

17 October 2023

Original: English\*

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## **Report of the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Quito from 3 to 6 October 2023**

### **I. Matters calling for action by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs or brought to its attention**

#### **Recommendations adopted by the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean**

1. The participants in the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted a number of recommendations made by its working groups. Those recommendations are presented below.

##### **Issue 1. Regional and international cooperation to reduce illicit cultivation and production of drugs, including alternative development**

2. The following recommendations were made with regard to the topic entitled “Regional and international cooperation to reduce illicit cultivation and production of drugs, including alternative development”:

(a) In their alternative development programmes, Governments should not only address the needs of communities in rural areas affected by or at risk of the illicit cultivation of drug crops, but also those of people in less traditional settings;

(b) Alternative development strategies should be part of tailored, long-term, comprehensive, sustainable development-oriented and balanced drug control policies and programmes. They should be aimed at protecting and empowering women and people in vulnerable situations, including minorities, and should be developed and implemented with the participation of the affected populations;

(c) Governments should engage in efforts to establish national and international labels for the certification of alternative development products, with a view to supporting the commercial distribution of such products;

(d) Governments should pursue efforts to include alternative development programmes in broad and participatory development policies, with the participation

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\* Available only in English, French and Spanish, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.



of local communities. The programmes must be linked to the commitments that each country has made regarding the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Issue 2. Financial investigations in drug trafficking cases, and the role of cryptocurrencies in drug trafficking and related money-laundering**

3. The following recommendations were made with regard to the topic entitled “Financial investigations in drug trafficking cases, and the role of cryptocurrencies in drug trafficking and related money-laundering”:

(a) Governments should strengthen inter-agency cooperation at the national level, as well as law enforcement cooperation at the regional and international levels, with a view to addressing drug-related money-laundering and the criminal use of virtual assets in drug-related cases. This includes the exchange of information that would support law enforcement in the backtracking of financial flows along drug trafficking routes;

(b) Governments should provide specialized training on virtual wallets, the dark web and financial intelligence, as well as the use of technological tools to detect, trace and freeze virtual assets, to institutions responsible for investigating money-laundering;

(c) Governments should conduct assessments of their legal frameworks regarding virtual assets and, if necessary, develop, strengthen and further the implementation of such frameworks.

**Issue 3. Measures to counter the illicit manufacturing and diversion of precursor chemicals**

4. The following recommendations were made with regard to the topic entitled “Measures to counter the illicit manufacturing and diversion of precursor chemicals”:

(a) Governments are encouraged to strengthen and update their legal frameworks related to the control of chemical substances and precursors, as well as synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances. Governments should establish or nominate dedicated institutions responsible for carrying out controls of pre-precursors and designer precursors, especially those that have no recognized licit uses;

(b) Governments are encouraged to promote and strengthen public-public and public-private partnerships in order to more efficiently control chemical substances and precursors. They should also promote such partnerships for the final disposal of chemicals, taking into account biosafety, environmental impact and cost-efficiency;

(c) Governments are encouraged to continue strengthening their national institutions through specialized technical capacity-building, including on operational interdiction processes, criminal investigation, forensics, the safe handling of detected chemicals and customs management.

**Issue 4. The link between drugs and the environment**

5. The following recommendations were made with regard to the topic entitled “The link between drugs and the environment”:

(a) Member States should strengthen the collaboration between national institutions and with the private sector, for example, through inter-agency technical groups;

(b) Member States should mainstream environmental considerations into the development and implementation of drug policies and regulations;

(c) Multidisciplinary studies on the direct and indirect environmental impact of drugs, including air pollution, deforestation and consumption of energy, land and water, should be conducted to support countries in the development of evidence-based policy approaches tailored to national and subnational contexts.

## II. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation in addressing and countering the world drug problem

6. At its first and second meetings, on 3 October 2023, the Meeting considered item 3 of its agenda, entitled “Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation in addressing and countering the world drug problem”. For its consideration of the item, the Meeting had before it the report of the Secretariat on the world situation with regard to drug trafficking (E/CN.7/2023/5) and the report of the Secretariat on the current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation (UNODC/HONLAC/31/3). In addition, country reports on drug trafficking trends had been submitted by Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), France, Italy, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Spain, Türkiye, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (UNODC/HONLAC/31/CRP.1–13) by 4 August 2023. After that date, country reports had been submitted by Colombia, Honduras and Trinidad and Tobago (UNODC/HONLAC/31/CRP.14–16).

7. A representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) introduced the item and made a presentation on regional drug trafficking trends and the activities undertaken by UNODC to address the world drug problem in the region. The representatives of Colombia, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Cuba, Brazil, Ecuador, Germany, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Türkiye, Peru, Nicaragua, Guyana and Chile made statements.

8. Many speakers reported on current drug trafficking trends in their countries, including the increase in the production and consumption of drugs, the dynamic developments in drug trafficking methods since the onset of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, new trafficking routes within the region and between the region and Europe, the detection of new psychoactive substances and the increase in seizures of synthetic drugs. Speakers also reported on novel methods of concealment and transport of drugs, for example, the delivery of drugs pertaining to different owners by one transporter and the increased use of clandestine airstrips. Investigation results relating to current trends in the structure of organized crime groups and the distribution of labour among them were explained. Some speakers also reported on the close interrelationships between organized crime groups and communities, as well as legitimate businesses.

9. Reference was made to the three international drug control treaties and the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime as constituting the cornerstone for addressing and countering the world drug problem. A number of speakers reiterated their countries’ commitment to accelerating the implementation of all international commitments to address the world drug problem and made reference to the upcoming midterm review in 2024.

10. Some speakers presented updates on their drug policies and recent legislative reforms, including national scheduling efforts. The fundamental role of demand reduction in addressing the world drug problem, including also drug trafficking, was highlighted. A number of speakers made reference to their countries’ drug policies based on health-oriented approaches. Furthermore, a number of speakers reported on their countries’ efforts to prevent drug use and drug use disorders, for example, through innovative education programmes developed and implemented in cooperation with universities and prisons.

11. Many speakers reported on their countries’ efforts to reduce the drug supply by strengthening national law enforcement agencies and their coordination with other institutions. They reported statistics on increased seizures of drugs, as well as on related seizures, such as seizures of arms and precursors, and the freezing of funds suspected to be proceeds of drug trafficking. In addition, many speakers mentioned efforts to address specific methods of drug trafficking, especially trafficking by sea and air, and referred to related efforts to strengthen container and airport control.

12. It was underlined that the ultimate goal of drug trafficking investigations was to dismantle organized crime groups and confiscate their assets. A number of speakers referred to specialized investigative methods to identify organized crime groups and their leaders, as well as related “follow the money” investigations. The close link between drug trafficking and corruption was underlined, and some speakers referred to their countries’ anti-corruption efforts in the context of anti-drug trafficking operations, for example, investigations of public officials collaborating with organized crime groups.

13. A number of speakers referred to their countries’ measures to reduce the illicit cultivation, production and manufacture of drugs, which included alternative development programmes. The environmental impact of such cultivation, production and manufacture was highlighted, as was the role of prevention.

14. Many speakers presented examples of cases in which regional and international cooperation had yielded positive results in law enforcement operations. Joint operations were referred to, in particular those related to trafficking by sea and air. Some speakers referred to the posting of liaison officers in other countries. A number of speakers also referred to cooperation through the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation and the Police Community of the Americas and to specialized initiatives such as the Conference on Regional Interoperability among Latin American and Caribbean Countries in Airspace Surveillance and Security, initiated by Mexico, and cooperation under the European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats. A number of speakers also referred to assistance in their countries’ efforts received at the international level, including from UNODC.

### **III. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirtieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean**

15. At its 2nd meeting, on 3 October 2023, the Meeting considered item 4 of its agenda, entitled “Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirtieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean”. The Meeting had before it a note by Secretariat ([UNODC/HONLAC/31/4](#)) providing information on the replies by Member States to a questionnaire sent to all States participating in the Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean. Replies to the questionnaire had been made available to participants of the Thirty-first Meeting on a dedicated web page. Replies had been submitted by the Governments of Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Ecuador, France, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Spain, Türkiye, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) by 4 August 2023. After that date, responses to the questionnaire had been received from Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Honduras, Paraguay and Trinidad and Tobago.

16. The Secretary of the Meeting introduced the item.

17. The Chair of the Meeting provided an overview of the recommendations adopted by the Thirtieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, with regard to four topics: (a) trends in drug trafficking and concealment methods, and in intelligence-led international cooperation; (b) synthetic drug production and trafficking, including the safe handling and disposal of synthetic drugs and their precursors; (c) alternatives to conviction or punishment for drug-related offences; and (d) exchange of actionable intelligence and the role of regional cooperation platforms in facilitating such exchange.

18. Statements were made by the representatives of Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Cuba, Panama, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Brazil.

19. The Meeting discussed action taken by Governments to implement the recommendations adopted by the Thirtieth Meeting.

20. One speaker reported on recent efforts undertaken in her country to enhance intelligence-led international cooperation and strengthen the exchange of information between national institutions and at the international level. She described measures taken to guarantee the fluid flow of information between national investigation institutions and referred to cooperation agreements between law enforcement authorities and their counterparts in a number of other countries. To improve intelligence-led international cooperation, it was proposed to create a mechanism to further the exchange of information between national institutions in different countries and to strengthen existing mechanisms in that regard.

21. Several speakers provided information on new measures and updated protocols regarding the safe handling, storage and disposal of synthetic drugs and their precursors. Specific mention was made of synthetic opioids. One speaker provided statistics on the disposal of chemicals. The fundamental role of interinstitutional cooperation and specialized training in that regard was underlined.

22. Speakers reported on dynamic developments regarding their countries' legislation on alternatives to conviction or punishment for drug-related offences. One speaker underlined that the legislation in his country always provided for punitive sanctions, even for smaller drug-related offences, and stated that the deterrent aspect had yielded positive results in his country. However, he explained that in such cases the legislation did not provide for imprisonment but rather community-based service or other non-custodial sanctions. Another speaker reported that, in accordance with a recently enacted reform, a differentiated set of measures could be imposed in addition to non-custodial sanctions, depending on the type of drug use disorder and the situation of the perpetrator. Another speaker reported on a recent legislative project developed on the basis of a recent national strategy entailing alternatives to imprisonment for small farmers and treatment strategies for young people. One speaker reported on the recent creation of interdisciplinary drug treatment courts consisting of specialized judges, psychologists, psychiatrists, medical doctors, and prosecution and special investigation officers. In those courts, young persons could benefit from a suspension of their sentence and, instead of receiving a criminal sanction, could participate in a broad range of rehabilitation programmes that often also addressed their families. Under the relevant legislation, special rules applied to persons who relapse into drug use disorders, with a view to avoiding their exclusion from the programmes.

23. A number of speakers underlined the importance of information exchange and of related regional and international cooperation platforms in facilitating such exchange to disrupt criminal networks. They also referred to programmes such as the UNODC-World Customs Organization (WCO) Container Control Programme and provided updates on their implementation. One speaker reported on a recent project carried out in cooperation with UNODC to address corruption in a specialized anti-narcotics police force. One speaker provided information on a regional police cooperation centre for the 24/7 exchange of operational information, which had recently been expanded through the placement of police officers from Europe.

#### **IV. Consideration of topics by working groups**

24. At its 3rd to 6th meetings, on 4 and 5 October, the Meeting established working groups to examine four topics under agenda item 5, entitled "Consideration of topics by working groups". The observations of the working groups are set out below. (For the recommendations made by the working groups and adopted by the Meeting, see sect. I above.)

## Observations of the working groups

### **Issue 1. Regional and international cooperation to reduce illicit cultivation and production of drugs, including alternative development**

25. The working group on issue 1 met during the 3rd meeting, held on 4 October. In its consideration of the issue, the working group made the following observations:

(a) The volume and area of illicit cultivation of coca and cannabis continue to increase in many countries, with exceptions. This increases the pressure to invest in national control measures both in cultivating countries and in transit countries. Prevention is an important part of alternative development strategies, especially in non-cultivating countries;

(b) To be successful, alternative development must generate the conditions for a transition from illicit to licit activities;

(c) South-South programmes are active, both at the operational level with regard to eradication and alternative development and for the exchange of experience and lessons learned;

(d) Reliable market access is a requirement for the economic success of all products and services stemming from alternative development efforts. Efforts for labels and certifications are made at both the national and international levels;

(e) Some countries have initiated programmes to commercialize coca-based products, industrial hemp or cannabidiol;

(f) Access to land and land titles are necessary requirements of an alternative development strategy, and small farmers are generally important beneficiaries of alternative development programmes;

(g) The positive environmental impact of alternative development contributes to more sustainable economies, and environmental considerations should be part of the planning and implementation of any alternative development programme;

(h) Governments should carry out geopolitical studies on and monitor the dynamics and socioeconomic and environmental impacts of enclaves of cultivation, production and trafficking of cocaine controlled by irregular armed groups based in border zones.

### **Issue 2. Financial investigations in drug trafficking cases, and the role of cryptocurrencies in drug trafficking and related money-laundering**

26. The working group on issue 2 met during the 4th meeting, held on 4 October. In its consideration of the issue, the working group made the following observations:

(a) Money-laundering investigations should ultimately not only be aimed at the seizure, freezing and confiscation of proceeds of crime, but also at the dismantling of criminal organizations. Parallel investigations into predicate offences and money-laundering are important for avoiding the loss of evidence and allowing for timely seizure and freezing; the involvement of accounting specialists from the beginning is important in this regard. Backtracking investigations after seizures should be undertaken regularly. Enhanced specialized training on financial investigations and asset confiscation is necessary;

(b) International cooperation is paramount to successful financial investigations, especially close coordination in backtracking investigations that work back to the source of drug trafficking routes. The establishment of joint investigation teams has contributed to success in international money-laundering investigations;

(c) The countries of the region have encountered the use of cryptocurrencies in a number of different money-laundering schemes. The schemes included regular high-volume transactions, as well as low-volume transfers of proceeds of

microtrafficking through brokers, and the frequent changing of regular bank accounts that are shut down immediately after their use, supposedly because the assets are exchanged for cryptocurrency to prevent them from being traced by authorities;

(d) Some countries of the region have experience in the freezing and confiscation of cryptocurrencies. In some countries, law enforcement authorities have virtual wallets for the freezing of cryptocurrency assets;

(e) Countries of the region have successfully used special investigative techniques, including undercover agents, in money-laundering and cryptocurrency investigations. Controlled delivery of cryptocurrencies has also been used in some cases;

(f) In a number of countries, investigators do not have the authority or capacity to access encrypted communication platforms. This increases the need for risky investigation methods such as physical surveillance. Communication devices often store valuable information; therefore their seizure is an important step;

(g) It would be important to map the capacities of countries in the region with regard to novel challenges such as cryptocurrencies at the regional level. Increased efforts for the training of law enforcement officials, including both front-line officers and decision makers, on freezing cryptocurrency and securing digital evidence are necessary. Investment in technological equipment can be important for advancing investigation capacity;

(h) Inter-agency cooperation, especially between prosecution offices and police forces, is of key importance, including in international cooperation networks and in training efforts;

(i) Research and knowledge on the use of artificial intelligence for money-laundering, as well as the training of officials to address the possible use of artificial intelligence for money-laundering, are still insufficient.

### **Issue 3. Measures to counter the illicit manufacturing and diversion of precursor chemicals**

27. The working group on issue 3 met during the 5th meeting, held on 5 October 2023. In its consideration of the issue, the working group made the following observations:

(a) Countries of the region have different kinds of active mechanisms in place for the scheduling of chemicals, including the scheduling of precursors, pre-precursors and dual-use chemicals. They are working to continuously expand and diversify their schedules, with a view to keeping abreast of new precursors, pre-precursors and other chemicals used for drug production. Countries also keep lists of relevant companies for cooperation and oversight purposes;

(b) Forensic laboratories, early warning systems and drug observatories have a key role in the detection of new chemical substances. Further strengthening of their capacities and further work to strengthen the information flow between them are necessary;

(c) In a number of countries, specialized inter-agency technical groups or specialized units are working on the identification and handling of precursors and pre-precursors. They include institutions that maintain an active dialogue with private sector entities, with a view to sharing information and encouraging enhanced control measures when necessary. Private businesses often lack information on the illicit use of the chemicals that are part of their business operations. Inter-agency groups are also in place in some countries for the detection and control of new psychoactive substances;

(d) Border and customs control posts at land borders, ports and airports are key elements for controlling chemicals in national territories. The control of the international trade in chemical substances is a shared responsibility of the exporting

and importing countries. In that regard, pre-export notifications play a key role in enabling countries to cooperate in the control of chemicals used for drug production. Some countries of the region conduct integrated, comprehensive controls over the production, trade and disposal chain relating to both scheduled and non-scheduled chemicals used for drug production. Technical assistance has been provided under, inter alia, the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme, the Airport Communication Programme and the UNODC global programme on strengthening criminal justice cooperation along trafficking routes (CRIMJUST);

(e) Countries have strengthened their efforts for the final disposal of seized drugs and psychotropic substances. For example, they have increased their incineration capacities and have created protocols between State institutions and municipalities for smooth and agile disposal procedures and related documentation processes. The advantages of the novel technique of encapsulation of cocaine and heroin in building concrete were presented, in particular the fast disposal, the low environmental impact and the impossibility of again extracting any psychoactive substance. The technique had been developed in cooperation with the Solutions, Training and Advice for Narcotics Disposal programme of UNODC.

#### **Issue 4. The link between drugs and the environment**

28. The working group on issue 4 met during the 6th meeting, held on 5 October 2023. In its consideration of the issue, the working group made the following observations:

(a) Drug cultivation, production and trafficking have deep and lasting impacts on the environment in the region;

(b) Coca, cannabis and opium poppy cultivation are on the rise in a number of countries, not only in traditional cultivation areas but also increasingly in protected and Indigenous areas. Drug crop cultivation is one of the significant drivers of deforestation and results in a loss of biodiversity and productive land, as well as erosion. The excessive use of pesticides in drug crop cultivation has led to the desertification of the soil and affected fish and other wildlife;

(c) Drug production in clandestine laboratories and drug crop cultivation are often carried out in the same areas. The residual waste of drug laboratories is often released into land habitats and rivers. Both for drug production and trafficking, the jungle is cleared and burned and unauthorized transport routes, communication infrastructure, clandestine airstrips and illegal border crossings are built, thereby increasingly causing environmental damage. Moreover, drug trafficking and illegal mining are closely related, as, among other reasons, drug traffickers use illegally mined precious metals as a means of money-laundering;

(d) The environmental harm caused by the illicit drug economy has an immediate impact on people and their right to sustainable livelihoods. Indigenous and other communities have been displaced. Erosion leads to the increased vulnerability of communities in cases of natural disasters. Deforestation, desertification, soil surface sealing and the destruction of parts of the Amazon rainforest have a direct impact on the climate crisis and thereby on all humankind. People in drug cultivation, production and transportation areas are often impacted by violence, conflict, forced labour, lack of alternative opportunities, sexual exploitation and inadequate labour conditions, including insufficient protection of the health of workers and payment in drugs instead of salaries;

(e) Countries in the region have invested in projects to recover ecosystems. Furthermore, alternative development programmes, as discussed by the working group on issue 1, can help communities to transition back into sustainable livelihoods, help to relocate communities and offer them opportunities in, for example, agriculture and ecotourism. This requires comprehensive cooperation between the public and private sectors and the support of international cooperation organizations;



(f) Scientific research on the connections between illicit drug economies and crimes that affect the environment is a relatively limited and recent effort. UNODC has supported countries in studying the environmental impacts of drug cultivation, production and trafficking through, inter alia, satellite technology.

## **V. Follow-up to the implementation at the national, regional and international levels of all commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the world drug problem**

29. At its 7th meeting, on 6 October 2023, the Meeting considered agenda item 6, entitled “Follow-up to the implementation at the national, regional and international levels of all commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the world drug problem”.

30. For its consideration of the item, the Meeting had before it the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”, and the Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of Our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem.

31. The Secretary of the Meeting made an introductory statement. Statements were made by the representatives of Colombia, Cuba, Peru and Ecuador.

32. Reference was made to the outcome document of the Latin American and Caribbean Conference on Drugs, held in Santiago de Cali, Colombia, from 7 to 9 September 2023 (the Cali declaration). It was highlighted that the conference had been preceded by a regional reflection process and that the Cali declaration, as a non-binding document, provided guidance on the regional situation regarding the world drug problem and expressed the political commitment of the participating Governments. The context of the midterm review of the progress made in implementing all international drug policy commitments, to be held in 2024, and the Ministerial Declaration of 2019 was highlighted, and it was noted that the Cali declaration, in its paragraph 6, made reference to the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly.

33. It was suggested that the Cali declaration, as well as the International Guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy, should be considered by the Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, under the agenda item on the follow-up to the implementation at the national, regional and international levels of all commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the world drug problem.

## **VI. Organization of the Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean**

34. At its 7th meeting, on 6 October, the Meeting considered item 7 of its agenda, entitled “Organization of the Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean”. The participants had before them for their consideration a note by the Secretariat ([UNODC/HONLAC/31/5](#)).

35. The participants were informed that the Thirty-second Meeting was scheduled to be held in 2024. Statements were made by the representatives of the Plurinational

State of Bolivia, Colombia, Brazil, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, Cuba, Chile, Ecuador, Panama and Spain.

36. The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia expressed his country's readiness to host the Thirty-second Meeting. The representative of Colombia expressed his country's readiness to host the Thirty-third Meeting.

37. The following were proposed as topics to be considered by the working groups of the Thirty-second Meeting under item 6 of the provisional agenda: (a) demand reduction, including prevention and other health-related policies; (b) the socioeconomic dimension of drugs, including alternative development; (c) the structure, organization and modus operandi of organized crime groups in the region; (d) the business model of drug trafficking at the regional and global levels; (e) the increasing strength of organized crime groups among migrants; (f) institutions to collect and share intelligence on organized crime groups; (g) urban crime and organized criminal groups linked to drug trafficking; (h) the operations of organized crime groups linked to drug trafficking in border areas; and (i) drugs and human rights, including the International Guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy.

38. The following draft provisional agenda for the Thirty-second Meeting was approved as orally revised:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation in addressing and countering the world drug problem.
4. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.
5. Follow-up to the implementation at the national, regional and international levels of all commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the world drug problem, and discussion of the outcome documents of the high-level segment of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in March 2024, with a view to strengthening the follow-up to all commitments as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019.
6. Consideration of topics by working groups.
7. Organization of the Thirty-third Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the report of the Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.

## VII. Other business

39. At the same meeting, the Meeting considered agenda item 8, entitled "Other business".

40. Under this agenda item, the representative of Colombia encouraged the participation of States as observers in the meetings of heads of national drug law enforcement agencies in other regions.

## VIII. Adoption of the report of the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean

41. Also at its 7th meeting, the Meeting adopted its draft report ([UNODC/HONLAC/31/L.1](#) and Add.1–6), including the reports of the working groups and the recommendations contained therein, as orally revised.

## IX. Organization of the Meeting

### A. Opening and duration of the Meeting

42. The Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, was held in Quito from 3 to 6 October 2023. The Meeting was opened on 3 October 2023. In an opening ceremony, welcoming remarks were made by the Executive Director of UNODC (through a video message), the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of Ecuador and the Minister of the Interior of Ecuador. In the following opening session, the Meeting was addressed by the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its sixty-sixth session (through a video message), the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system in Ecuador, the Deputy Regional Representative of UNODC for the Andean Region and the Southern Cone, and the Chair of the Thirtieth Meeting of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Executive Secretary of the Commission against Drug Addiction and Trafficking of Guatemala.

### B. Attendance

43. The following States members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean were represented: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Guatemala, Guyana, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

44. Australia, Belgium and the Russian Federation were represented by observers.

45. The Organization of American States was also represented by an observer.

46. UNODC served as the secretariat of the Meeting.

### C. Election of officers

47. At its 1st meeting, on 3 October 2023, the Meeting elected the following officers by acclamation:

<i>Chair:</i>	Francisco Javier Páez Rodríguez (Ecuador)
<i>First Vice-Chair:</i>	Jaime Mamani Espíndola (Plurinational State of Bolivia)
<i>Second Vice-Chair:</i>	Edna Patricia Cepeda Morales (Mexico)
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	James G. Singh (Guyana)

## **D. Adoption of the agenda**

48. At the same meeting, the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation in addressing and countering the world drug problem.
4. Implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirtieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.
5. Consideration of topics by working groups:
  - (a) Regional and international cooperation to reduce illicit cultivation and production of drugs, including alternative development;
  - (b) Financial investigations in drug trafficking cases, and the role of cryptocurrencies in drug trafficking and related money-laundering;
  - (c) Measures to counter the illicit manufacturing and diversion of precursor chemicals;
  - (d) The link between drugs and the environment.
6. Follow-up to the implementation at the national, regional and international levels of all commitments, as reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, to address and counter the world drug problem.
7. Organization of the Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the report of the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean.

## **E. Documentation**

49. The documents before the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean, are listed in the annex.

## **X. Closure of the Meeting**

50. A representative of UNODC made a statement. The Commander General of the National Police of Ecuador made a statement. The Chair of the Meeting made a statement and closed the meeting.

## Annex

### List of documents before the Thirty-first Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean

<i>Document number</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Title or description</i>
<a href="#">UNODC/HONLAC/31/1</a>	2	Provisional agenda, annotations
<a href="#">UNODC/HONLAC/31/2</a>	3	Note by the Secretariat transmitting the report of the Secretariat on the world situation with regard to drug trafficking
<a href="#">E/CN.7/2023/5</a>	3	Report of the Secretariat on the world situation with regard to drug trafficking
<a href="#">UNODC/HONLAC/31/3</a>	3	Report of the Secretariat on the current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation
<a href="#">UNODC/HONLAC/31/4</a>	4	Note by the Secretariat on the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Thirtieth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean
<a href="#">UNODC/HONLAC/31/5</a>	7	Note by the Secretariat on the organization of the of the Thirty-second Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Latin America and the Caribbean
<a href="#">UNODC/HONLAC/31/L.1 and Add.1–6</a>	9	Draft report
<a href="#">UNODC/HONLAC/31/CRP.1–16</a>	3	Country reports