



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 11 November 2015
(OR. en)

13947/15

CORDROGUE 86

NOTE

From: Romanian regional chair of the Dublin Group
To: Delegations
No. prev. doc.: ST 7801/15
Subject: Regional Report on the Near East¹

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

1. General narcotics situation

The Jordanian authorities, particularly the “*Anti Narcotics Department*” (AND) and the “*Public Security Directorate*” (PSD) maintain the control of the drugs situation in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

¹ For Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, the State of Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, the Romanian Embassies and Consulates did not obtain additional data, apart from those already presented in April 2015, on the occasion of the Dublin Group meeting in Brussels (Council document ST 7801/15).

The country is still a *transit territory* regarding the traffic of narcotics, according to the international criteria in the field. With two ongoing conflicts/crises at the frontiers (Syria and Iraq), the Jordanian authorities must also pay a special attention at the border areas and also at the traffic activities with narcotics, especially “light drugs” (like CAPTAGON), within the refugee camps established in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The most important seized quantities of narcotics, during 2015, were in transit. The final destinations of the drugs that enter the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan remain:

- in the case of Captagon - the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other rich Gulf states;
- Cannabis and Heroin - Israel, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Egypt;
- Cocaine and Hashish - Israel and Lebanon.

Note: The final statistics regarding the seizures for the year 2015 (January - October) are presented within the ANNEX 1 of the present report (source: “Anti Narcotics Department”/ AND / the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan).

The authorities from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan developed an efficient cooperation with the competent authorities within the region and from all over the world, which conducting in seizing drugs quantities in many countries. Some of the most important relations regarding the cooperation in the field are with the specialized anti-drug agencies from: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Turkey, Lebanon and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has continued to take measures in order to increase public awareness of the dangers of narcotics, through an effective and active plan in the field. They are visiting students in schools and Universities, lecturing and negotiating the dangers of drugs with the young generation of Jordanians.

Regarding the total number of the activities during 2015 (January-October), this is as follows:

- 58 “Anti-Narcotics Supporters’ Courses”;
- 2079 “Sensitization Lectures”;
- 134 visits organized to the Anti Narcotics Department (AND);
- Participations – in 37 fairs in this domain;
- 21 media programs / interviews on narcotics issues;
- 64 meetings;
- 42 radio Programs / “NO TO GRUGS”;
- 34 “Drugs Poison Play”.

Also, 845 persons were admitted to the Anti Narcotics Department centre, for specialized treatment. Jordan has two public treatment facilities. One of them is affiliated with the Ministry of Health and the other is affiliated with the Public Security Directorate - PSD / Anti-Narcotics Department - AND.

***Note:** The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan had declared, in 2008, the establishment of the “National Anti Narcotics Council”, which includes members from governmental and non-governmental organizations, aiming to take care of the drugs problem in the country. The Council had formulated a comprehensive national strategy in which every entity had been assigned to a specific role in the combating process.*

1.1. Production / Demand

The production and consumption of narcotics in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan are considered by the local authorities as not being particularly alarming. According to the PSD data, only small cultivations of Marijuana were discovered, on the Jordanian territory.

The *penalties for possession, use, or trafficking of illegal drugs in Jordan are very strict*. According to Jordanian “*Law No. 11 / 1988, on Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*”, addicts who admit addiction and seek treatment are exempted from these penalties. According to an amendment on the Law on Drugs, that was signed by the His Majesty King Abdullah II, ratified by the Jordanian Parliament and published at the Official Gazette (2012), first time drug users will be sent to a rehabilitation centre instead of prison.

1.2. Trafficking

Jordan's location between drug producing countries to the north and drug consuming countries to the south and west makes it an ideal transit territory for trafficking. The drugs situation is under control, bearing in mind the possibility of facing a bigger problem on short and medium term. AND is trying the best (by limited resources and huge efforts), to develop the combating efforts and make them more effective, by giving the officers more training and bringing new detection devices in the institution. In the same time, they are facing new smuggling trends, targeting their region with new types of drugs that were not “known” to abusers before, such as cocaine. Cocaine comes to Jordan from South America via European airports targeting Israel, Lebanon and other countries in the region.

Please find, below, some brief summaries of the most significant seizures recorded starting with January 2015

(Source: „The Anti Narcotics Department”)

1. On the 12th of January 2015, an operation in Al-Mafraq county resulted in seizing 15 kg. of Hashish, one Jordanian national was apprehended in the operation;
2. On the 25th of January 2015, an operation in Al-Mafraq county resulted in seizing 6 kg. of Hashish, two Jordanian nationals were involved in the operation;
3. On the 1st of February 2015, an operation in Aqaba county resulted in seizing 2243400 narcotic tablets (CAPTAGON), three Jordanian nationals were involved in the operation, one is still fugitive;
4. On the 1st of February 2015, an operation in Amman county resulted in seizing 627500 narcotic tablets (CAPTAGON), three Jordanian nationals were involved in the operation;

5. On the 3rd of February 2015, an operation in Aqaba County resulted in seizing 59 kg. of Heroin, three Jordanian nationals are still fugitive;
6. On the 17th of March 2015, an operation in Aqaba County resulted in seizing 4.5 kg. of Heroin, three Jordanian nationals involved were apprehended in the operation;
7. On the 19th of March 2015, an operation in Amman area resulted in seizing 3000 narcotic tablets (CAPTAGON). Those were hidden next to a bridge on the highway, between Amman and Zarqa;
8. On the 2nd of April 2015, an operation conducted in Amman, resulted in seizing 345500 narcotic tablets (CAPTAGON), hidden in some blankets. Three Jordanian nationals were apprehended in the operation;
9. On the 8th of April 2015, upon information of AND, an operation in Al-Mafraq county resulted in seizing 100000 narcotic tablets (CAPTAGON) and 3 kg of Hashish (hidden in an abandoned house);
10. On the 14th of April 2015, an operation in Irbid County resulted in seizing 330000 narcotic tablets (CAPTAGON). Those were concealed in stones. Two Jordanian nationals were arrested;
11. On the 15th of April 2015, in an operation upon a Kuwaiti vehicle, resulted in seizing 515500 narcotic tablets (CAPTAGON). Those were hidden in the fuel tank. One Jordanian and one Saudi national were arrested;
12. On the 19th of May, an operation in Aqaba County resulted in seizing 140000 narcotic tablets and 3 kg of Heroin. Two Jordanian nationals were arrested in the operation;
13. On the 31st of May 2015, the border security armed forces attacked two vehicles crossing the border from Syria into Jordan, searching the vehicles, resulted of seizing 6.5 million narcotic tablets (CAPTAGON) and 345 kg. of Hashish. The passengers ran back to Syria.

2. Short update on the country's anti-drugs strategy

2. 1. Participation in international instruments/ International cooperation

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is party to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1954, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, to the UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and to the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

The kingdom has ratified all international drug control conventions. It is also a party to the Unified Arab Law and a member of the Interpol, the League of Arab States, and the Organization for Social Defence against Crime and the Pall Arab Bureau for Narcotic Affairs. The Kingdom has been a regular participant in the annual meetings of the Bureau and has been attending the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs meetings regularly and responding positively to International Narcotic Control Board requests for reporting. Jordan continues to remain committed to existing bilateral agreements providing for counter-narcotics cooperation with Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan, Israel, Iran and Hungary. There are also excellent relations between Jordan and the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Nicosia Country Office based in Cyprus. Finally an agreement is underway between Jordan and Saudi Arabia within the framework of the Arab League operations office for cooperation in preventing and fighting drugs smuggling.

2.2 Jordanian legal framework

The basic legislation is *Law no. 11 of 1988 on Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*, as was recently amended, distinguishing between first time users and long term addicts. The amendment provides that first time user be placed in a rehabilitation centres instead of the prison.

2.3 Institutional framework

The **control structure** in Jordan involves four entities: **a) the Anti Narcotics Department (AND)**, established in 1973 (second in the Arab world after the one in Egypt); which is responsible for coordinating all of Jordan's enforcement efforts against drug trafficking and misuse. Beyond mainstream counter-narcotics work, it participates in the process of treatment of addicts, who are kept in custody in a special quasi judicial, quasi medical rehabilitation facility. Addicts are treated on the basis of a comprehensive program conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, **b) the Desert and Border Police**, responsible for patrolling the vast border and desert areas (the length of the Jordanian borders is 1,734 km, distributed as follows: 360 km with Syria, 714km with Saudi Arabia, 180km with Iraq and 480km with Israel and Palestine), **c) the General Customs Department**, responsible for general customs duties and anti-smuggling patrol work, **d) the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF)**, which control part of the country's borders.

2.4 Law enforcement efforts

For the past eight years the PSD has began utilizing x-ray equipment on larger vehicles at its major border crossings with Syria and Iraq. It has also intensified police and customs training on how to identify and locate concealed drugs. Sniffer dogs are also used in inspections and searches.

2.5 Corruption

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a party to the *UN Convention against Corruption*, and has signed, but not yet ratified, the *UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*. In 2006, an *Anti-Corruption Commission in Jordan (JACC)* was established by Royal Decree, which is run by a board of seven members (including the president appointed by His Majesty the King upon recommendation of the Prime Minister). JACC has investigative and prosecutorial powers and is concerned with sensitizing and raising the awareness of the public at large of the dangerous effects and harmful consequences of corruption on economic, social and political development. As far as its mandate is concerned, JACC is entitled by law to investigate financial and administrative corruption, uncover violations and breaches, gather evidence and information related thereto, initiate investigations and proceed with administrative and legal procedures necessary thereof as well as prosecute all those who are responsible for committing such breaches.

In addition, in 2007 Jordan enacted a comprehensive *anti-money laundering law (46/2007)*, by which the *National Committee on Anti-Money Laundering was established*. This Committee is chaired by the Governor of the Central Bank of Jordan and has nine members. One of the aforementioned nine members is the head of the Anti-Money Laundering Unit (AMLU), which was created under the same law and is the Government's financial intelligent unit.

3. Enumeration of major bilateral and multilateral counternarcotics (CN) programs (including those support demand reduction)

3.1 Major programs

Jordan has a very close cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Union (EU), through the following projects:

CEPOL EU[ZOMED II Programme]: This program is funded and implemented by the European Union in order to enhance the international cooperation in the field of combating drugs through the organization of several seminars in different countries.

JORJ22- UNODC Project: "Strengthening the community resources in providing drug abuse treatment and rehabilitation for vulnerable groups in Jordan". funded by the Governments of the Netherlands, was implemented by the UNODC Office in Amman in cooperation with the PSD and the Ministry of Health.

XAM/J07 Project: This Regional UNODC project, entitled "Increasing Access to Prevention and Care Services for Drug Use and HIV/AIDS in the Prison Setting" , is implemented by UNODC in cooperation with Jordanian PSD and the Ministry of Health.

TAIEX Cooperation: After the Jordanian side performed a study tour in Spain, they have programmed to receive a reciprocal expert's mission from Spain to Jordan, which will evaluate their needs in the operational field.

LEXPRO: "Program of Capacity Building in the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean Region through Targeted Drug Law Enforcement Exchange".

UNODC launched a new project in cooperation with *PSD I AND* and the Ministry of Health in order to raise drug and HIV I AIDS awareness in prisons across Jordan.

Cooperation with the Pompidou *group/MIDNET*, which is supported by the European Union. Jordan has been one of the member countries of Pompidou group/MIDNET, since 2009. Jordan participates in all MIDNET events (seminars, workshops and training courses), aiming to promote cooperation between Mediterranean countries. Presently, the MIDNET network is processing a project of data collection in Jordan, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the Anti-Narcotics Department. We urged the Jordanian side to expand the data collection to include all social strata as well as women.

3.2 Actions against drugs (demand reduction and rehabilitation)

The drugs situation in Jordan is perceived by the local authorities as being under control. However, they bear in mind that there is a possibility of facing a larger problem in the future. In this context, Jordan continues to take measures to increase public awareness of the danger' of drugs through an active awareness plan. The PSD/ AND conduct seminars and lectures at universities and schools, while they also distribute published material aimed at raising awareness. In addition, the AND's awareness plan also involves cooperation with government institutions, NGO's, correction & rehabilitation centres, youth clubs and of course the media.

4. Place and date of meetings of Mini-Dublin Group

The Romanian Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as the coordinator of the Mini-Dublin Group for the Middle East organized in 2014, the first meeting of this informal working group. The participants - representatives of the diplomatic missions of the Member States of the Mini-Dublin Group in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the EU Delegation in Amman and the Department of Public Security / AND - analyzed the issue of drug trafficking in the region and from this perspective; they emphasized the importance of inter-state cooperation in combating this phenomenon. In the same time, all the participants appreciated the activity of the Jordanian institutions which are acting in the field and the good cooperation between the Hashemite authorities and the member states of the Mini-Dublin Group for the Middle East. The next meeting will be organized soon, when the AND officials will be available. The Romanian Embassy hold the most recent meeting at the “Anti Narcotics Department”, in August 2015. In that context, all the subjects related to the narcotics issue within the kingdom were updated.

5. **Prioritized identification or needs for external assistance**

The AND has pointed out to this Group that in terms of capacity building assistance, it would welcome the help of the member states of the Group for the equipment of technical unit, the organizing of training courses for Jordanian anti narcotics officers locally and in countries that have a good experience in dealing with drug trafficking, visits to MS for officers of the Jordanian anti-narcotics department, as well as training in the use of K9 dogs for drug detection and providing the furnishing for the new treatment centre.

6. **Mini Dublin group assessment of needs**

6.1 **Emerging threats/trends**

Despite the fact that Jordan is not an illicit drugs producer, it has become a *main transit country* for the organized smuggling of drugs, while recently it has started to also be targeted as transit territory for cocaine trafficked towards Europe, mainly by post.

With regard to consumption, there is an increasing trend, especially regarding heroin, Hashish and Captagon / Ecstasy tablets. There is no official information regarding female users as well as the use of drugs, in particular cocaine, among upper classes, since data collection focuses on the lower social strata. The official position is that most drug consumption in the country is concentrated in poor and high populated areas.

6.2 **Political initiatives**

In 2008, a Higher Council for Drug Awareness was established, which is chaired by the Ministry of Interior and has 24 members. This body's mandate was to set up a general strategy for fighting drugs, which was officially launched in May 2009 under the title "National Strategy to Fight Drugs".

6.3 Recommendations

- a) It would be helpful to convey to the Jordanian authorities that more thorough and detailed statistics, which will cover all social strata, would be conducive to a better understanding of the drug consumption situation in Jordan.
- b) MS should examine the possibility of signing MOU's related to exchange of information, which potentially could facilitate the Jordanian efforts to interception of drug traffickers.
- c) MS should also examine the possibility of supporting the upgrading of the Jordanian Technical Unit, especially as regards surveillance, which can result to the better protection of undercover Jordanian officers in action. The Jordanian side has acknowledged lack of resources, in this respect.
- d) Exchange of visits should also continue.
- e) Jordan could be assisted in raising awareness, regarding the link between drugs and HIV/AIDS.

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

1. General situation in Syria

Security developments in Syria restrict the capacity of local authorities to efficiently fight against drug manufacturers and traffickers especially because vast regions of the Syrian territory (mainly in northern and eastern areas) are currently outside the control of the government.

The above mentioned situation causes difficulties for the local authorities, hindering their capacity to accurately estimate the types and quantities of the drugs manufactured and/or trafficked across the Syrian territory, identify the traffickers or their routes.

According to the local authorities, small-size Captagon-producing workshops activate in Syria, with a higher concentration of these producers being reported in Homs. Captagon production is intended mainly for domestic use and trafficked by insurgents. The Syrian officials associate the coordinated production of Captagon with armed opposition groups of Islamic origin, which are also involved in drug trafficking in Syria.

On the Syrian market was also reported the presence of other types of drugs (heroin, hashish, cocaine) entering the country from Turkey, Lebanon and Iraq. Around 15% of these drugs have a domestic use, the remaining 85% being trafficked towards Arab Gulf states (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar). The drug traffic across the Syrian territory is made mainly by cars and their smuggling to Jordan is facilitated by the Bedouin tribes from the southern border area.

2. Short update on the country's anti-drug strategy

2.1 There were no changes in the institutional framework. The authorized body in this field is The Anti-drug Department, operating within the Syrian Ministry of Interior.

2.2 Since the beginning of the Syrian Crisis (2011), there were no changes in the legislation governing the issues of fight against drugs.

2.3 The Syrian authorities, despite the precarious security situation in the country, continue their efforts to enable the relevant institutions in combating production, trafficking and consumption of drugs. Recently, significant investments were made in the procurement of modern mobile drug-detection equipment.

The Syrian authorities have not communicated any information regarding national, bilateral or multilateral programs developed by Syria in the fight against drugs.

Currently, the local authorities or other entities with responsibilities in this field do not organize Mini Dublin Group meetings in Damascus or other Syrian cities.

The Syrian authorities have not issued any inquiries regarding their needs for external assistance.

3. Mini-Dublin group assessment of needs

3.1 Emerging threats/trends: the lack of control over extensive regions of Syria from the local authorities generates an increase of the drug producing/trafficking activities that might lead to the proliferation of this phenomenon in the Middle East and Europe.

3.2 Political initiatives: the current international/regional security situation obstruct the opportunities for common political actions with the Syrian authorities

3.3 Recommendations: depending on the political developments in Syria, and considering the Syrian relevant officials willingness to cooperate in this field, there is a possibility of future Syrian involvement in the international actions against drug production and traffic.

REPUBLIC OF LEBANON

1. General situation in the country

Various drugs are currently available in Lebanon, such as marijuana, hashish, heroin, cocaine, amphetamines and other synthetic drugs, for example MDMA (ecstasy). Lebanon is a transit country for cocaine, heroin, and fenethylamine (marketed under the brand name Captagon). Criminal networks based in Western Africa, Panama, and Colombia are associated with networks in Lebanon in the trafficking of drugs intended for European markets and the Gulf States. Regarding production in Lebanon, cannabis resin is mainly produced in the fields of the Beqaa Valley of Lebanon. Moreover, heroin production in that very same region has been increasing. Synthetic drugs are increasingly available in Lebanon, in particular, fenethylamine and ecstasy (MDMA). The volume of cocaine trafficked from South America via commercial aircraft has similarly risen.

Captagon trafficking and production is the most commonly illegal – drug related activity addressed by the Authorities. Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon are frequently involved in these illegal activities, a fact that proves the reorganization of criminal activities between Syria and Lebanon as result of the crisis and the strengthening of the criminal links between the two countries.

In the past 6 months there was an increase in the quantities of Captagon seized by the Lebanese authorities. The narcotics were intended mainly for markets in Gulf countries.

Tourists and international visitors traffic in small quantities illegal drugs, mostly for personal use, although the extent of this issue remains unknown.

Drug consumption is a growing problem in Lebanon and there are no reliable estimates of the number of drug users in Lebanon. According to the Lebanese authorities, most addicts are between 18 and 25 years old. The most common drug is hashish, but the consumption of heroin, cocaine and synthetic drugs is increasing.

2. Short update on the country's anti-drug strategy

Lebanon is a party on the 1961 UN single convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic substances, the 1972 Protocol amending the single Convention and the 1988 UN Convention against illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Lebanon adopted a law on Narcotics, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors in 1998 (law no. 673), amended by law no. 77 of 3 April 1999, which foresees the establishment of various state structures to address the challenges of drug abuse.

The Lebanese government pursues a strictly implemented drug repression policy. Mere possession or use of drugs, even in a limited quantity, is punishable to the same extent as trafficking. The use or possession of drugs attracts a prison sentence of up to six months, as well as a fine (of about 50 Euros). The law does not distinguish between different types of drug use. However, drug dealers, or persons who facilitate drug dealing, are more severely punished, with prison sentences ranging from 6 months to 3 years, and fines ranging from 50€ to 250€

The "Internal Security Forces (ISF)" Counter Narcotics Unit of Lebanon is in charge of combating drug trafficking and drug abuse. The ISF is Lebanon's main police force, made up of an administrative branch and an operations branch, operating under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior. The police are in charge chiefly of arresting and detaining suspects, as well as leading criminal investigations. The Drug Repression Bureau (DRB) is part of the Criminal Investigation Department and is responsible for conducting drug-related criminal investigations. The DRB has four detention and interrogation centres. Under article 211 of law No. 673 of 16 March 1998 on drugs, the "Command centre" leads the collection of information that will serve to facilitate the prosecution of drug-related crimes, to detect and prevent drug trafficking, and to destroy illegal crops.

One of the major challenges that the Lebanese authorities are facing in dealing with the drugs problem is the lack of specialized and trained personnel, caused mainly by the rotation system at the law enforcement level.

The main counternarcotics goal of the Lebanese government remains the eradication of illegally-cultivated drug plants in the Bekaa region, but a difficult security environment and the need for additional logistical support and equipment hamper its effectiveness.

Taking in consideration the current political, economic and security situation of Lebanon the anti-drugs policy is not a priority on the agenda of the Lebanese authorities.

3. Enumeration of major bilateral and multilateral country national programs

French, German and US authorities have a good collaboration with ISF on drug related issues mainly in providing training courses and equipment to Lebanese officers from the Drug Enforcement Bureau.

Another important aspect of this collaboration is the campaign supported by the French authorities designated to raise awareness about the narcotics ("Les dangers des drogues") to the young people. The campaign includes presentations of various narcotics and the effects of their consume in about 80 schools from all over Lebanon every year

At the EU level, there is an interest for establishing a national drug information system and to foster the exchange of experience on best practices. In 2013, the EU provided some training on basic intervention techniques to the investigative units of the Judicial Police in charge of drug-related crimes among others.

4. Place and date of meeting of mini-Dublin groups

The first mini-Dublin meeting in 2015 was organized at the premises of the European Union delegation in Beirut, on March 23rd. A second meeting is going to be held in the same location in November.

STATE OF QATAR

1. General situation in the country

Qatar remains a destination country for drug trafficking from Saudi Arabia.

Permanent Committee for Drugs and Alcohol Affairs (PCDAA) is a committee which is made up of representatives from different governmental associations and organizations. The Permanent Committee for Drugs and Alcohol Affairs was established according to the decree No. (1) for the year 1999 issued by the Council of Ministers. The above decree was amended by the decree No. (12) for the year 2001 in the framework of Arab strategy for combating illegal consumption of drugs and other mental stimulants, which stipulates that, formation of such committees should comprise officials from social affairs, health, media, education and security sectors. The committee has a secretary who is responsible about the secretarial works which include preparing agendas of the committee, meeting notes and reports, memorandums announced by the meetings, following up the implementation of the recommendations issued by the committee, conducting lectures, courses, conferences and exhibitions and executing any other mission requested by the concerned departments.

2. Short update on the country's anti-drug strategy

The social awareness of the danger of illicit narcotics is growing among the different sections of society. Consequently, it will enhance the future efforts concerning the plans of combating and the preventive programmes on the danger of illicit narcotics.

Ministry's of Interior Permanent Committee for Drugs and Alcohol Affairs has organized several meetings on the role of the medical staff in preventing and reducing the misuse of prescribed medication and the prescription drug abuse.

The Permanent Committee for Drugs and Alcohol Affairs published several books in Arabic concerning the prevention from drugs and alcohols in the country.

STATE OF ISRAEL

1. General situation in the country

1.1 Production / Demand

Although Israel is not a narcotics producing country, it constitutes a transit point for large proportions of drugs reaching Israeli territory via neighbouring countries. Still less than 10% of drugs seized in Israel are produced inside the country. Israeli authorities are convinced that drug trafficking is overlapping with other criminal activities (e.g. arms trafficking).

During the last years the use of "hydro" method of home-growing marijuana has been widely established.

Although there are no major changes in the demand for the well known substances, Israeli authorities observe that the use of "grass" and ecstasy among the young population, as well as the demand for cocaine, in general, has been growing.

1.2 Trafficking

Given that Israel is not a producing and manufacturing country, most efforts have been targeted to counter illicit drug trafficking and supply.

Trafficking occurs mainly through land and sea borders. Over the last years, Jordan has been established as a transit country. The “Shalom” border with Jordan, from the south part of the Dead Sea to Eilat, is main gateway for heroin, cocaine and amphetamine. Heroin and hashish are smuggled from Lebanon, while hashish and marijuana are being smuggled through the border with Egypt.

Also, Thailand is a major source for methamphetamine “YABA”, while South America is the main source for cocaine, by carriers and luggage.

Since 2005, Israel has become a “transit” country for heroin and cocaine smuggling, transferred from Lebanon and Jordan to Egypt, in exchange for hashish which is supplied to the local Israeli market.

The Israeli authorities consider that there are “good relations” between traffickers from the north and the south of Israel. Drug trafficking is flourishing as significant traffickers from neighbouring countries have local connections in Israel, despite the strong security measures along the latter’s borders.

Israeli nationals have become quite prominent internationally in trafficking networks, especially for cocaine and ecstasy. Domestic organized crime is involved in the distribution of drugs and more recently in a gang war.

1.3 Drug consumption patterns

According to the Drug Unit of the Israeli National Police:

- Cocaine is an established drug in the Israeli market with a relatively high supply from the “source” countries in South America.
- Heroin reaches Israel from “source” countries in Asia.
- Cannabis remains the most popular drug, mainly in the forms of hashish and marijuana. During 2009, there was a significant increase in the number of “hydro” marijuana labs seized by the Police. Consumers in Israel show a preference for Moroccan and Indian hashish.
- The MDMA amphetamines (ecstasy) are the most popular by-product in Israel, most of which is smuggled from “source” countries in Europe. For the first time in 2009, “YABA” spread in the Israeli market, destined for the use of Thai workers.

2. Short update on the country’s anti-drug strategy

2.1 Legal/legislative changes, including money laundering and chemical precursors

In July 2013, the ‘Kiosk Drug’ law passed its final reading in the Knesset, expanding the police’s authority to confiscate materials suspected as hazardous to public health or safety. The law was introduced following increasing numbers of cases of young people using dangerous substances sold in kiosks.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drugs Addiction (EMCDDA) and IADA was signed on 4 February 2014 in Jerusalem. A representative from IADA attended the 2nd Reitox week in May. Among relevant sources of expertise of interest, one can mention the New Psychotropic Substances (NPS), for which an Israeli expert participated in the International Forum on NPS organised by the EMCDDA and by NIDA. Israel appointed a national correspondent to the EMCDDA.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Executive Director, Yury Fedotov, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Jerusalem, on the 8th of June 2014, which furthers cooperation between UNODC and Israel in countering drugs and crime.

2.2 An assessment of the government's political will to conduct a comprehensive and resolute anti-drugs policy

Due to the multi-faceted and complex nature of the drug problem, which touches on many different areas and demands the involvement of a variety of government agencies, the Prime Minister of Israel is the Minister responsible for the realization of Drug Control Authority Law. However, in 2009, the parliament approved the government's decision to grant the Minister of Internal Security responsibility over the Israel Anti-Drug Authority.

The State of Israel devotes much effort to the implementation of a comprehensive demand reduction strategy. Coordinated by the Israel Anti-Drug Authority (IADA), in cooperation with relevant ministries such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services and other governmental agencies and NGOs, evidence based prevention and treatment programs are implemented throughout the country, targeting the general and at risk populations. IADA also addresses addiction as a chronic health disorder, and aims to provide adequate and accessible treatment and rehabilitation solutions to all drug and alcohol abuse victims.

3. Enumeration of major bilateral and multilateral country national programs (including those that support demand reduction)

In the multi-lateral front, Israel has strong working relations with international organizations working to fight the plague of substance abuse, among them: UNODC, INCB and WHO. Cooperation with our European counterparts: European Council and European Union have also raised to a new level, in particular collaboration with the Pompidou Group and the EMCDDA.

Israel showed interest in cooperation with the EU in the fight against drugs.

At a regional level, cooperation between neighbouring countries is essential and necessary in order to control the flow of illicit drugs and crime. A Memorandum of Understanding agreed upon by Israel and the Palestinian Authority in Cairo in 2005 paved the way for information exchange regarding drug demand and supply reduction. Mutual study visits also took place with our Jordanian counterpart.

4. Prioritized identification of needs for external assistance

Israel Anti-Drug Agency works closely with MASHAV - the Center for International Cooperation of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, organizing courses for participants from developing countries around the world in Israel, and on-the-spot short term courses, given in the participants' home countries (Africa - Ghana, Senegal, Nigeria, Kenya and Seychelles, South America - Ecuador, and Eurasia - Kazakhstan, Russia and Armenia).

5. Recommendations

The European Commission's Progress Report in 2011 noted that there had still not been any sustained follow up to the recommendations of the Mini Dublin Group on establishing a central anti-drug unit within the Israeli police. No indications on developments in this field were registered until 2014. However, Israeli authorities made efforts on maintaining accurate records of information exchange with neighbouring countries on regular individuals involved in drug trafficking activities.

FINAL STATISTICS

“ANTI NARCOTICS DEPARTMENT” / **THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN**

SEIZURES FOR 2015 (January - October)

Narcotics:	Quantities:
Heroin	212 Kg
Hashish	3402 Kg
Marijuana	13588 Kg
Captagon tablets	45582332 tabs
Cocaine	2.5 Kg
Synthetic Cannabis	50 Kg
Opium	-
Hashish Oil	-