37 tonnes in 2016). It is estimated that cannabis accounts for almost 80 % of Uruguay's illegal drugs market. A total of 144 kg of cocaine was seized in 2017, as well as 31.84 kg of base paste. In addition, 9 372 doses of ecstasy were seized – much less than the year before, which has led the authorities to believe that drug traffickers may have changed the route they use to transport this substance to its final destinations.

As regards consumption, the sixth national household survey on drug consumption, carried out by the national statistical office in 2016, found that 23.3 % of people between the ages of 15 and 65 had tried marijuana at least once in their lives, an increase of three percentage points on 2011. 16.7 % of consumers showed signs of problematic use over the previous year. The seventh national household survey is set to be carried out in 2018, which will provide us with more up-to-date data.

As of October 2018, 34 108 people are authorised to access marijuana regularly. A total of 28 181 people have registered to buy cannabis in pharmacies – a system launched by the new legislation. 6 795 people are regulated as home growers and there are 107 cannabis clubs.

6.8 % of people between the ages of 15 and 65 have consumed cocaine at least once in their lives, a similar percentage as was recorded in the 2011 survey.

Consumption of cocaine base paste is considered marginal, with 0.7 % of the population declaring that they had consumed it at least once in their lives. In the case of hallucinogens, this figure rises to 3.1 %, while 2.8 % reported having used cannabis resin at least once in their lives. Consumption of other substances (inhalants, crack, ketamine, heroin) is even more marginal, with figures staying under 1 %.

However, increased consumption of synthetic drugs and the creation of a new market are cause for concern. Uruguay has an early warning system for detecting new psychoactive substances; Uruguay, Colombia and Argentina are the only countries in the region with a system of this kind.

Montevideo airport is the usual entry point for the trafficking of synthetic drugs originating in Amsterdam and bound for Buenos Aires (using the Buquebus service that connects the two sides of the River Plate), where they are consumed at electronic music festivals. The Uruguayan police authorities report that these substances all come from the Netherlands, via Madrid, and that drug mules ('burriers') use return flights to deliver cocaine in exchange for these substances. They also suspect that the traffickers may have a base in Spain. As stated above, the decrease in the number of doses of ecstasy seized in 2018 suggests a possible change of route.

Uruguay is also one of the countries that has reported a rise in the use of NPSs (new psychoactive substances), such as ketamine, though levels of consumption are not significant and are still well below those seen in North America and Europe.

2. Brief update on the drugs strategy in Uruguay

The national anti-drugs strategy 2016-2020, a framework document encompassing the measures to be implemented by the government over the next four years as part of a comprehensive approach to the fight against drugs, was approved in March 2016.

At the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS 2016), Uruguay presented its contribution to the debate: a document setting out five main strands required for a comprehensive approach to drugs policy. The document explains the country's innovative approach to control and regulation of the cannabis market, and argues that regulation and control represent the best methods of avoiding illegal trafficking in cannabis. It also argues that prohibiting cultivation has caused major public health and safety problems. Uruguay has therefore requested a review of the measures prohibiting cannabis, advocating the study and follow-up of those being implemented. Its authorities believe that, if successful, the measures could represent an alternative to the current prohibition of cultivation which would be more beneficial for the international community. Uruguay also argues that, when regulating the use of cannabis, consideration should be given to the fact that every country has its own specific circumstances, and advocates flexibility in interpreting the Conventions.

Uruguay also argued against the criminalisation of consumption at UNGASS 2016. Uruguay's stance is that not all consumption is problematic, and it therefore proposes comprehensive policies to deal with the phenomenon. Uruguay does not consider that sentences as drastic as the death penalty should be inflicted on consumers, as is the case in some countries, nor that they should be imprisoned.

According to the Uruguayan authorities, UNGASS has not made progress towards eliminating the death penalty, or supported risk and damage reduction strategies or essential principles such as the proportionality of sentences. In their opinion, this may create a space in which a future position can be coordinated with the European Union.

Uruguay attended the 61st session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March 2018. At the meeting, Uruguay and Canada put forward a resolution aimed at destigmatising drug users.

2.1 Changes in the institutional framework relating to drugs

The President of the Republic, Dr Tabaré Vázquez, has declared that he supports and will maintain the principles and instruments initiated by the previous government, as set out in the national anti-drug strategy 2016-2020. The strategy goes beyond the traditional model of reducing supply and demand and emphasises public health, well-being, justice and social harmony, as well as aspects linked to human rights, comprehensively addressing the drug problem in line with the parameters set out by Uruguay at UNGASS.

Following the adoption of the marijuana legislation, the Institute for Cannabis Regulation and Control (IRCCA) has been established and is now up and running, with registrations open for home growers (with around 6 617 applications received and 51 cannabis clubs in operation in April 2017).

A Scientific Advisory Committee has also been set up to evaluate the application of the marijuana legislation, though it is not yet operational. The Uruguayan authorities are very keen to share the results of this new model with the international community and, in particular, to explain what it could achieve in terms of public health and safety (as they believe that it should be accompanied by a reduction in drug trafficking-related violence). In order to increase the decentralisation and deconcentration of drug operations, all departments (regions) in the country now have departmental and local drugs boards with a role in the coordination of regional and national policies, and 18 interdepartmental brigades have also been established to fight drug trafficking within the country.

This parliamentary term has seen the Confiscated Property Fund bolstered so that it can work more effectively, and resources are being allocated to the different areas covered by the national strategy. An advisory committee on allocations has already been set up. It should be noted that the Fund has gained in importance in recent years, and in 2018 the number of seizures of goods has continued to rise.

2.2 Regulatory changes including money laundering and chemical precursors

The Uruguayan authorities consider that, thanks to the new legislation on marijuana, this market is now regulated. They also consider that the success of the new policy should not be measured purely in terms of its effect on the total number of consumers. They believe other variables must be taken into account (such as bringing consumers into a safer environment).

Following the entry into force of the regulation implementing the law on the regulation, sale and consumption of marijuana, two regulatory decrees on the use of marijuana for recreational and medicinal purposes have been approved. Two private companies (Simbyosis and ICC) have been licensed by the government to produce cannabis to be sold through the pharmacy network. These companies' monthly production figures currently stand at around 300 kg. Following the first cannabis harvest carried out under this new system, registration of consumers began on 2 May 2017, and on 17 July 2017 cannabis started to be sold in a total of 14 pharmacies (in April 2018 it was being sold in 13). A solution is yet to be found to increase the number of sales outlets, bearing in mind the financial problems that have arisen with the United States.

Under the new rules, potential buyers have to be identified using a fingerprint reader, and register with the Uruguayan post office. Registered consumers can purchase up to 10 grams per week in pharmacies and 40 grams per month, at a regulated price of 187 pesos (approximately USD 6.4). Only adult Uruguayan citizens who are permanently resident in the country and who have registered in advance are able to buy cannabis in pharmacies. Between July 2017 and April 2018, 150 431 5-gram packets of cannabis were purchased. In total, 752 155 g were sold during this period, 55 % of which was sold in Montevideo and the rest within Uruguay.

Three projects are also being developed with authorisation for research and production in the medicinal field, with USD 1 530 000 worth of investment.

Reform of the regulatory framework for establishments specialising in the care and treatment of problem drug users has continued to be consolidated. In this context, the Ciudadela project on information, advice and referral for drug users now has 20 centres, meaning that most departments now have a body which can refer problem drug users to the national care and drug treatment network (RENADRO).

As part of the COPOLAD II project, Uruguay intends to further develop its model for monitoring chemical precursors, with a view to extending controls to the domestic market in finished products.

August 2012 saw the adoption of the national strategy and action plan against money laundering and the financing of terrorism, and work continues on the application of the FATF and IMF recommendations. Uruguay considers that the action plan has been carried out in its entirety and indeed has exceeded what was initially provided for. Uruguay will be evaluated in 2019. In December 2017, a new anti-money laundering law was adopted. It covers various crimes committed in relation to money laundering, including corruption, and sets up a commission within the office of the President of the Republic.

A new code of criminal procedure entered into force at the end of 2017, which is having an impact on the number of individuals being arrested and tried.

Whilst it is recognised that the authorities are doing some good work in this area, particularly in terms of legislation, Uruguay remains vulnerable to money laundering and financing activities.

2.3 Assessment of the Uruguayan government's willingness to implement a comprehensive and decisive anti-drugs policy

The Dublin Group in Montevideo reaffirmed the Uruguayan authorities' commitment to the fight against drugs. Particularly worthy of note is their 'open-door' policy to show the international community the results achieved thanks to the implementation of the new rules on marijuana.

3. List of the main bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes (time frame, activities and outcomes – including those that aim to reduce demand)

The National Drugs Board's international cooperation objectives include strengthening national capacities in order to take an integrated approach to a 'global and transnational issue', as well as managing offers of technical and financial cooperation which support the national strategy and ensure it is represented in scientific and institutional exchanges.

Examples of international cooperation projects include: the SAVIA project (by CICAD/OAS) to develop regional cooperation and local initiatives for drug demand reduction, which ended recently (it is currently in its second phase, during which the departmental and local drugs boards are being evaluated); the COPOLAD programme (Latin America-European Union), under which Uruguay is involved in the components relating to the consolidation of the national drugs observatories, training centres, and the gender approach; and support for the fight against money laundering in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (GAFILAT). In addition, the United States organised an international course on port interdiction, which included classroom instruction and practical activities on a variety of security issues relating to ports, and focused on inspection and detection techniques applicable to contraband. Course participants included officials from the National Customs Directorate, the National Naval Prefecture, the National Port Administration, the national army and other offices connected to law enforcement in the port sector.

With Uruguay's support, the network of drug observatories in UNASUR member countries was created in order to provide a stronger regional vision, with the focal points designated at the time. In February 2015, Uruguay and UNASUR signed an agreement to that effect. Uruguay was also elected as the project leader, due to a Uruguayan company having been awarded the tender. A study was carried out on the most important aspects of the fight against drugs in the region, and a website was created to share data between the network's member countries. However, as a result of the problems that UNASUR is currently embroiled in, projects that had been set in motion are now at a standstill.

Uruguay engages in south-south bilateral cooperation with Argentina on improving their early warning system, the community approach and georeferencing technology, as well as with Colombia and Costa Rica. It is also expected to do so with Ecuador in the near future. In 2016, Uruguay signed a memorandum with Canada and its Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and the two countries are also working on risk-reduction guidelines for the use of cannabis.

Uruguay was an active participant in UNGASS 2016, maintaining that the drugs problem can be tackled with new approaches. Many countries in the region are receptive to and supportive of the Uruguayan position within the framework of the OAS, CELAC and UNASUR.

With regard to CICAD (OAS), work continues on the action plan evaluation questionnaire (multilateral evaluation mechanism, or MEM).

4. Location and date of the mini Dublin Group meetings

A Counsellor-level meeting was held at the Spanish Cultural Centre in Montevideo on 11 October 2018, with the Secretary-General of the National Drugs Board, Mr Diego Olivera, and the Director of the IRCCA, Mr Martín Rodríguez, in attendance.

5. Identification of priority external assistance needs

The Uruguayan authorities have also expressed interest in receiving help from the Dublin Group countries to finance visits by experts, technical assistance and training in different areas related to drug abuse. In particular, they are requesting support for studies by the network of international experts set up to evaluate the impact of Law 19.172 and support for activities involving the exchange of best practices and lessons learned. The Group supports these requests.

6. Recommendations

- The progress made on cooperation between departments and decentralisation and on strengthening institutions and technical training in the police and judicial spheres should continue.
- Recognising Uruguay's efforts on money laundering, we recommend that it follow the recommendations of the IMF and FATF, as well as the action plan against money laundering and financing of terrorism. It is recommended that the Group maintain a continued dialogue with the recently created National Secretariat for the Fight against Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (SENACLAFT) in order to closely monitor progress made in this area.
- Efforts and international cooperation with regard to control of chemical precursors, with a view to preventing their diversion to other countries, should be maintained.
- As regards the law on the regulation of the marijuana market, we recommend that dialogue be maintained with international specialist bodies that have expressed doubts about the new rules and their compatibility with relevant international law.

- At the same time, it would be helpful to analyse the new rules adopted and to monitor their implementation and their effect on drug consumption in Uruguay. Particular attention should be paid to analysing the studies currently being carried out by the Scientific Advisory Committee; the Dublin Group should maintain an open dialogue with the former, given the innovative nature of Uruguay's legislation on cannabis.
- The Group expresses its concern at the trafficking of synthetic drugs ('ecstasy') from Amsterdam and at the fact that Montevideo is being used as a point of transit to Argentina. The Group takes the view that it would be extremely helpful to provide funding for training courses, as requested by the Uruguayan police authorities, to help combat such trafficking. In this regard, any collaboration on the part of the Netherlands authorities could be very useful.

VENEZUELA

1. GENERAL SITUATION

The serious economic crisis in Venezuela continues to deepen, with an even more dramatic shortage of food and medicines; it is therefore once again inappropriate to address the issue from a public health perspective.

As already noted in previous reports, Venezuela has become an established transit point on the cocaine route and a key distributor of cocaine from the producing countries to North America and Europe.

The increasing weakness of the security forces' operational capabilities has led to the consolidation of the emerging proliferation of cultivation areas and the growth of the production infrastructure in Venezuela, particularly in the states bordering Colombia, with the permanent settlement of paramilitary groups which control and manage these production areas, mainly in the states of Zulia and Táchira (ELN, FARC, EPL, FBL), in terms both of distribution via Venezuela and of the production of coca; up to eight towns in these border states have been identified with coca leaf plantations. The lack of state action in these areas is strengthening the rise of pseudo-states controlled in virtually every regard by these paramilitary groups, including the creation of their own radio stations.

The route to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire that emerged last year, as stated in the latest reports, has been maintained and reinforced, combining drug trafficking with arms trafficking and money laundering on these islands.

2. THE DRUGS STRATEGY IN VENEZUELA

The drug trafficking structures remain opaque, although the recent change in the leadership of the ONA (National Anti-Drug Office) seems to be leading to more transparency; the following information is taken from their reports:

- Between 1 January and 16 October 2018, there were 2 992 police procedures involving the seizure of 22 359.222 kg of drugs, 5 392 arrests and, according to the same data, 17 412.755 kg were incinerated. According to the latest data, 18 laboratories and seven landing strips were destroyed and nine leaders of criminal organisations were imprisoned; seven aircraft were recovered, six were disabled, three were immobilised, three removed from use and six were destroyed.
- In this area, 34 military operations took place and 312 635.484 kg of precursors were confiscated.

As these data show, the amount of drugs seized is approximately half the amount reported in 2017, bearing in mind that these statistics are starting to be more reliable than those produced by the ONA in previous years.

2.1. Institutional changes and legal measures related to the fight against drugs

In line with the approach of recent years, no legal or operational measures whatsoever have been established, although it seems that the change in the leadership of the ONA might, in the near future, result in the adoption of operational measures.

2.2. Legislative changes, including money laundering and chemical precursors

There have been no legislative changes whatsoever in this field, and none are planned in the near future, given that a significant proportion of those within the state's circles of power make their living and profit from this activity.

2.3. Assessment of the political will of the government to establish a comprehensive law enforcement policy in the fight against drugs

There is currently no real commitment on the part of the government to establishing a comprehensive policy in the fight against drugs.

3. ASSESSMENT OF THE BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS ON DRUGS

There is currently no new information in this area; there is only one agreement, with the United Kingdom, and there is less and less practical activity from the UK's task force in Venezuela.

4. LOCATION AND DATE OF THE MINI DUBLIN GROUP MEETING

The last meeting took place on 17 October 2018 at the United Nations Headquarters.

5. PRIORITISATION OF EXTERNAL NEEDS

In the absence of any real policy of the Venezuelan authorities in the fight against drug trafficking, this point remains non-existent.

6. ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS MINI DUBLIN GROUP

6.1. Emerging threats

- Consolidation of large coca-growing areas in the states bordering Colombia, which are increasingly controlled by paramilitary groups as a result of the lack of state action in these areas.

6.2. Policy initiatives

None

6.3. Recommendations:

- Venezuela must step up the fight against money laundering and the criminal organisations involved in drug trafficking by promoting operational investigation, as investigations currently stop at the drug couriers, while the organisations and those most responsible go unpunished.
- The competent authorities must be urged to use the legal instruments provided for in the 1988 Vienna Convention which are designed to combat drug trafficking, especially those related to controlled deliveries.
- Strengthen international cooperation and the supply of information at both strategic and operational levels.
- Promote the provision of training courses in Venezuela on money laundering and the fight against drug trafficking, delivered by EU specialists and aimed at trainers.
- Encourage participation and active representation in the international fora and bodies that deal with these issues.
- Draw up a regional plan to analyse developments in this phenomenon.
- Review prevention and detoxification policies, especially among the prison population and the most disadvantaged sections of society.
- Review and strengthen capacities to monitor and control them.
- Improve the transparency of and access to statistical information to enable forward and situation analyses to be carried out.
- Commit to the implementation and completion of support programmes to be carried out within the framework of international cooperation.
- Strengthen the legal, technical and human resources allocated to the fight against drug trafficking.