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Subject:	Country report on Mozambique

1. OVERVIEW

1. This report provides an update to the assessment issued in December 2011 by the Mini-Dublin Group in Mozambique.
2. Mozambique is a growing concern for international counter-narcotics agencies. Its long and porous land and sea borders, and lack of control over its ports of entry, make the country an attractive transit route for illegal trafficking of goods, drugs and people. The country is recognised as a southern African transit point for South Asian hashish, heroin and other opiates. Increasingly it is a trafficking route for cocaine originating from South America that is mainly destined for European and South African markets. Domestic drug abuse is low, but growing, and there is widespread use of locally cultivated cannabis. Although, this is not produced for export.

3. Evidence of a determined Government commitment to combat trafficking is limited, although the Government is increasingly aware of the challenges posed by illegal migration and people trafficking. In general terms, Mozambican law enforcement agencies lack capacity to tackle narcotics trafficking and the Government's focal point for counter-narcotics efforts, the Mozambican Drug Prevention Agency (Gabinete Central de Prevencao e Combate a Droga - GCPCD) is under-resourced to tackle the issues. However, since the release of the June 2011 Mini-Dublin Group report, there has been a marked increase in cocaine seizures at Maputo International airport, totalling over 40 kgs. In June 2010, US President Barack Obama identified prominent Mozambican businessman, Mohamed Bachir Suleman as a drug kingpin (pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act). Following investigations, in September 2011 Mozambique's Attorney-General's office announced there was insufficient evidence of his involvement in drug trafficking.
4. There are a small number of donor-funded counter-narcotics projects, although UNODC is exploring options to run a country-specific programme in Mozambique. However, without evidence of high-level commitment to tackle drug trafficking, and progress on making significant drug seizures and prosecutions, as well as strengthening efforts to stamp out corruption in law enforcement agencies, it will be difficult for donors, at this stage, to justify commitment beyond operational-focused counter-narcotics projects.

2. GENERAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

5. With more than 2,000km of coastline and porous borders, Mozambique has long been an attractive route for illicit trafficking networks. However, there is limited data available making it difficult to assess fully the scale of illegal drug flows. Reports suggest that due to weak and under-resourced law enforcement bodies, poorly trained (and possibly corrupt) law enforcement officers and weak border management procedures, criminal networks can transit Mozambique relatively easily. South Asian traffickers ship, inter alia, heroin, opiates and cannabis resin through Mozambique often using small fishing dhows to deliver the illicit cargo to a point of entry. Shipments typically transit India, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates and Tanzania before arriving in Mozambique and onwards to South Africa and then European markets.

6. There are reports of South American cocaine entering the country, either by “drug mules” or in shipping containers, before transiting to South Africa and European markets. President Barack Obama’s identification of wealthy Mozambican businessman Mohammed Bachir Suleman as a drugs kingpin (under the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act) pushed drugs trafficking up the political agenda. In September 2011, the Government of Mozambique completed its own investigations on Suleman. While the Government of Mozambique found insufficient evidence of drug trafficking, it found extensive tax, customs and foreign exchange violations, and has commenced administrative action against him for back-payment of taxes and fines.
7. There are increasing concerns that human traffickers and illegal migrants are exploiting the same weaknesses as narcotics traffickers. There has also been an increase of mostly Somali and Ethiopian asylum-seekers crossing the border from Tanzania into the northern Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado and there are some concerns that Mozambique is not meeting its obligations under international refugee and asylum law. UNHCR and IOM are closely monitoring the situation and providing assistance. There are also acute maritime security concerns after Somali pirates captured a Mozambican-registered fishing vessel in December 2010. Off-shore energy exploration and fishing companies are deploying counter-piracy security measures, and as part of a South African counter-piracy initiative, the South African Navy has deployed a frigate in the Mozambican channel.

2.1. General Drugs Situation

8. Official drug seizures are low (see also below). According to GCPCD in their 2010 report on counter-narcotics activities (passed to the Mozambican Council of Ministers in March 2011), the quantity of hashish seized was just over 10 kgs, a significant fall compared with 2009 (2,930 kgs). The GCPCD also reports the seizure in 2010 of 4 kgs of cocaine (down from 6 kgs in 2009), a mere 5g of heroin (down from 4.4 kgs in 2009) and 3,252 kilos of cannabis (up from last year’s figure of 2,619 kgs). Figures for 2011 have not yet been made available to the Group. The above seizure figures highlight the limited capacity that Mozambique law enforcement has in investigating international organised crime groups trafficking narcotics. The seizure figures are at variance with intelligence that suggests that during 2010 multi-ton shipments of cocaine, heroin and cannabis resin were landed in Mozambique for onward transportation to consumption countries in Europe and North America.

These figures are borne out by a number of multi-kilo seizure and arrest operations in 2010 that have taken place in South Africa, UK and Canada involving all three commodities. And in May 2011, for example, a load of over 800 kg of cocaine concealed in shipping containers was interdicted in Paraguay whilst en route to Mozambique (UNODC/IMO). There is evidence of the existence of clandestine synthetic drugs laboratories using precursors from India.

2.2. Production/Demand

9. The local cultivation of cannabis remains a major pre-occupation for the Mozambican authorities and GCPCD figures underscore that the plant is cultivated and consumed in all 11 Mozambican provinces. GCPCD reports cannabis seizures in all provinces especially in Tete (1,381 kg), Cabo Delgado (690kg), Nampula (395kg) and Manica (218kgs). GCPCD's 2010 figures report that 140 people were detained for drug trafficking of which 33 were convicted which represents a fall compared to 2009. In terms of drug consumption, 300 people were detained of which 102 were convicted. In 2010, police destroyed nearly 3,000 kgs of cannabis sativa, 3.7kgs of cocaine and 5g of heroin.

2.3. Eradication activities/counter-trafficking efforts

10. To date, Mozambique has invested little in supporting indigenous counter-narcotics efforts. Despite open enthusiasm for increased resources and training amongst operational staff, there is little evidence of high-level co-operation. In July 2011 the Mozambican Prime Minister requested a meeting with the Mini-Dublin Group to discuss the national anti-drugs strategy and requested inputs, which was an encouraging signal. The Prime Minister was, however, replaced in a re-shuffle in early October, and the level of his successor's engagement is yet to be discovered.
11. In 2001, the Interior Ministry established a 45-strong anti-narcotics brigade within the Interior Ministry's Criminal Investigation Department (Policia Investigacao Criminal, PIC), but the number has dwindled to 35; the central element of this unit being located in Maputo and comprising just 5 personnel. The remainder (30 people) are spread amongst the provinces without easy access to official PIC cars or rapid drug detection kits.

Officers often have to use personal vehicles to perform their duties, or borrow cars from other units. In the absence of intelligence gathering capabilities and an adequate criminal intelligence infrastructure, it is almost impossible for the anti-drugs unit (or PIC more generally) to develop intelligence-led investigations (UNODC/IMO needs assessment report 2012).

12. The GCPCD is the focal point for drug prevention initiatives with a focus largely on treatment, prevention, education and data collection. The GCPCD has a small number of officers seconded from PIC and staff from the Attorney General's office. It has responsibility for collecting and collating figures relating to drugs trafficking and consumption, but no law enforcement function. It has trained some 35,000 anti-drug activists who have run awareness-raising events to some 755,000 beneficiaries. But the GCPCD lacks sufficient resources to take a more proactive role. The agency's director continually complains that his team lacks the skills and equipment to do more. Similarly, PIC lacks the resources and specialised training to disrupt drug trafficking networks. A lack of resources, coupled with limited high-level political commitment (although the Prime Minister's request for Mini-Dublin Group input – as noted above – was welcome) has led to weak counter-narcotics interventions. However, a series of recent arrests of narcotics "mules" at Maputo's international airport, and the suspension of several customs and police officers on duty there, does suggest heightened commitment to fight narcotics trafficking. In addition, in 2011, Mozambique's Attorney-General recognised the country had become a drugs "corridor" and called for law enforcement agencies to increase efforts to tackle the issues.

2.4. National Drug Strategy/Legislation

13. The GCPCD launched a new anti-drug strategy in 2010 following a period of consultation with stakeholders including civil society groups. The updated strategy, and its implementation plan, will cover the period 2011-2014. The plan is based on key pillars which are:
 - Institutional development;
 - Management and coordination to prevent and combat drug trafficking and consumption;
 - Treatment and social integration of drug addicts;

- Investigative research on drug related issues;
- International cooperation;

14. The plan's implementation will require investment in capacity building, particularly in the areas of training and equipment. The GCPCD has regional offices in all 11 Mozambican provinces and works closely with law enforcement bodies. UNODC has undertaken an inter-agency rapid needs assessment (between designated UN agencies and donor partners) to prepare a more concrete implementation plan for the strategy. The assessment identifies specific capacity building needs and the Government of Mozambique's timelines for its strategy is to be aligned to dovetail with the UNODC recommendations. It is expected that the final draft strategy along with the needs assessment/implementation plan will be presented at the highest government level for approval at the end of 2012. It should be noted that funding will be required to assist the Mozambican Government in its implementation.

15. A comprehensive package of anti-corruption legislation was approved by the Council of Ministers in September 2011 and sent to Parliament in October, including new provisions on trafficking in influence, illegal enrichment, diversion of funds, as well as enhanced prosecution powers, whistle-blower protection, and declaration of assets requirements. Parliament subsequently approved some provisions (including the Public Integrity Bill), but others (eg Bill on the Code of Ethics in Public Service) may be delayed until 2014. The 1997 Mozambican anti-money laundering act states that the laundering of the proceeds of illicit drug trafficking is subject to a prison sentence of between 8 and 20 years. The Law was revised in 2002 to include other criminal activity. Mozambique has recourse to other domestic anti-money laundering legislation, including the Anti-Corruption Act and the Foreign Exchange Law.

16. Mozambique has signed and ratified international legal instruments on money laundering, inter alia the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime; bilateral agreements on counter-narcotics with Brazil and Portugal and adheres to SADC protocols. Under the Banking Act, the Banking Supervision Department may co-operate with any foreign banking supervision authority to investigate suspicious transactions. Mozambique is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

17. There is an apparent lack of detailed regulations on controlled precursors to ensure full compliance with international and INCB (International Narcotics Control Board) standards. Existing controls and checks for the importation, storage, use and exportation of precursor chemicals are conducted by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and by the Customs Service, with an apparent reliance on the honesty of the importing and processing companies regarding what has been produced with these precursor chemicals. There is also a lack of qualified chemists able to verify the reports of the importers and processing companies. MIC officers have never detected any cases of diversion of regulated precursor chemicals into unregulated markets.

3. BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL COUNTER-NARCOTICS PROGRAMMES

18. Based on the recommendation from the Mini Dublin Group in December 2011, a needs assessment was conducted in February 2012, jointly between experts from UNODC, IOM and UK/SOCA. The rapid assessment covered both law enforcement/trafficking as well as drug demand reduction and focused on identifying priority areas of interventions. The reports from the assessment were presented to the Mini Dublin Group in May 2012. Members of the Group welcomed the assessment reports, expressed appreciation for the information presented and supported the recommendations made with particular emphasis on some immediate ‘quick-fix’ areas of intervention including police training as well as container control.

19. Subsequently, experts from UNODC conducted another visit to Mozambique in August 2012, introducing the container control programme to the Government of Mozambique. A detailed report on the container control visit has been shared with the Government of Mozambique In September 2012 and further consultations are currently being held with relevant Government departments as well as donors.

20. In addition to the container control programme, and based on the outcome of the assessment, UNODC developed a number of proposals including for drug demand reduction as well as support in anti-corruption. Donor interest has been expressed for both proposals and implementation is expected to start in early 2013 subject to availability of funding.

21. The US will continue to strengthen efforts to combat narcotics-trafficking. Twelve police officers attended a course in basic drug investigations at the International Law Enforcement Academy in Botswana in September 2011. The US Mission also plans training to improve capabilities of Mozambican border guards, investigative organs, and other enforcement agents. Physical assets such as 17 rigid hull inflatable boats provided by the US government to the Mozambican military, and follow-on training programmes, should also assist to enhance Mozambique's ability to secure its maritime borders against transnational threats, including narcotics-trafficking.
22. Portugal provided training for migration and customs officers and the Portuguese Institute of Drug and Drug Addiction has developed close cooperation with the GCPCD. Portugal has also developed close links with PIC and is supporting efforts to improve the capabilities of the Mozambican police in the area of criminal investigation. The EU Delegation is implementing a Euro 9 million institutional development programme with the Interior Ministry. Spain is in the process of donating a Navy patrol vessel along with providing training to Mozambican marines. In September 2011, Italy funded 20 Mozambican customs officials to attend training in Italy. France has supported an international conference on chemical precursors in South Africa. The United Kingdom plans to provide targeted training to the criminal investigation police as well as supporting a small prosecutorial assistance project with the Attorney-General's office.
23. The UK is also lobbying the Mozambican government to encourage it to participate in the Regional Anti-Piracy Prosecution & Intelligence Coordination Centre (RAPPICC) in the Seychelles, whose function is to target the financiers, leaders and enablers of Somali piracy. The aim is for the RAPPICC to have a lasting impact on the region's (and Mozambique's) capacity to investigate complex cases involving international organized criminal groups, primarily by exposing them to sophisticated and modern investigative techniques. Other Mini-Dublin Group members are supporting anti-trafficking and counter-piracy efforts that will also help secure maritime and land borders from the perils of narcotics-traffickers.

4. NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

24. Mozambique has porous land and sea borders as well as international airports with direct flights to several South African cities, Nairobi and Addis Ababa. Illegal migrants have used Ethiopian Airways to enter the country.

25. There is increasing evidence that drug traffickers are spreading their operations further south due to displacement from West Africa where interdiction efforts have been successful. Heroin trafficking routes are also spreading south possibly due to the anti-piracy task force in the Horn of Africa. Mozambique is a growing concern for international counter-narcotics agencies. There is evidence of successful co-operation with South African police to stem the flow of drugs entering the country from Mozambique. But there could be increased co-operation and intelligence sharing amongst the drug liaison officer community.
26. The piracy threat and an increase in illegal migration is seen by Mini-Dublin Group members as inter-linked with drug trafficking. These criminal activities adopt a similar modus operandi and measures adopted by the international community to prevent piracy will also assist in counter-trafficking efforts.
27. Official figures for annual drug seizures mask the scale of the problem and also highlight that under-resourced indigenous law enforcement agencies can presently do little more to stem the flow of illicit goods that transit through Mozambique. A clear weakness is in relation to data collection, analysis and threat identification within GCPCD and within the wider law enforcement community. The GCPCD director has recognised the inherent risk that Mozambique could become a “paradise” for narcotics-traffickers.
28. The recent UNODC rapid assessment identified three key areas that needed to be addressed before any meaningful progress could be made elsewhere: firstly the legal frameworks; secondly, regulations, policies, and procedures; thirdly, anti-corruption measures.
29. It went on to recommend a wide range of measures including the need for: better data collection and better coordination between agencies; training for investigators and prosecutors; creation of units and training for intelligence gathering; creation of specific units within the PGR to deal with serious and specialised crimes such as drugs trafficking, trafficking in people, and money laundering; strengthening of controls on precursor chemicals, and increasing capacity of forensic laboratories; a strategy to combat trafficking in people and smuggling migrants; and for the Mozambican government to review its maritime and air-maritime capacity for patrol and interdiction.

Recommendations

The Mini-Dublin Group in Mozambique:

- Will encourage better co-ordination and sharing of intelligence amongst the drug liaison officer community (many of whom are based in Pretoria). Co-ordination should also be maintained with non Mini-Dublin Group members, notably South Africa. In addition, Mini-Dublin Group members should make greater efforts to co-ordinate on training provision;
 - Encourages its members to better understand the integrated linkages of criminal networks that take advantage of weak security structures, corruption within the police, poor border management and porous land and maritime borders;
 - Recognises the value of the recent joint UNODC/IOM needs assessment and encourages donors to investigate methods of support. Donors should review the outcome of the assessment with a view to strengthening future targeted operational assistance;
 - Recognises that genuine commitment on the part of the Government of Mozambique in tackling drugs trafficking will be key in determining further and additional donor support for counter-narcotics efforts;
 - Will seek to assist UNODC to focus on its mandate and to encourage it to strengthen relations with key institutions and organisations;
 - Suggests that in other donor fora, its members should seek to engage in senior level discussions on trafficking and maritime security issues, if appropriate;
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