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Illicit drug traffic and supply and related measures**Strengthening international support for States in
West Africa in their efforts to combat drug trafficking****Report of the Executive Director***Summary*

The present report has been prepared pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 51/18, entitled “Strengthening international support for States in West Africa in their efforts to combat drug trafficking”, in which the Commission requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to report to it, at its fifty-third session, on the implementation of that resolution. The present report contains an overview of the support provided by the international community to West African States and to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in overcoming the challenges related to drug trafficking and organized crime. More specifically, it contains information on progress made since the ECOWAS Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat to West Africa was held in Praia on 28 and 29 October 2008 with regard to the implementation of the ECOWAS Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa and the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crimes and Drug Abuse in West Africa (2008-2011). It also highlights main initiatives developed in support of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan and efforts made by the international community to support West African States to combat drug trafficking and related organized crime, both of which pose serious threats to the security of the subregion.

* E/CN.7/2010/1.



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 51/18, entitled “Strengthening international support for States in West Africa in their efforts to combat drug trafficking”, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs reaffirmed its determination and commitment to confronting the world drug problem in all its manifestations, using a common, coordinated and balanced approach and following the principle of shared responsibility, including in the area of new emerging trends, such as the increasing use of West Africa as a transit area for cocaine consignments destined for international markets, mainly in Europe.
2. The Commission called upon Member States and relevant international organizations, in coordination with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to strengthen ongoing initiatives and programmes, in particular those designed and developed by States in West Africa and ECOWAS, and to facilitate the development of other relevant programmes considered appropriate by the States concerned, in order to combat drug trafficking through West Africa by providing technical and financial assistance, including strengthening support for existing subregional drug law enforcement initiatives, such as the West African Joint Operations initiative and the interregional initiative financed by the European Union for the sharing of intelligence among States in the Caribbean, Latin America and West Africa.
3. The Commission invited Member States and relevant international organizations to intensify their efforts in support of those West African States most affected by the problem of drug trafficking, particularly Guinea-Bissau, bearing in mind the specific dimension of the problem in those States and the urgent need to confront the problem.
4. The Commission also invited Member States and relevant international organizations, in collaboration with ECOWAS and other stakeholders, to strengthen their coordination in support of the efforts of the Governments of West African States in order to achieve maximum results.
5. The Commission called upon Member States, especially those that are the main countries of destination of illicit consignments of drugs, particularly cocaine, smuggled through West Africa, to continue their efforts to reduce the demand for illicit drugs in line with the provisions of the international drug control treaties.
6. The Commission urged States in West Africa to continue their efforts to combat drug trafficking and to adopt effective demand reduction measures, including the provision of treatment and rehabilitation for drug abusers, and to continue to address the drug problem in a balanced and integrated manner within their development priorities.
7. The Commission called upon Member States and relevant international organizations to accord adequate attention, in a balanced and integrated manner, to both supply and demand reduction measures in providing assistance to States in West Africa and, in the case of demand reduction, especially to treatment and rehabilitation.
8. The Commission requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to facilitate the coordination of efforts, in

consultation with the States in West Africa and international partners, to address the problem of the smuggling of cocaine through West Africa, within the framework of the drug control component of the Programme of Action, 2006-2010, emanating from the Round Table for Africa held in Abuja on 5 and 6 September 2005, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/248.

9. The Commission also requested the Executive Director to report to the Commission at its fifty-third session on the implementation of that resolution.

Recent developments in West Africa

Security Council mobilized on the threat posed by drug trafficking to the security of the subregion and its global impact

10. In recent years, drug trafficking in Africa has gained special attention at the international level, as demonstrated by the fact that the Security Council has repeatedly discussed the threats posed to regional stability and international security by the smuggling of cocaine through countries in West Africa, notably in Guinea-Bissau. In July 2009, the Council took note of the UNODC report entitled *Transnational Trafficking and the Rule of Law in West Africa: A Threat Assessment*, presented by the Executive Director of UNODC, and commended the multi-stakeholder comprehensive approach in assisting the subregion through the West Africa Coast Initiative, a joint effort by UNODC, the United Nations Office for West Africa, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), all of which have agreed to work in synergy in support of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crimes and Drugs Abuse in West Africa (2008-2011). In November and December 2009, the Executive Director of UNODC was again invited to address the Security Council on Guinea-Bissau, West Africa and the African continent as a whole, and was subsequently requested by members of the Security Council to provide the Council with regular updates on the situation and progress made with regard to the challenges faced by West Africa related to drug trafficking and organized crime.

11. The United Nations is fully involved in various peace processes in the subregion, including in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction efforts, through the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau and the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations Office for West Africa. The United Nations Police has more than 3,000 police officers available to support security sector reform in West Africa. In addition, the Peacebuilding Commission, whose main task is to support post-conflict reconstruction, has, since its creation in 2005, extended its activities to Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone; recently, it has also been involved in Guinea. The Peacebuilding Fund is, therefore, supporting several conflict prevention projects in the above-mentioned countries.

Illicit manufacturing of drugs in Guinea

12. In July 2009, the interim authorities in Guinea seized large quantities of chemicals and equipment suspected of being used for drug processing at several sites in the country. The chemicals, which were highly toxic for humans and therefore posed a threat to public health, were subsequently identified by UNODC, INTERPOL and commissioned international experts as being precursors. Cocaine and “ecstasy” processing equipment was also identified. The existence of clandestine laboratories shows that drug cartels are not only smuggling cocaine through Guinea, but that they are developing sophisticated on-site capacities for producing narcotics. Such developments represent an alarming threat to the stability of the country and the subregion.

International and national efforts start to pay back

13. No seizures of bulk consignments of cocaine from Latin America to West Africa were made in 2009, except for the interception at the port of Tema, Ghana, in September of a vessel from Brazil carrying about 160 kg of cocaine. Also, fewer seizures were made at European airports in connection with flights originating in West Africa. The increased international attention paid by national and international law enforcement agencies, the political turmoil in Guinea and the period of transition in Guinea-Bissau have made it less attractive for traffickers to operate in what were previously safe havens. However, intelligence reports suggest that the current scenario is just a sign of tactical repositioning and that multi-ton shipments will continue to reach West Africa, especially since the underlying factors that facilitated the flow in the first place continue to exist. There are indications that the illicit drug trade will be pushed southwards and inland as long as international attention to the subject persists.

14. In November 2009, Malian authorities discovered the burned remains of a large Boeing aircraft that had landed on a clandestine airstrip in the north of the country (around 220 km north of Bourem, Gao Region). The aircraft, suspected of having carried cocaine from Latin America, apparently failed to take off again and was subsequently set on fire by the crew to destroy all evidence. If such a scenario were confirmed, it would be the first time that a large plane capable of carrying multi-ton shipments of cocaine was used on the transatlantic trafficking route.

II. International support to West Africa: from process to action

15. In 2008, UNODC was successful in drawing the attention of the international community to the security threat posed to West Africa by drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. In 2009, UNODC, with the support of international and development partners, has been successful in mobilizing additional resources to assist the subregion in combating drug trafficking and related crime. West African States have also demonstrated their support for the declarations made at the ECOWAS Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat to West Africa, held in Praia on 28 and 29 October 2008 and many of them have taken action to implement the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan. The ECOWAS Commission has also taken the necessary steps to implement the Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and

Organized Crime in West Africa by strengthening its capacity to deal with drugs and crime and by assuming the role of leader, based on the principle of regional ownership and sustainability.

16. The progress made by ECOWAS and its member States is also in line with the revised African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2007-2012) approved at the Twelfth Ordinary Council of the Executive Council of the African Union held in January 2008. The African Union Commission held a special session in parallel to the eighteenth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Vienna from 16 to 24 April 2009, confirming its commitment to the implementation of its revised Plan of Action with the support of UNODC and other partners and highlighting the progress made by ECOWAS with regard to drug control and crime prevention, starting with the Praia Ministerial Conference, citing it as a good example for other regional economic commissions in Africa. The African Union Commission and UNODC, in the framework of their project on supporting the implementation of the revised African Union Plan of Action, will provide the ECOWAS Commission with the services of an expert who will help to build the Commission's capacity to implement the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan. The expert will start working within the ECOWAS Commission in 2010.

A. Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat to West Africa

17. On 28 and 29 October 2008, ECOWAS, with support from UNODC and the United Nations Office for West Africa and in partnership with the European Union, held a ministerial conference in Praia to address the serious threat posed by drug trafficking to subregional security. The Political Declaration and Regional Action Plan that resulted from the conference and that were subsequently endorsed by the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS in Abuja on 19 December 2008 established the basis for a strong political commitment and a detailed cooperation framework to combat drug trafficking and organized crime in West Africa. UNODC has been entrusted with leading the process of translating the Political Declaration and Regional Action Plan into concrete programmes to be carried out by ECOWAS member States in partnership with the United Nations Office for West Africa, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, INTERPOL and the European Union.

18. Implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan will be supported by national and regional activities. The ECOWAS Commission has been entrusted with providing overall subregional support through the implementation strategy.

19. In addition, UNODC has assisted ECOWAS in the organization of a meeting of experts held in Abuja on 12 and 13 May 2009, during which an operational plan and a monitoring and evaluation mechanism were developed and subsequently endorsed at the meeting of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government held in Abuja on 22 June 2009.

20. Implementation of the ECOWAS Commission's operational plan will require about US\$ 13 million. The aims of the plan are the following: (a) to redefine the role and mission of ECOWAS vis-à-vis drug control and crime prevention; (b) to build the Commission's capacities to respond to the challenges posed by organized

crime; and (c) to set clear subregional priorities with regard to the initiatives to be undertaken to achieve the objectives contained in the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan.

21. A strong focus will be on developing coordination mechanisms and disseminating knowledge. The monitoring and evaluation mechanism will function alongside the ECOWAS Commission's operational plan to provide further tools and guidance.

22. The operational plan is meant to complement the initiatives undertaken by Member States. Both the operational plan and the monitoring and evaluation mechanism contribute to achieving the objectives of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan through regional and national activities.

23. The monitoring and evaluation mechanism aims to set out an overall framework for the continued monitoring and evaluation of, as well as the reporting on, progress made in the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan's different components, including at the level of the Security Council.

24. In addition, UNODC developed and transmitted to 15 West African States an assessment questionnaire with a view to collecting information on national responses and initiatives related to drugs and crime.

B. West Africa Coast Initiative

25. Responding to calls for a comprehensive and multi-stakeholder approach to support the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, UNODC, the United Nations Office for West Africa, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and INTERPOL have agreed to work in synergy to address the growing problem of drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse in West Africa through the West Africa Coast Initiative, a joint technical assistance programme for building capacity at the national and regional levels, primarily in post-conflict scenarios in West Africa, in the areas of law enforcement, forensics, border management, money-laundering and criminal justice institutions. A key element of the programme is the establishment of specialized transnational crime units. The proposed programme addresses the priority interventions identified in the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan. The programme will have clear links to ongoing activities within West Africa and will first be implemented in the following priority countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. It is expected that the geographical scope of the Initiative will eventually expand to include all 15 ECOWAS member States and Mauritania.

26. The West Africa Coast Initiative was officially launched in Vienna in April 2009, on the sidelines of the eighteenth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. In addition, the Initiative was brought to the attention of the Security Council at a meeting held in New York on 7 July 2009, at which the Council discussed the report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Office for West Africa (S/2009/332). Joint assessment missions have already begun in the four pilot countries.

C. Economic Community of West African States donor round table

27. The ECOWAS Commission, with the support of UNODC and in partnership with the United Nations Office for West Africa, held a donor round table in Vienna on 3 December 2009 that was hosted by the Government of Austria. The event offered the opportunity to present the main initiatives in support of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, including the operational plan and the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as well as implementation modalities.

28. At the donor round table, funding for the operational plan and the monitoring and evaluation mechanism was pledged by the European Commission. Such funding will enable the ECOWAS Commission to build the capacity of existing structures dealing with drugs and crime and to address priority areas related to law enforcement, justice, drug use prevention and treatment, and data collection. Other representatives of the international donor community committed funds in favour of initiatives for West Africa under the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan.

29. Partners of ECOWAS stressed their continued commitment to addressing the threat posed by drugs and crime in the region and underlined the importance of the role played by ECOWAS in those efforts. In addition, they agreed to strengthen cooperation and coordination in tackling drug trafficking and related forms of organized crime, based on the principle of shared responsibility and by adopting a balanced approach, and to continue communicating at all levels on related crimes, such as the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, trafficking in persons and counterfeit medicine, as well as all other forms of trafficking in the subregion. Ministers from countries in the subregion reconfirmed their commitment to the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan and called for support to enable its full implementation. They also stressed the need to address all aspects of the problem, in other words the need to reduce supply of and demand for trafficked goods.

III. Technical assistance to West Africa

A. Regional initiatives

1. Research and analysis

30. With regard to West Africa, UNODC has focused on increasing knowledge of and on expanding and monitoring the evidence base on drugs and crime and the impact on policymaking and on operational decisions. On the occasion of the Praia Ministerial Conference, UNODC launched the report entitled *Drug Trafficking as a Security Threat to West Africa* and in 2009 issued the publication entitled *Transnational Trafficking and the Rule of Law in West Africa*, which contains information on a range of illicit activities, from the theft of and trafficking in oil (termed “bunkering” in the subregion) to the smuggling of cigarettes, counterfeit medicines and small arms, and the trafficking in persons. The publication was launched at a session of the Security Council on West Africa held in New York on 7 July 2009. UNODC is currently preparing a study on the security threat posed by trafficking in the Sahelian band to be carried out in the course of 2010.

2. Policymaking and partnerships

31. Through its project on assistance to the ECOWAS Commission for the development and implementation of a strategy for West Africa on drug control and related organized crime, UNODC aims to provide technical assistance to the ECOWAS Commission and ECOWAS member States so that they can develop a coherent regional strategy to combat drug trafficking and related organized crime. In addition to enabling the organization of the Praia Ministerial Conference and related follow-up actions, the project provides a framework for continued technical assistance to the ECOWAS Commission and ECOWAS member States in support of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan. The project is also assisting West African States in developing national integrated programmes on drugs and crime, one of the primary objectives of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan.

3. Partnership with the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa

32. Not only has West Africa become a staging point for drug traffickers and organized crime groups, it has also become exposed to corruption and the laundering of money derived from drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime, all of which undermine sustainable social and economic development and political stability, in the subregion. There is strong evidence that money is being laundered through investments in the real estate sector and that important sums of money are being transferred outside the subregion. In many West African countries, financial institutions are proliferating even though there has been no corresponding boom in economic activities, which has led to concerns about the origin of assets. In response, all States in the subregion have adopted legal frameworks implementing most of the international standards against money-laundering and countering the financing of terrorism. In addition, several countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo) have established financial intelligence units that have started receiving and analysing disclosures on suspicious financial transactions. However, except for in Nigeria, there have been no convictions for money-laundering yet in West Africa. To achieve real results, the objective is to set up a network of operational financial intelligence units in all West African countries. Stronger cooperation among and between law enforcement and judicial authorities remains a prerequisite.

33. In December 2009, UNODC and the Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) signed a memorandum of understanding against money-laundering and the financing of terrorism in ECOWAS member States. The memorandum of understanding will help UNODC and GIABA to cooperate more closely, which will, in turn, support the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan and be instrumental in preventing criminals from benefiting from the proceeds of their crimes. Through the memorandum of understanding, both parties commit to cooperating towards the development of national and regional initiatives to raise awareness about States' vulnerability to money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, to aligning national laws to the provisions of international legal instruments and to building operational capacities with financial intelligence units, law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities, in particular with regard to tracing and confiscating the proceeds of crime and

developing national strategies to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

4. Post-conflict and peacebuilding: assistance to States of the Mano River Union

34. The overall objective of the ongoing project launched in 2009 is to assist the strengthening of national capacities and cross-border cooperation to tackle transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, both of which undermine peace and development in the States of the Mano River Union (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone). The project will also provide preparatory assistance to the West Africa Coast Initiative. In the initial phase, an assessment will be made of the capacities of the Mano River Union States to respond to those crimes, to promote cross-border cooperation and inter-agency coordination, and to use intelligence for policing. Assistance is to be implemented with a focus on achieving long-term, sustainable reform within the crime prevention and criminal justice sector in the context of security sector reform and in support of priority interventions under the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan.

5. Law enforcement, counter-narcotics and forensics

35. Late in 2008, UNODC launched a law enforcement capacity-building project to fight drug trafficking in selected countries in West Africa, specifically in Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone. Based on the results of preliminary assessment missions carried out in July 2009 and requests formulated by national beneficiaries, a team of specialized trainers will develop and run tailored training programmes for each country. The training sessions will be undertaken at the beginning of 2010.

36. UNODC has developed a large interactive computer-based training programme that contains more than 70 modules on law enforcement-related topics. Through the programme, quality training can be given to a large number of students at low cost. Two computer-based training centres have been established (one in Cape Verde and one in Nigeria) and two others are under construction (one in Ghana and one in Sierra Leone). UNODC would like to make the entire computer-based training package available in all official languages in the subregion, in all West African States.

37. Through its Laboratory and Scientific Section, UNODC has conducted joint forensic training courses under the INTERPOL Providing of Operational Assistance, Services and Infrastructure Support to African Police Forces (OASIS Africa) programme, which aims to enhance the operational capacity of African police forces to effectively combat and tackle national and international crimes. A subregional course for Anglophone West African countries was organized in Nigeria in September 2009 and a similar course for Francophone countries was held in Côte d'Ivoire in October 2009. The objective of the courses is to raise awareness about good practices in crime scene investigations and about the nature and relevance of physical evidence. UNODC continued to support the forensic work of Member States during the reporting period by providing field detection test kits for drugs and precursors to several countries, including Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Mali and Senegal.

38. UNODC has developed a subregional project on enhancing forensic science services in West Africa, to be launched in 2010. The project will support the establishment of a sustainable and integrated West African infrastructure for the delivery of basic forensic services for counter-narcotic and related activities, including aspects of basic forensic intelligence and the use of forensic information in operations. Under the project, an expert is expected to work at the UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa, in Dakar, during the first quarter of 2010.

6. Transatlantic cooperation

39. In order to strengthen transatlantic cooperation between Latin American and West African drug law enforcement agencies, ECOWAS member States were invited to attend the Nineteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held on Isla Margarita, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, from 28 September to 2 October 2009. A memorandum of understanding to promote the joint investigation of specific cases was then signed by representatives of Latin American and West African law enforcement agencies at a meeting organized by UNODC that was held in Bogotá in November 2009.

40. In an attempt to curb the smuggling of cocaine from Latin America to West Africa, in 2008 UNODC launched a transatlantic intelligence exchange project. Seven Latin American countries and six West African countries were selected to participate in the project, together with European liaison officers based in target countries. Through the project, information will be exchanged with the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre-Narcotics, which is based in Lisbon, and cooperation will be strengthened with INTERPOL and Europol. The three-year project, supported by the European Commission, aims at establishing a multiregional intelligence-exchange mechanism and at promoting intelligence-led investigations for intercepting drugs in Latin America, West Africa and Europe.

41. UNODC has taken the initiative to develop the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP), in cooperation with INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization. The objective of the AIRCOP project is to create joint anti-trafficking units in 10 airports on drug trafficking routes in Africa and Brazil and to link them with the INTERPOL I-24/7 database and communication system and the World Customs Organization Customs Enforcement Network communication system. It may also be possible to link airports in Africa to airports in source and destination countries. The project will start in 2010. The European Commission, which is supporting the project financially, has requested UNODC to replicate the AIRCOP project for Latin America and to build synergy between AIRCOP Africa and AIRCOP Latin America.

42. The Container Control Programme, which is implemented jointly by UNODC and the World Customs Organization, currently has project sites in South America, Central America, Africa and Central Asia. At the heart of the initiative are the joint port control units, which consist of police, customs, gendarmerie and drug law enforcement authorities. The units are trained in risk analysis, profiling and container inspection by leading international experts. Although they have been set up primarily to tackle the smuggling of drugs, the units' profiling and search efforts can also be directed towards preventing trafficking in arms, counterfeit medicines, toxic waste, stolen vehicles and cigarettes, in line with local priorities and the results of threat assessments. In Africa, the implementation of the project has been

completed in Senegal. The joint port control unit in the port of Dakar has been trained and equipped and is operational. In Ghana, a joint port control unit operating at the port of Tema was established and equipped in October 2008; it has also received theoretical and practical training. The team is fully operational and has already seized stolen cars and more than 200 kg of cocaine. In Cape Verde, joint port control units will be set up at three ports in the near future. In the meantime, the units received theoretical and practical training in September 2009. In Mali, activities are to start in 2010 at Bamako's container terminal (dry port). In 2010, UNODC is planning to conduct assessment missions to ports in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. Once the assessment missions have taken place, activities can start, subject to the availability of additional funding for these countries.

7. Drug abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention

43. In conjunction with increased drug trafficking through the region, a growing amount of drugs coming into West Africa are being consumed locally. This is a new development, though not surprising in view of the low prices and high supply of cocaine. Low-level traffickers are being paid in kind with part of the cocaine (including crack cocaine) that they then give to retail on the domestic market. At between \$17 and \$55 per gram, cocaine remains quite affordable. Prices are lowest in countries acting as major points of entry for cocaine being smuggled into West Africa. In particular, recent rapid situation assessments conducted by UNODC among drug users in local communities and in prison settings (in Nigeria in 2005, in Sierra Leone in 2006 and in Cape Verde in 2007) indicate dramatic levels of cocaine abuse among vulnerable groups, especially among youth and women. Also of great concern is the widespread use of crack cocaine among prisoners. It is known that crack cocaine is cheaper and more addictive than some other forms of cocaine. Combined with massive youth unemployment in West Africa, local cocaine abuse leads to urban delinquency and youth gang-related violence, fuelling criminal activities in general and undermining social peace and security. In addition to the threat posed by cocaine to public health and security in West Africa, there is also an emerging pattern of injecting drug use in several countries of the region, which increases the risk of an HIV epidemic. Recent rapid situation assessments supported by UNODC indicate that drug users are involved in risky behaviour, such as drug injection and needle sharing.

44. UNODC has recently launched a joint programme with the World Health Organization (WHO) to mobilize efforts around drug dependence treatment and care. These efforts include advocating supportive policies and legislative frameworks, building capacity by training trainers and service providers, forming networks of treatment and care services that are evidence-based and ethical, easily accessible to drug users, affordable for providers and incorporated into the national health care system. West African countries will also benefit from the programme.

45. In December 2009, UNODC, together with partners such as the World Bank, WHO, UNAIDS and national partners organized a regional consultation on HIV and AIDS prevention and care among prisoners and injecting drug users in West and Central Africa, held in Côte d'Ivoire. At the event, experts from West and Central Africa, as well as from East and Southern Africa, shared their experiences. The participants agreed on a roadmap that included country-specific activities supporting quick implementation of country programmes and reached broad

agreement on budgets and mechanisms for the provision of support agreed upon between participating countries and partners. The aim of the roadmap is to support the implementation of recommendations endorsed during the regional consultation, the establishment of an HIV in prisons partnership network and a declaration of commitment for West and Central Africa.

46. The regional consultation was held to support the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, especially with regard to national and regional evidence-based efforts against drug abuse and the inclusion of HIV/AIDS and drugs in educational sectors and prevention services.

B. National initiatives: main national integrated programmes on drugs and crime

47. The national integrated programmes against drug trafficking and organized crime developed jointly by UNODC with Governments constitute strategic and development frameworks for responding effectively to those threats in the subregion. The national integrated programmes are developed through a comprehensive and participatory approach. Since security and the rule of law are essential for sustainable development, the programmes are aimed at addressing issues related to the management of intelligence, at improving the effectiveness of and coordination among law enforcement entities, and at ensuring a functional and effective criminal justice system capable of responding to crime, including money-laundering and corruption. The development of national integrated programmes is in line with the objectives of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan. UNODC has started implementing such programmes in Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Mali, and is planning to finalize and launch additional programmes in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo in 2010.

Cape Verde

48. In collaboration with the inter-ministerial drug control committee and the Ministry of Justice of Cape Verde, UNODC is implementing an integrated drug control and crime prevention programme for Cape Verde. A large part of that programme is the Cape Verde anti-trafficking programme, which is aimed at enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies in Cape Verde to prevent and combat more effectively the scourge of drugs and organized crime. As part of the programme, joint anti-trafficking teams have been established at international airports, intelligence software has been provided to judicial police and other agencies, a state-of-the-art forensic laboratory has been established, a computer-based training classroom has been equipped, and the UNODC computer-based training software has been developed in Portuguese. An automated fingerprint identification system will become operational in Cape Verde in the near future. UNODC is extending the current programme on drugs and crime in the framework of the One United Nations initiative.

Guinea-Bissau

49. In Guinea-Bissau, no cocaine seizures have been reported during recent months. However, informal intelligence suggests that smuggling continues to take

place on many of the country's privately owned islands, with the use of aeroplanes, speedboats and other means. Moreover, clandestine laboratories for the production of drugs have been found in neighbouring Guinea. This new modus operandi exposes even more the territory of Guinea-Bissau to the interests of criminal groups and indicates that continued efforts are needed from national authorities and in particular law enforcement entities.

50. In 2008, UNODC started implementing the national anti-narcotic programme for Guinea-Bissau to prevent and combat drug trafficking to and from the country through the establishment of a specialized anti-narcotics unit. The programme aims to build the capacity of the judicial police and to enhance inter-agency and judiciary cooperation for effective law enforcement. Moreover, a specialized pool of judges and prosecutors is being set up to strengthen the work of the judiciary police using international legal tools for promoting cooperation. A third phase of the programme will follow, during which a police academy will be established, introducing large-scale training components, providing equipment and refurbishing prisons. In 2008, UNODC established a project office in Bissau with expert staff, including an anti-narcotic and organized crime adviser and a legal adviser placed within the Ministry of Justice.

51. During the first year and half of the programme's implementation in Guinea-Bissau, the country was in a turbulent political situation. President João Bernardo Vieira and the chief of the army were killed in March 2009, after which a presidential candidate and a former defence minister were assassinated. Elections took place and a government was established in late 2009. During that time, UNODC provided the judicial police with training, equipment and new premises, which were instrumental for providing initial assistance to the commission carrying out inquiries into the killings of the President and the chief of the army, in the areas of investigative operations, searches and case-building for prosecution. In the field of prison reform, UNODC will be completing, in the first quarter of 2010, the refurbishment of two prisons in the provinces and start reconstruction of a prison in Bissau. In the framework of South-South cooperation, the Government of Brazil developed jointly with UNODC and the Ministry of Justice of Guinea-Bissau a project on the creation of a training academy for security forces, to be launched in 2010.

52. A post for a policy adviser on anti-narcotics and organized crime has been established within the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, to be filled in January 2010. In the context of security sector reform in Guinea-Bissau, UNODC is working closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the implementation of police-related programmes.

Sierra Leone

53. In response to the growing concern about Sierra Leone being used to smuggle drugs from Latin America and the fact that such smuggling undermines democratic process and poses a real threat to security and stability in the country, in late 2009 UNODC launched, in the framework of the *Joint Vision for Sierra Leone of the*

United Nations Family,¹ a project on building the capacity of institutions to respond to the threat posed by drug trafficking and organized crime in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone is a priority country for UNODC in West Africa, in terms of peacebuilding and integrated, inter-agency programming.

54. UNODC activities in Sierra Leone, including the West Africa Coast Initiative, fall within the scope of the *Joint Vision for Sierra Leone* and are being implemented by UNODC as part of the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone to support national security forces. These initiatives support the important role of the Integrated Peacebuilding Office in a coherent manner and respond to the President of Sierra Leone's *Agenda for Change*, in which drug trafficking and corruption are identified as major risks for the country. The United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone has also secured two policy positions, one on law enforcement and the other on anti-corruption, which are being filled early in 2010. With regard to the issue of youth development and employment identified in the Joint Vision document, UNODC is providing assistance on drug demand reduction and HIV/AIDS prevention.

55. In 2009, UNODC assisted and contributed to the finalization of the Joint Vision document and to the Sierra Leone multi-donor trust fund document. The Joint Vision aims to provide a framework for the United Nations to fulfil the mandate it was given by the Security Council, as well as to support the work and pursue the goals of the Peacebuilding Commission. A key component of the Joint Vision is the Sierra Leone multi-donor trust fund, which aims to provide for a coherent and streamlined platform for resource mobilization, fund allocation and reporting of the programmatic priorities of the Joint Vision. The trust fund is consistent with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability, including with regard to national ownership, alignment with national priorities, harmonization and coordination. The trust fund also responds to the "Delivering as one" initiative (see A/61/583) and the Secretary General's efforts to improve the integration of political, development and humanitarian activities in the United Nations system through a network of integrated United Nations field offices.

Guinea

56. At the beginning of 2009, following the death of President Lansana Conté of Guinea, UNODC carried out an assessment mission to Conakry upon the request of the Department of Political Affairs and the interim authorities to assess the needs of the Government to implement the national strategy on drugs and crime, especially in connection to the drug trafficking-related arrests that had taken place following the death of President Lansana Conté (among those arrested were members of Conté's family). The main recommendation made by UNODC was to provide initial support to the current national commission in charge of combating drugs and crime under the framework of the United Nations presence in the country, by, for example, placing a law enforcement adviser to work within the United Nations country team, subject to the evolving political situation and security conditions.

¹ Available at <http://www.sierraleoneconference2009.org/docs/Joint%20Vision%20for%20Sierra%20Leone.pdf>.

57. In a letter dated 28 July 2009, the Permanent Representative of Guinea to the United Nations made an urgent appeal through the Secretary-General to the international community, and in particular to the relevant United Nations programmes and bodies, for the implementation of effective support for Guinea in relation to the discovery of large quantities of toxic chemicals at several sites in the country (A/64/227-S/2009/402). In response, UNODC carried out two technical missions, with experts from INTERPOL and other international organizations, in July and August. The overall objective was to confirm that illicit drug production activities were taking place at some of the sites visited and to identify the seized chemicals to facilitate safe disposal. UNODC provided its findings and recommendations to the interim authorities.

Sahel: Mali, Mauritania and Niger

58. In September 2009, UNODC launched an integrated national programme on drugs and crime for Mali. The objective of the programme is to improve the operational capacity of the Malian Government to avoid its territory being used by traffickers and organized criminals. Among the main components of such a programme is the inter-ministerial committee for drug control and organized crime and the enhancement of the operational capacities of law enforcement services and the financial intelligence unit. It is also envisaged that the programme will strengthen the legal framework and revitalize activities at the community level, as well as prevent crime and drug abuse.

59. UNODC has already finalized draft integrated programmes for Mauritania and Niger.

UNODC regional programme for West Africa

60. UNODC has developed a regional programme for West Africa that is supportive of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, to be launched in the first quarter of 2010. The regional programme has been developed in the context of a new generation of UNODC regional programmes for various parts of the world.

61. The overall objective of the regional programme is to contribute to and support the efforts of West African States, as well as those of regional organizations and civil society, to respond to evolving human security threats and to promote the rule of law and good governance. The programme aims at achieving clear outcomes that have tangible impacts as part of the implementation of the ECOWAS Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa. The programme is in line with the strategy for the period 2008-2011 for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/12, annex) and will establish the basis for providing support to the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

62. During the past few years, UNODC has raised concerns about key challenges to the socio-economic and political stability, as well as the security, of West Africa. Those challenges have required the sustained effort and continued attention of the United Nations and the wider international community. UNODC has been proactive

about contributing to efforts addressing issues such as drug trafficking and organized crime, both of which affect the development and security of the subregion.

63. UNODC is pleased to be working closely with the ECOWAS Commission, West African member States, its United Nations partners (including the United Nations Office for West Africa, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations), INTERPOL and the European Commission. Together, these entities have continued to raise awareness about the links between drug trafficking and peace and security in West Africa and to promote the need for decisive measures to be taken to address that problem in the region.

64. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs may wish to consider:

(a) Urging the international community to continue providing support to West Africa, reiterating that the subregion remains vulnerable to the threats posed by drug trafficking and organized crime;

(b) Welcoming the progress made in 2009 in support of the implementation of the ECOWAS Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in West Africa and the Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crimes and Drug Abuse in West Africa (2008-2011);

(c) Welcoming the outcome of the ECOWAS donor round table held in Vienna in December 2009, at which financial resources were pledged in support of the ECOWAS operational plan, the monitoring and evaluation mechanism and other initiatives for the subregion;

(d) Urging Member States to continue supporting the strengthening of the operational capacities of the ECOWAS Commission and the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan;

(e) Welcoming and supporting the ECOWAS monitoring and evaluation mechanism and reporting on progress made with regard to the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan (2009-2012), including at the level of the Security Council, in order to maintain the mobilization and assistance of Member States;

(f) Welcoming the international multidisciplinary approach adopted through the joint West Africa Coast Initiative in assisting the subregion and calling upon the international community to provide the resources necessary for implementing the Initiative;

(g) Supporting the joint West Africa Coast Initiative, including the component for the creation of transnational crime units for exchanging information and intelligence, cooperating across borders and using modern interdiction techniques in tackling drug smuggling groups;

(h) Urging Member States to support the subregion in the prevention and treatment of drug abuse and HIV/AIDS;

(i) Urging Member States to tackle the scourge of drug trafficking and organized crime at all stages (in source, transit and destination countries), to support transatlantic cooperation on the basis of a common and shared responsibility to

counter the world drug problem and to support relevant national, subregional and regional organizations and mechanisms;

(j) Calling the attention of Member States to the need of ensuring coordination among United Nations actions and partners and of enhancing the effectiveness of international and national efforts;

(k) Reminding Member States of their responsibility to comply with their obligation to combat drug trafficking and to thoroughly investigate and prosecute persons and entities involved in drug trafficking. Urging States not only to accede to international conventions but also to take appropriate measures to implement the provisions contained in those instruments;

(l) Urging Member States to take appropriate measures in fighting corruption and to secure adequate national budgets for national strategies on drugs and crime in line with the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan;

(m) Recalling the important collective effort and the contribution of Member States, regional and subregional organizations, civil society and other stakeholders in tackling drug trafficking;

(n) Calling for continued financial and technical assistance for West Africa;

(o) Requesting the Executive Director of UNODC to report to the Commission, at its fifty-fourth session, on progress achieved in the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan, as well as on other regional and national level initiatives supporting West African States in combating drug trafficking and organized crime.
