

DIVISION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS Vienna

2022

BULLETIN ON NARCOTICS

Volume XXXV, No. 4 October-December 1983

Special issue on an analysis of the campaign against drug trafficking

119778-119789

U.S. Department of Justice National Institute of Justice

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UNITED NATIONS New York, 1983

SPECIAL REQUEST

As indicated in recent issues of the *Bulletin on Narcotics*, the Division of Narcotic Drugs plans to focus forthcoming issues of the *Bulletin* on particular subjects of general interest.

For this purpose, the following topics have been identified for future issues:

- 1. Role of narcotics laboratories in combating the illicit drug traffic.
- 2. Illicit supply of, and traffic in, coca leaves, coca paste and cocaine: problems and countermeasures.
- 3. Sentencing policies for offenders convicted of drug-related infractions.
- 4. Recent research on the harmful effects of cannabis.
- 5. Drugs and youth.
- 6. Extradition of persons accused of illicit drug traffic studies on existing international instruments and on judicial implementation at the national level.
- 7. Drug-related problems in Africa.
- 8. Developments relating to control of psychotropic substances.

Interested readers are accordingly invited to submit manuscripts related to the topics listed above in sufficient time to be considered for possible publication in the *Bulletin*.

For more detailed information concerning submission of manuscripts, readers may refer to the "Note" on page v.

NOTE

The *Bulletin on Narcotics* seeks to cover current information on experience gained in national and international drug control programmes with particular attention to results obtained in a given country that may be of interest and value to other countries.

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Articles for publication in the *Bulletin* should be addressed to the *Bulletin on Narcotics*, Division of Narcotic Drugs, United Nations, Vienna International Centre, P.O. Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria, accompanied by an abstract of approximately 200 words and a short *curriculum vitae* of the authors. They should be submitted in original and two copies. Illustrations consisting of all material that cannot be set in type, such as photographs, line drawings, graphs, charts and tracings may be included with the manuscript. Tables should be self-explanatory and should supplement, not duplicate the text. Each table must have a title. References should follow numerical order. The bibliography should be presented in alphabetical order.

A transmittal letter should designate one author as correspondent and include his complete address and telephone number.

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Editor's note

This special issue of the Bulletin on Narcotics is concerned with the campaign against drug traffic and is published in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 37/198 adopted on 18 December 1982. The continuing rapid increase in total quantities of many drugs being moved in the illicit traffic in most parts of the world is well recognized. It is also universally accepted that the most successful measures to counter this traffic must operate from a firm base of co-ordinated activity at the national level. On this basis it is possible to establish regional and interregional coordination mechanisms to counter the drug traffic which is itself an international phenomenon. The International Drug Control Strategy, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 36/168 of 16 December 1981, indicates the parameters within which co-ordinated action can most usefully be undertaken. This Strategy identified activities which could be undertaken by regional organizations and this special issue contains a number of articles describing the work of such organizations. Other articles describe national and international action against the drug traffic.

The United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs, in accordance with decisions and resolutions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, continues, within resources available, to encourage mutual assistance between States to counter the drug traffic and associated phenomena. Special attention has recently been directed to measures designed to alleviate the particular problems of transit States, the number of which is increasing exponentially. There is also concentration on supporting regional and interregional meetings, seminars and workshops designed to develop and promote more rapid, secure and accurate exchanges of information and intelligence. These measures at national, regional and international level have accounted for at least some part of the greater quantities of many drugs seized from the traffic. However, much remains to be done, especially in improving communication networks both within and between national territories.

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Action by the Customs Co-operation Council to combat illicit drug trafficking

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ABSTRACT

Since its establishment in 1953, the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC) has been actively involved in combating illicit drug trafficking. CCC has adopted legal measures designed to meet the requirements of member States in their efforts to promote the prevention, investigation and repression of customs offences, including drug smuggling. CCC studies patterns and trends in drug trafficking and promotes ways and means of detecting drug smuggling and financial transactions related to such smuggling. CCC publishes studies and handbooks that serve as practical guides to national customs administrations of member States. In its work to combat drug trafficking, the CCC co-operates with the United Nations bodies concerned with drug control and the International Criminal Police Organizations (ICPO/Interpol).

Introduction

Combating drug smuggling is an important element in the struggle against drug abuse since it attacks the illicit supply of drugs which is very often organized on an international basis. Since its foundation in 1953, the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC) has undertaken various measures to combat drug smuggling. These measures are intended to meet the requirements of countries seeking appropriate means of combating customs fraud and smuggling of all types. The traditional control functions assigned to customs services at frontiers, ports and airports give them a key role in the prevention, investigation and repression of offences involving illicit drug trafficking, irrespective of the means of transport involved. CCC is, therefore, concerned with both the legal measures and more practical, technical measures of combating drug smuggling in cargo, by mail and by travellers.

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Legal measures to combat drug smuggling

CCC has drawn up legal instruments to meet the requirements of national customs administrations of member States. Such legal measures allow for adaptation and supplementary provisions so as to best respond to the needs of member States. Some of these instruments are concerned with customs fraud in general and hence include drug smuggling, such as:

(a) The 1953 recommendation on mutual administrative assistance;

(b) The 1975 recommendation on the pooling of information concerning customs fraud;

(c) The 1967 Convention, which is a model for bilateral mutual administrative assistance adopted by CCC to assist member States wishing to conclude bilateral agreements.

In 1967, CCC adopted a resolution for the prevention of illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and, in 1975, a recommendation on the spontaneous exchange of information about illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The International Convention on mutual administrative assistance for the prevention, investigation and repression of customs offences, adopted by CCC at Nairobi on 9 June 1977, should gradually replace the international legal instruments that are applied at present. The Nairobi Convention entered into force on 21 May 1980 and now has 14 contracting parties. Annex X of this Convention is concerned specifically with action against the smuggling of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and financial operations undertaken in connection with such smuggling.

Finally, CCC has adopted a recommendation on the control of goods transported by containers if an inquiry shows that such containers are used for drug smuggling.

The legal instruments provide for liaison with the United Nations bodies responsible for international drug control. They also take account of the measures that can be introduced at the national level to co-ordinate the activities of the various services involved in combating illicit drug trafficking.

Practical measures to combat drug smuggling

CCC works to promote the extensive application of its legal instruments by member States and adapts and supplements these instruments in conformity with new requirements as they emerge.

Practical methods of combating drug smuggling are particularly examined by the Enforcement Working Party and the newly created Enforcement Committee at their meetings and by the Customs Investigation Services. In an effort to promote the role of the customs in combating fraud, these bodies consider:

(a) Trends in the illicit trafficking of drugs, including heroin, cocaine and psychotropic substances;

(b) Information on new smuggling techniques;

(c) Means of detecting drug smuggling, such as technical aids and detector dogs;

(d) Training of enforcement specialists through seminars, courses and workshops.

They also study a variety of other measures such as those relating to financial transactions connected with drug smuggling, controlled delivery and measures against smuggling of drugs by post.

CCC publishes studies and handbooks that are regularly updated and that provide practical guides to national customs administrations in their struggle against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Particularly useful for drug control activities is a nomenclature of places of concealment and methods of smuggling, which contains an illustrative catalogue. A catalogue of available technical aids to drug enforcement has also been published. In addition, the secretariat regularly updates a list of officials responsible for maintaining direct personal contacts with persons involved in the mutual administrative assistance. Such assistance is described in *Handbook Enforcement*, a publication of CCC intended to assist member States. A handbook describing practical methods for dealing with drug smuggling in containers will appear in the beginning of 1984.

All these activities are carried out in co-operation with the United Nations bodies concerned with international drug control and Interpol. In particular, this co-operation takes the form of joint studies or analyses of specific aspects of drug trafficking and meetings on subjects of mutual interest.