



Brussels, 2 December 2015
(OR. en)

14818/15

CORDROGUE 97
COAFR 357

NOTE

From:	Spanish Regional Chair
To:	Dublin Group
Subject:	Regional report for North Africa

TUNISIA

1. General situation

1.1. Production and trafficking

We maintain the hypothesis, put forward in previous years, that Tunisia is not a drug-producing country, but rather a country of transit and consumption. The transit is mainly of cannabis to Europe, in moderate amounts, and to Libya and Egypt. This can be inferred from the limited data available on seizures and the activity of the Tunisian security forces in this area.

The Tunisian Interior Ministry has not provided any official data over the last six months on seizures of narcotic substances in Tunisia. A notable event was the arrest of three Spanish citizens aboard a yacht that was transporting 5 141 kg of hashish from the western Mediterranean towards the eastern Mediterranean. The arrests were made after the vessel had called into the port of Yasmine Hammamet (Nabeul) for technical reasons.

Most known seizures of hashish, based on open source reports, occur during the inspection of vehicles travelling on public roads in governorates near the borders with Libya and Algeria and at the port and airport of Tunis. Seizures of subutex tablets, usually arriving from Europe, are continuing to be made, mostly in the port of La Goulette or at Cartago airport, both of which are in Tunis.

1.2. Consumption

In the absence of official data from the Tunisian authorities or reliable statistics, our assessment is that drug use in Tunisia remains fairly limited, with the majority of consumers believed to be aged between 18 and 35, and hashish being the substance consumed.

2. Institutional framework

Following the approval of the new Tunisian constitution on 26 January 2014, numerous initiatives have been announced to modernise the legal framework applicable to the prevention and suppression of drug use. Despite this, there has so far been no legislative initiative to adapt the current legal framework (Law No 52/92 of 18 May 1992) regarding production, consumption and trafficking in narcotics.

The Tunisian authorities recently agreed to cooperate with the Paris-based Anti-Drug Coordination Centre for the Mediterranean, CECLAD-Med, and the French authorities are hoping that operational police cooperation in this area will improve as a result.

3. International cooperation

3.1. Technical assistance

Nothing to report.

3.2. Statistics

Nothing to report.

4. Recommendations

In view of the absence of official data provided by the Tunisian authorities, it is difficult to make a precise assessment of the situation in Tunisia and to issue recommendations on prevention of drug addiction and combating drug trafficking; consequently, the first recommendation would be for the authorities to improve the transparency of information in dealing with these matters.

Other recommendations could be as follows:

- Draw up a national strategy to combat drug addiction using a multi-sectoral approach, circulate it to Tunisia's civil society and international partners, and then implement it.
- Encourage the participation of senior officials of the Tunisian security forces, dedicated to combating organised crime, in seminars and activities organised by international bodies and other countries of the Mediterranean basin.
- Promote international police cooperation in combating serious crime, which normally includes criminal organisations engaged in drug trafficking. For this it is necessary to modernise the antiquated structures and operational procedures of the Tunisian Ministry of the Interior, with regard to both combating organised crime and police cooperation.

MOROCCO

As scheduled, on 2 November the mini Dublin Group met again to update the report prepared in March 2015.

In accordance with the meeting agenda, the different sections were reviewed:

1. General situation

The trends in drug production and trafficking identified in previous reports are unchanged. That assessment relies, in any case, on partial data which may, in some cases, be checked against information in the media.

Morocco remains one of the world's major cannabis producers. There are no updated official figures recording a reduction of the cultivated area. On the other hand, as has been stated in other reports, the improvement in crop productivity and the increase in the proportion of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) should be taken into account. Trafficking to Europe has continued to stabilise owing to increased local production in several European countries.

Cocaine continues to arrive via two main routes: from Latin America on transatlantic flights, and through West Africa. There has been no appreciable increase in seizures in recent months, although trafficking of the substance is thought to have decreased. Contrary to the comments made in the previous report, the local police authorities have stepped up their monitoring of tourist ports and recreational craft, resulting in a number of significant seizures and arrests.

The level of trafficking of industrially-produced psychotropic substances remains in line with that mentioned in earlier reports. There have been regular seizures and arrests linked to such trafficking in the main cities and they have received extensive coverage in the media.

2. Legislative amendments

There have been no changes to the legislation on production, trafficking and consumption. In the recent election campaigns, some local candidates again raised the possibility of a partial legalisation of hashish cultivation. There have been no new proposals at national level, however.

In any event, it should be noted, within the broader legal framework, that work is progressing on concluding the justice reform. The purpose of that reform is to bring the judicial system into line with the 2011 Constitution and modernise its structures and operations with a view to affirming the independence of the judiciary. The projects under discussion (creation of a Higher Judicial Council and of a new statute for magistrates) are being contested by some magistrates' bodies.

3. International cooperation

A high level of cooperation between the Moroccan police authorities and the EU Member States and the Dublin Group participants has continued, in particular at operational level. The creation of the Central Bureau of Judicial Investigation has not significantly altered the arrangements and instruments for cooperating at local level. One of the areas in which the existing cooperation could be stepped up concerns the official figures and statistics provided by the authorities, which tend currently to be only partial and to come from various agencies.

4. Miscellaneous

The Moroccan authorities have taken various pertinent measures to tackle cases of police corruption with connections to drug trafficking. The press has reported on these cases.

Some steps are being taken to strengthen Morocco's cooperation with Europol, and the beginning of negotiations on a framework agreement is scheduled for November.

5. Recommendations

The possibility was raised of using the mini Dublin Group format to launch some form of multilateral cooperation with the Moroccan authorities.

EGYPT

1. General situation

A comparison of the figures for 2014 and 2015 shows a significant reduction in the quantity of substances seized so far in 2015; however, it should be noted that any analysis should be based on the end-of-year figures.

Based on the investigations by ANGA it is not possible to establish a relationship between terrorist groups and drug trafficking.

a. Hashish is not produced locally in Egypt and is usually brought into the country over land or by sea from the Maghreb. The change reported in the previous report has been confirmed, with more seizures of consignments from Lebanon and Jordan transported by sea to ports and airports in eastern Egypt. Attempts to bring the drug into the country from Afghanistan and Pakistan have also been detected. 19 tonnes of cannabis were seized in the first ten months of 2015.

b. 33.3 tonnes of bango (cannabis) have so far been seized.

c. The quantity of psychotropic substances in the country has continued to fall: 157 million tablets were seized in 2014 whilst the figure for 2015 has barely reached one million. The main problem is the consumption of Tramadol, which is smuggled from India.

d. Heroin originating in south-east Asia is continuing to arrive in Egypt via Red Sea ports such as Nuweiba and airports, though not in significant quantities (65 kg in 2015).

e. There has been an increase in seizures of cocaine, which is used in Egypt by the wealthy classes and in tourist areas. The drug originates in Latin America, with stop-off points in the Mediterranean region or North Africa, though operations have also been detected on the country's eastern border. The operation leading to the seizure of half a tonne in September 2014 was also reported. 12 kilograms have been seized in 2015.

f. Ecstasy is mainly used by young people and tourists, and 344 tablets have so far been seized in 2015.

2. Institutional framework

It was recalled that trafficking of cocaine and heroin is subject to the death penalty, with a possible reduction to life imprisonment for trafficking of other substances. It was also reported that new substances had been added to the list of banned substances.

3. International cooperation

The ANGA representative welcomed the close cooperation with countries in both the Mediterranean region and outside it, such as Jordan.

In addition, the ANGA representative highlighted the cooperation between the Egyptian authorities and the Home Affairs Attaché on the arrest of Latin American citizens (Peruvian nationals) who were transporting cocaine and were arrested at El Cairo Airport in September 2014.

4. Recommendations

a) Despite the existing smooth cooperation, a more accurate analysis of the current situation would require going beyond purely quantitative exercises and examining other elements, such as drug-trafficking networks, their resources and sources of funding, and where their profits go.

b) Also, we would again recommend reinforcing the preventive aspects – through social and educational awareness-raising – and improving mechanisms for treating and rehabilitating drug addicts, alongside the coercive and punitive operations/legislative amendments aimed at combating drug trafficking and production in the region.

REPORT ON THE DRUGS SITUATION IN MAURITANIA
MINI DUBLIN GROUP (OCTOBER 2015)

The most recent meeting of the mini Dublin Group in Mauritania took place in the Spanish Embassy in Nouakchott on 30 October 2015. The participants were France, Spain, Germany, the EU Delegation, Japan and the United States.

After discussions, the group approved the following report:

1. General situation

Mauritania is still a **transit country for cannabis resin and cocaine**, although seizures of cocaine have remained rare and been on a small scale. This lack of seizures is presumably due to a shortage of appropriate equipment and technology.

It should be recalled that Mauritania has signed the principal international agreements on combating drug trafficking, including the Vienna Convention. The following **anti-drugs laws** exist: the law of 18 July 1993 which lays down very stiff penalties, including the death penalty, if the offence is repeated; and the law of 27 July 2005 which criminalises the laundering of the proceeds of drug trafficking. **The legal instruments available to combat drug trafficking remain unchanged in 2015.**

Mauritania was the driving force behind the creation of the 'G5 Sahel' group, whose members, apart from Mauritania, are Mali, Chad, Niger and Burkina Faso. The group became an international organisation when its members' Heads of State adopted its founding agreement in Nouakchott on 19 December 2014. Expressing their desire to strengthen cooperation on security matters, they created the *platform for security cooperation*: a shared space for dialogue and exchanges of operational information in the fields of security and border management (terrorism, illegal immigration, all types of trafficking).

2. Trafficking trends

Cocaine trafficking: Mauritania is regarded as a **transit country for cocaine**. Several reports indicate that drugs trafficking is closely linked to the funding of terrorism in northern Africa, but the current pattern of seizures offers no confirmation of that information.

It is nonetheless acknowledged that cocaine arrives from South America by air and sea at ports in the Gulf of Guinea (Guinea-Bissau, Conakry and Sierra Leone, Togo, etc.) and other West African countries such as Senegal and Cape Verde.

It is transported to Mauritania by road or by boat, directly from Conakry, the east of Mali or Senegal. The cocaine is then transported primarily by sea for delivery in Europe via the ports of Nouakchott or Nouadhibou and the surrounding area, including the no-man's land in the south-west of Western Sahara.

Since 2008-2009, however, there have been no noteworthy seizures, probably as a result of the establishment of a security mechanism as part of the fight against terrorism. The group also posited that this may be due to the **lack of training and professional incentives for Mauritanian customs staff.**

Cannabis trafficking:

Mauritania is above all a **transit country** for cannabis originating from Morocco (as demonstrated by recent seizures, such as the 1 400 kg seized in December 2014), en route to the whole of West Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and the eastern Mediterranean.

More precisely, the cannabis resin comes mostly from the Moroccan Rif, bound for Egypt and Libya (via northern Mali and northern Niger) and for countries in the Arabian Peninsula (via Chad and Sudan). Upon entering Mauritania, two main routes are used, one in northern Mauritania and the Sahara along the border with Algeria, then via northern Mali and northern Niger, bound for Libya and later Maltese ports (which, according to our contacts, are a safer port of entry into Europe), and the other to the south-east via Nouakchott, following the 'road of hope' to the Malian border.

On the first route, drugs are apparently transported from the Sahara across the area controlled by the Polisario Front, which has nine allegedly easily bribed nahiya (area command posts) along the Mauritanian border.

It is believed that convoys cross the Mauritanian border around Bir Moghreïn and Ain ben Tili, after which they follow the Algerian and Malian borders into Libya. Temporary stores are said to have been set up in Mauritania around Bir Moghreïn and Ain ben Tili.

However, **the security measures put in place by the Mauritanian authorities since President Abdel Aziz came to power in 2009, as part of the fight against terrorism, also benefit the anti-trafficking mechanism, making it more difficult for drugs to transit.** Since the **Serval intervention** in Mali, this mechanism has been stepped up considerably. Most recently, in a report on Western Sahara submitted to the Security Council on 10 April 2015, Ban Ki-moon stated that the President of Mauritania had "highlighted some of the negative spillover effects of the dispute [in Western Sahara], in particular the considerable quantity of cannabis resin arriving at the northern borders of his country [Mauritania] for transit into Mali and beyond". He had added that "this phenomenon posed a serious security threat to all countries in the Sahel-Saharan region in that it helped to finance criminal, extremist and terrorist groups".

OCLCTISS (Mauritania's Office for Combating Illegal Trafficking in Drugs) and the gendarmerie are beginning to provide more regular and reliable statistics.

The following statistics are available for **2015**:

First half of 2015

From OCLCTISS:

- 1 132 kg cannabis resin
- 678 kg Indian hemp
- 5 vehicles seized

47 cases initiated by OCLCTISS, with 91 suspects handed over to the judicial authorities.

From the gendarmerie

- 17 g cocaine
- 136 kg Indian hemp
- 25 kg cannabis resin
- 17 people arrested

Trafficking in counterfeit medicines

After several years, this form of trafficking has started to become a serious problem for Mauritania. In May 2015, the Zouerate gendarmerie intercepted a cargo of counterfeit medicines and weight-loss products. Last year, a two-tonne cargo of counterfeit medicines destined for Mauritania was seized in Algeria.

3. Production trends

The country has no tradition of growing or processing drugs. Local consumption is limited to some (herbal) cannabis derivatives, linked to traditional practices (Indian hemp). No evidence suggests that laboratories producing synthetic drugs are operating in Mauritania.

4. Progress report on drug consumption

Indian hemp is the only drug consumed on a significant scale. Its consumption is mainly cultural and traditional.

Consumption of cannabis resin remains low, while consumption of cocaine is negligible.

5. Progress report on international cooperation

French cooperation

France continues to work alongside the Central Office for Combating Illegal Trafficking in Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (OCLCTISS), in particular in providing staff training courses (four per year). A new support and assistance project for the opening of branches of OCLCTISS is under consideration. The agency suffers from having offices only in Nouakchott even though it has national jurisdiction. Nouadhibou, Zouerate, Rosso and Nouakchott port and airport could be the first branches opened from the beginning of 2016.

Spanish cooperation

The Spanish Guardia Civil's project within the EU's WEST-SAHEL Mauritania programme, to enlarge the dog-handling unit, continues. In 2015, eight new dog units were purchased and training courses for trainers and dog-handlers were held from 20 September to 23 December 2015.

Finally, **the expansion of the unit to other places in Mauritania, including Aioun and Pk 55 (close to the northern frontier with the Sahara), will be supported by Spanish cooperation.**

European Union cooperation

The European Union continues to support the 'integrated border management system' in Mauritania, which contributes to the fight against drug trafficking, through support for the country's national gendarmerie.

The following projects are planned, jointly funded with Spain's Guardia Civil:

- **Implementation of the first joint police and customs coordination centre in Selibabi (Mauritania),** which will include the forces responsible for the integrated management of the borders of Mali, Senegal and Mauritania: the gendarmerie, the police and the customs service.

- **A new three-week training course on border security**, including the drugs aspect, to be given in November 2015 in Selibabi (Mauritania) **by the Spanish Guardia Civil, with EU funding.**

Meanwhile the Senegalese authorities are in the process of developing a migration strategy and strengthening their border controls, coordinating with the Mauritanian authorities to develop close links between the forces responsible for border control, and coordinating their actions to achieve better results in combating all types of illegal trade, in particular the drugs trade.

At regional level the European Union is developing the West African Police Information

System (WAPIS) Cocaine Route programme in Nigeria, Benin, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, with a budget of EUR 5 200 000 for the period 2012-2015. The aim is to combat (organised) crime and the threats posed by terrorism by setting up a regional police information system (WAPIS), and to establish a connection between the countries of the region and the rest of the world using Interpol's tools and services. Mauritania, though invited to participate, has still not given the green light for this system to be set up.

German cooperation

In 2015, as part of the project for capacity-building of the national police (RCPN project), **GIZ (German Agency for International Cooperation) continued its work with the Mauritanian border police and technical and forensic police.**

- **Following the establishment, between 2013 and 2014, of a criminal database complying with AFIS (Automatic Fingerprint Identification System) standards, GIZ helped the National Technical and Forensic Police Service (SNPTS) to collect and classify fingerprint files at more than 50 police stations across Mauritania** (including 33 in Nouakchott). As a result of the system being established, 1 100 people apprehended since the start of the year have had their fingerprints taken in Mauritania, compared with 7 000 in the previous 21 years (from 1993 to 2014). Therefore, the use of digital fingerprints as a crime-fighting tool has an increasingly important role in the work of the Mauritanian criminal police.

- As part of the next phase of the RCPN project (2016-2018) currently being developed, **it is planned that GIZ will continue to support the DGSN (Directorate-General for National Security) in this area.** This could include in particular also involving police border posts in fingerprinting work. Other measures envisaged are: support for the creation of a 'psychotropic substances and drugs analysis' department in the scientific crime detection laboratory in partnership with the GIZ police project in Côte d'Ivoire, and anti-drugs training sessions for border police.

Japanese cooperation

At the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V), **the Japanese government** announced that in the context of the priority areas for Japanese cooperation in the Sahel, **it had committed itself to training 2 000 people, with a view to capacity-building to fight terrorism, including illegal drug trafficking.**

As a measure expressing that ambition, **the Japanese government gave financial support worth in total around USD 6.8 million to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for the execution of a project to strengthen the capacities of criminal justice and law enforcement in the Sahel region, in seven countries including Mauritania.** In the context of that project, those responsible for criminal justice and the gendarmerie in Mauritania will be trained to increase international cooperation to combat terrorism and cross-border crime.

Japan also funded several projects that contribute to combating terrorism, executed by international organisations such as the UNDP, which also connects with fighting the drugs trade.

6. Operational recommendations

The members of the mini group have identified flaws in the investigation strategy. **The authorities do not follow up cases where trafficking is detected and there is no subsequent analysis of drug seizures.** Besides that, **there is a significant shortfall in terms of judicial processing and a lack of coordination between the various police bodies involved in fighting this scourge** (the national gendarmerie, the national police, customs and, most recently, the road security service or GSSR); for instance there is no common database (as described below). In addition, the public prosecutor should have a bigger role in supervision and coordination. Magistrates, investigators and the services monitoring the financial system and the health and pharmaceutical services all need specialist training.

Mauritania still has very significant needs in all areas, ranging from basic personnel training to logistical support. Both the Mauritanian police and the gendarmerie have repeatedly stressed the need for technical resources for surveillance, communications, investigation and toxicological analysis. Training is an absolute priority, starting with training for the instructors themselves.

Mauritania has no overall view of the drugs trade either locally or internationally. That makes it difficult to draw up a strategy to combat the phenomenon. OCLCTISS does not centralise data on the subject sufficiently; the Mauritanian gendarmerie and customs do not keep it regularly informed of drugs cases. As a result, OCLCTISS does not really know the full extent of drug trafficking.

Other more specific recommendations are listed below:

- o **Continue to raise the Mauritanian authorities' awareness of the need to step up their commitment to the fight against trafficking and against the laundering of the proceeds of trafficking.**
- o **Promote and support the establishment of a central office for combating trafficking in drugs (for the coordination of the security forces) and a national drug-trafficking database** with input from the police, the gendarmerie, customs and the army.

- o **Support the framing of a national anti-drug-trafficking policy** on that basis.
- o **Improve and optimise the material resources of the Mauritanian security forces with responsibility in the area.**
- o **Ensure the continuity of training by setting up a permanent centre with specialised professional trainers.** Emphasise on-the-spot training for trainers. Encourage agents to specialise from the time they enter into service.
- o **Promote a regional cooperation framework**, in particular by encouraging the work of the **G5 Sahel security platform**, which could become a new arena for regional cooperation in combating the drugs trade among the Sahel countries, and also the West African liaison officers' platform based in Dakar.

Promote an evaluation of the national Interpol bureau and improve its capabilities, as a means of increasing international cooperation.

- o **Improve effective border control capacities and, in that context, encourage implementation of the Stability Instrument.**
- o In addition to the action taken, **there should be a special focus on Mauritania's chief ports, Nouadhibou and Nouakchott**, as there are few or no checks there and they are a major loophole in the anti-drug smuggling effort.
- o **Provide financial support to the Directorate-General for National Security in its effort to create branches of OCLCTISS in big cities** and areas where there is increased activity by drug trafficking organisations.
- o **Schedule regular meetings between the partners and the units of the security forces involved in the fight against drug trafficking**, to coordinate work and avoid overlaps.
