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Presidential Determination No. 99-15 of February 26, 1999

The President

Certification for Major Illicit Drug Producing and Drug Transit Countries

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

By virtue of the authority vested in me by section 490(b)(1)(A) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (''the Act''), I hereby determine and certify that the following major illicit drug producing and/or major illicit drug transit countries/dependent territories have cooperated fully with the United States, or have taken adequate steps on their own, to achieve full compliance with the goals and objectives of the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances:

Aruba, The Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Laos, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Taiwan, Thailand, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

By virtue of the authority vested in me by section 490(b)(1)(B) of the Act, I hereby determine that it is in the vital national interests of the United States to certify the following major illicit drug producing and/or major illicit drug transit countries:

Cambodia, Haiti, Nigeria, and Paraguay.

Analysis of the relevant U.S. vital national interests, as required under section 490(b)(3) of the Act, is attached.

I have determined that the following major illicit drug producing and/ or major illicit drug transit countries do not meet the standards set forth in section 490(b) for certification:

Afghanistan, Burma.

In making these determinations, I have considered the factors set forth in section 490 of the Act. Given that the performance of each of these countries/dependent territories has differed, I have attached an explanatory statement for each of the countries/dependent territories subject to this determination.

You are hereby authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress immediately and to publish it in the **Federal Register**.

William Temmen

THE WHITE HOUSE, Washington, February 26, 1999.

STATEMENTS OF EXPLANATION

Afghanistan

According to U.S. Government (USG) estimates, Afghanistan continued to be the world's second largest producer of opium poppy in 1998. Poppy cultivation and opium gum production increased by seven percent in 1998, despite poor weather, resulting in an estimated 1,350 metric tons (mts) of opium gum production. Afghanistan is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, but neither of the warring political factions (Taliban nor Northern Alliance) took steps to demonstrate that they take Afghanistan's obligations under the Convention seriously. Aside from Taliban authorities burning a reported one ton of opiates in Jalalabad in June, there is no evidence to indicate that any action was taken by any faction to discourage poppy cultivation, destroy morphine or heroin laboratories, or arrest and prosecute narcotics traffickers. Numerous reports indicated that members of all factions at all levels continued to profit from the drug trade. UN Drug Control Program (UNDCP) initiatives made very slow progress, while a USG-funded non-governmental organization (NGO) program achieved many of its alternative development goals.

By the end of the year, the Taliban faction controlled over 80 percent of Afghan territory and 96 percent of Afghanistan's opium-growing areas. The Taliban's inaction and lack of political will, as well as substantial drug trade involvement on the part of some local Taliban authorities, also impede meaningful counter-narcotics progress.

The Taliban condemned illicit drug cultivation, production, trafficking and use in 1997. However, there is no evidence that Taliban authorities took action in 1998 to decrease poppy cultivation, to arrest and prosecute major narcotics traffickers, to interdict large shipments of illicit drugs or precursor chemicals, or to eliminate opiate processing laboratories anywhere in Afghanistan. Opium is Afghanistan's largest cash crop and, by many estimates, narcotics remain a significant and perhaps the largest source of income. Some Taliban authorities reportedly benefit financially from the trade and provide protection to heroin laboratories. There are numerous reports of drug traffickers operating in Taliban territory with the consent or involvement of some Taliban officials.

In 1998, poppy cultivation increased and spread to new areas. In an unverified policy statement published by the Taliban's High Commission for Drug Control on September 10, 1998, which appears to contradict the Taliban's November 1997 commitment to UNDCP, the Taliban indicated that they would not support a strategy of forced eradication if farmers who benefitted from alternative development failed to comply with the requirement to abandon poppy cultivation.

A USG-sponsored poppy eradication/alternative development program in Helmand Province through Mercy Corps International (MCI), an American NGO, continued this year. It was originally funded in 1997 for \$772,000 and expanded in FY 99 to \$1.04 million. It is the only poppy reduction project being implemented by an NGO in Afghanistan. MCI accomplished all but one of its objectives during the year. The one objective not accomplished—delivery of fruit trees to farmers—was not met due to rainy weather. The trees were held for the next planting season.

The USG strongly supports the UN Special Mission to Afghanistan and its efforts to achieve peace and facilitate the development of a broad-based government that respects international norms of behavior on narcotics, terrorism and human rights. The Afghan Support Group (ASG) of major donors to Afghanistan met twice during the year. At the meeting in Tokyo in December, the ASG endorsed the principle that counter-narcotics is a crosscutting issue and should be integrated wherever possible with other programs in Afghanistan. UNDCP agreed to include gender and human rights components in its counter-narcotics programs wherever appropriate.

Denial of certification does not cut off USG counter-narcotics assistance and would thus have minimal effect in terms of implementation of this policy. Continuation of large-scale opium cultivation and trafficking in Afghanistan, plus the failure of the authorities to initiate law enforcement actions, preclude a determination that Afghanistan has taken adequate steps on its own or that it has sufficiently cooperated with USG counter-narcotics efforts to meet the goals and objectives of the 1988 UN Drug Convention, to which Afghanistan is a party.

Aruba

Aruba is a staging area for international narcotics trafficking organizations, which transship cocaine from Colombia, Venezuela, and Suriname to Europe and the United States. Drug traffickers are attracted to Aruba by its key position near the Venezuelan and Colombian coasts, its efficient infrastructure, its excellent air and sea links to South America, Europe, Puerto Rico, and other Caribbean locations, and its reputation for relatively light prison sentences and good prison conditions.

Aruba, the nearby Netherlands Antilles, and the Netherlands comprise the three parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Since 1986, Aruba has had autonomy over its internal affairs and independent decision-making ability in a number of counter-narcotics areas. The Government of the Netherlands (GON) is responsible for the defense and foreign affairs of Aruba, and assists the Government of Aruba (GOA) in its efforts to combat narcotics trafficking. Aruba is a participant in a joint Netherlands-Netherlands Antilles-Aruba Coast Guard, which has anti-drug responsibilities. Although the Netherlands is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, the other two parts of the Kingdom are not covered by the Convention.

In late 1998, Aruba passed an international asset seizure law, the final legislative prerequisite to requesting that the Kingdom of the Netherlands extend the 1988 UN Drug Convention to Aruba. In December, Aruba formally requested that extension, which is expected during 1999.

During 1998, the GOA continued to cooperate fully with the USG on counter-narcotics goals and objectives. Three Aruba nationals believed to be major drug traffickers and money launderers were extradited to the United States and are now awaiting trial. They include two members of the Mansur family, one of the richest and most powerful in Aruba, who are accused of belonging to a large network that laundered some \$40 million for Colombian drug traffickers operating in the United States. These extraditions were the first under a 1997 law permitting the extradition of Aruba nationals.

Aruba law enforcement agencies, including the Aruba Police and Customs, have a good working relationship with USG law enforcement agencies. They cooperate with the DEA on joint investigations and with the U.S. Coast Guard on maritime law enforcement searches and interdictions. Joint USG–GOA efforts contributed to an increase in the number of arrests in 1998 of drug couriers transiting Aruba. A proposed U.S.-Kingdom of the Netherlands maritime drug enforcement agreement, pertaining to the Caribbean, is currently under negotiation.

The Bahamas

The Bahamas is a major transit point for South American cocaine and Jamaican marijuana en route to the United States. Very small amounts of cannabis are grown on the islands for domestic consumption. The USG and the Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas (GCOB) continue to enjoy a productive and positive counter-drug working relationship. The GCOB places a high priority on combating drug transshipments through its archipelago, and is moving decisively to combat money laundering and other drug-related crimes. The GCOB cooperates very closely with the USG on our combined law enforcement effort, Operation Bahamas and Turks

and Caicos (OPBAT). The Bahamas was the first country to ratify the 1988 UN Drug Convention, and the GCOB continues to take steps to implement its provisions. Following passage of strong anti-money laundering legislation in 1996, Bahamian authorities are closely monitoring bank compliance and investigating suspicious financial transactions.

U.S. and Bahamian law enforcement officials worked very closely throughout the year to respond to notable increases in air and maritime transshipment incidents. The GCOB is strongly emphasizing money laundering and asset forfeiture investigations and prosecutions. The GCOB also continued in 1998 to strengthen its judicial system, with assistance from the USG. However, unreliable jury pools and weaknesses in the drug laws resulted in several major Bahamian drug dealers avoiding conviction in 1998. Despite committed and talented judicial leadership, The Bahamas needs to improve the effectiveness of its court system in securing convictions against major dealers and organizations by strengthening its drug trafficking laws and improving the prosecutorial capabilities of the police prosecutors. The USG will continue to work with the GCOB in this area, both bilaterally and through regional training and assistance projects.

In December 1998, the Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF) Drug Enforcement Unit arrested two police officers from the RBPF Drug Canine Unit at Nassau International Airport for allegedly working with a cocaine trafficking ring. The GCOB needs to continue to move decisively against corruption at Bahamian ports of entry.

Belize

Belize remains a significant narcotics transit country. After taking office in August of 1998, the new Government of Belize (GOB) made it clear it takes seriously the problem of drug transit through its territory, including the impact the trafficking activity has on domestic crime. The new government has created a national drug abuse council, which is in the process of creating a comprehensive drug control strategy. The Belize Police Force, the Belize Defense Force and the rapid response force "Dragon Unit" will remain important parts of the national drug control strategy. Belize is party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention and the GOB works closely with the USG in the fight against narcotics trafficking and transnational crime.

Upgrading training, professionalism and equipment in the Belize Defense Force continues as the focus of the USG/GOB counter-narcotics program to combat violent crime and drug trafficking. With the completion of training of the money-laundering unit staff, the USG/GOB effort is now focused on building and equipping a Financial Investigations Unit to enforce money-laundering regulations. The GOB is energetic in its unilateral efforts to reduce drug trafficking through its borders and to combat associated crime. It is a strong supporter of regional and cooperative counter-narcotics efforts.

Concern over corruption remains. The dismissals of suspected corrupt police officials in 1998 and the new government's efforts to rid itself of institutional corruption appear to demonstrate the GOB's commitment. Concerns were raised, however, by the government's recent attempt to dismiss the Supreme Court's chief justice over a case with political overtones.

Counter-narcotics efforts in Belize are hampered by lack of manpower, training and equipment. The relatively large expanse of uninhabited territory and the thousands of coastal cays and inland waterways that are used by traffickers as drop-off sites for drugs contribute to the problem. Seizures in 1998 of just under one metric ton of cocaine were significantly lower than in 1997. Slightly more than 200,000 marijuana plants were eradicated.

Boliva

Boliva retains is position as the world's second largest producer of cocaine even though it has less coca under cultivation than either Peru or Colombia.

The cocaine industry in Bolivia is fragmented and dominated by small to mid-level trafficking organizations which manufacture, transport and distribute cocaine base in hundred to multi-hundred kilogram quantities per month. Successful law enforcement efforts to prevent significant quantities of chemicals utilized in processing coca leaf into cocaine base and cocaine hydrochloride (HCL) from being smuggled in from neighboring countries have negatively impacted the quality of cocaine produced, with a resulting decrease in marketability.

In an impressive show of resolve and political will, the Government of Bolivia (GOB) achieved an unprecedented level of coca eradication—a net reduction of 17 percent, and a gross eradication level of 11,621 hectares. Significant successes in increased arrests of narcotics traffickers, as well as seizures of cocaine, cocaine products and precursor chemicals, were also realized.

The Banzer administration is the first to devise and set forth a credible, formal strategy to eliminate coca cultivation in Bolivia. Despite a shaky start last spring and continuing violence against eradication and counternarcotics forces, the GOB showed its determination to persevere with its five-year plan. USG experts also credit 1998's success to the GOB's abolition of direct compensation to coca growers, and to devoting enough human resources to the eradication and security effort. The Banzer administration's embrace of alternative development has not only provided farmers with licit, profitable alternatives to growing coca, but has changed public opinion against coca growing and cocaine production activities.

Three-fourths of Bolivia's judicial reform package has been enacted, which should make the criminal justice system faster, more transparent and accessible, less politicized, and less corrupt. Currently being debated in the legislature is the Code of Criminal Procedure, the final part of the reform package. It should include language that permits police to use informants, controlled deliveries, undercover operations, and other modern law enforcement tools. Action on money laundering crime has been lacking, although the GOB named a Director of the Financial Investigations Unit of the Superintendency of Banks, which is charged with enforcing the anti-money laundering law.

If Bolivia is to realize its five-year goals, in 1999 the GOB should act to prevent new coca plantings and continue eradication efforts in a sustained manner. Other important objectives include initiation of eradication operations, alternative development in the Yungas, and prosecutions of those who plant new illicit coca fields there and in the Chapare. The GOB should also move forward to implement vigorously the law criminalizing money laundering, and actively seek out, investigate and prosecute public officials engaged in corruption. Finally, if its efforts are to be fully successful, the GOB should ensure that the new Code of Criminal Procedures provides law enforcement authorities with the tools they need to investigate and prosecute narcotics offenders.

Brazil

Brazil is a major transit country for cocaine shipped by air, river, and maritime routes from Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia to the United States and Europe. Because of increased interdiction of trafficker aircraft in Peru (along the Peru/Colombia air corridor), traffickers have shifted illicit narcotics flights into Brazilian air space. Brazil's vast and sparsely populated Amazon region provides ample opportunity for traffickers to transship drugs and chemicals by air and riverine routes. A southern "drug route" also exists along Brazil's borders with Paraguay and Bolivia. While not a major drug cultivation country, Brazil is a major producer of precursor chemicals and synthetic drugs.

Several key legislative initiatives, including an anti-money laundering law and legislation permitting the military to interdict unauthorized civilian aircraft (including those suspected of smuggling narcotics), were passed by the Congress in 1998. A two-year-old omnibus counter-narcotics bill remained pending in the Congress at year's end. Brazil's major counternarcotics policy initiative was formation of the National Anti-Drug Secretariat (SENAD) which will coordinate counter-narcotics efforts and activities nationwide.

Federal police continued their heightened surveillance of the Amazon region, which resulted in seizures of drugs, aircraft, boats and an assortment of weapons. While seizures of cocaine in 1998 were about the same as in 1997, and marijuana seizures were slightly lower than in 1997, seizures in psychotropic drugs increased tenfold over 1997 levels. Inadequate staffing and resources continue to hamper activities of the counter-narcotics unit of the Federal police.

Although Brazil does not extradite its own citizens, the Government continues to cooperate with the United States and other countries in the extradition of individuals accused of narcotics-related crimes.

Most of Brazil's demand reduction efforts are aimed primarily at young people, who constitute the largest group of drug users in the country. With the creation of SENAD, the GOB will focus even more attention on drug demand reduction, education, and treatment programs. Over half of Brazil's 26 states conduct some type of drug awareness program.

Top Brazilian counter-narcotics officials in SENAD have expressed a strong interest in more active cooperation and greater coordination with the United States in narcotics law enforcement, including interdiction activities.

Burma

Burma continues to be the world's largest source of illicit opium and heroin. There was, however, a significant decline in production and cultivation from 1997 levels. The 1998 crop estimates indicate there were 130,300 hectares of opium poppy cultivation, down 16 percent from 1997. The potential yield from this crop is up to 1,750 metric tons of opium gum. This is the lowest potential production figure in ten years and a drop of 26 percent from 1997 figures. Most of this crop decrease was due to weather; however, the Government of Burma (GOB) did engage in opium crop eradication efforts.

During 1998, seizures of methamphetamine tripled, although opium and heroin seizures were below last year's record levels. While there were cases of interdiction and arrests for narcotics trafficking of members of some tribal groups located outside the protected tribal areas, the GOB has been unwilling or unable to take on the most powerful groups directly. Cease-fire agreements with insurgent tribal groups dependent on the narcotics trade involve an implicit tolerance of continued involvement in illicit narcotics for varying periods of time. Given the scale of the problem in Burma, and what would be necessary to bring about lasting improvement, the GOB's efforts remain inadequate.

There is reason to believe that money laundering in Burma and the return of narcotics profits laundered elsewhere are significant factors in the overall Burmese economy, though the extent is impossible to measure accurately. Political and economic constraints on legal capital inflows magnify the importance of narcotics-derived funds in the economy. An underdeveloped banking system and lack of enforcement against money laundering have created a business and investment environment conducive to the use of drug-related proceeds in legitimate commerce. The GOB made little if any effort against money laundering during 1998.

Despite some progress over the past year, the USG remains concerned that Burma's counter-narcotics efforts are in no way proportional to the extent of narcotics cultivation and trafficking. Effective toleration of money laundering by the GOB, failure to turn over notorious traffickers under indictment in the United States, and general lack of respect for the rule

of law are also concerns. The United States remains prepared to cooperate with Burma in international efforts against narcotics, when the Burmese regime presents a consistent pattern of cooperation in all aspects of that effort.

Cambodia

Throughout 1998, Cambodia was embroiled in internal political strife and proactive counter-narcotics efforts suffered. This failure is reflected in a serious drop in the statistics for seizures and narcotics arrests. Reports indicate that narcotics traffickers, alien smugglers, and other criminals have found refuge in Cambodia. Corruption and factionalism among Cambodia's police are also a continuing problem—one police unit attacked another earlier this year in an effort to intimidate the unit attacked. Cambodia is not a major producer of narcotics or a center for narcotics-derived money laundering, although reports that narcotics proceeds are in fact laundered there persist. The country's principal involvement in the international narcotics trade is as a transit route for Southeast Asian heroin intended for overseas markets, including the United States. Marijuana is cultivated for export and the authorities have had only marginal success at stemming this flow, though Cambodian marijuana is not thought to have a major effect on the United States. Reports persist about the involvement by some elements of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and the national police in narcotics trafficking.

Outward cooperation by Cambodian police officials with the DEA on specific requests is excellent. Senior government officials consistently responded to requests to make available persons wanted on U.S. arrest warrants, including in narcotics cases. The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has established a National Authority for Combating Drugs and a special drug enforcement unit in the Ministry of Interior; however, the effectiveness of these bodies has been limited by a lack of resources and training, corruption at various levels of the RGC, and the country's geographical location adjacent to major narcotics producing areas.

In the latter part of 1998, competing factions in Cambodia finally formed a coalition government, resulting from elections. We believe that at this crucial time, imposition of counter-narcotics sanctions would undermine U.S. interests in democracy and regional stability as well as limit antinarcotics efforts. The ability to provide strategically placed U.S. aid at the appropriate time can help strengthen Cambodian institutions, with the objective of promoting greater official accountability and adherence to the rule of law. Furthermore, it is in the U.S. interest for Cambodia to contribute to the political and economic stability of the region, which should be furthered by Cambodia's anticipated accession to ASEAN membership in 1999. Thus, on balance, the consequence for the United States related to the counter-narcotics setbacks are far outweighed by the risks of being unable to support the new coalition government now in place at this critical juncture.

China

China continued to take strong and effective measures to combat the use and trafficking of narcotic drugs in 1998. China is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, as well as to the 1961 UN Single Convention and its protocols, and the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances. The Chinese government is committed to achieving the goals of the 1988 Convention, implementing several new initiatives to strengthen its counternarcotics efforts at all levels, from apprehending and prosecuting traffickers to counteracting drug addition and abuse.

Preliminary figures indicate that during 1998 Chinese police seized record amounts of heroin, other illicit drugs, and precursor chemicals. The Chinese government sponsored a nationwide education campaign aimed primarily

at reducing drug use by youth. Narcotics enforcement cooperation between the United States and China continued to expand in 1998, with increased levels of training, professional exchanges, and tactical-level enforcement cooperation. The United States and China established a Joint Liaison Group on Law Enforcement Cooperation, and are taking steps to further enhance mutual legal assistance; in general, however, China's response to U.S. requests could have been more forthcoming. The DEA anticipates the assignment of permanent staff for its new office in Beijing sometime in 1999.

China is a major producer of precursor chemicals. The ephedra plant, from which the precursor chemical ephedrine is extracted, grows wild in northern China. China produces and legally exports potassium permanganate, which can be used in cocaine production. The Chinese government vigilantly monitors precursor chemical exports and has in place a system of pre-export notification. Yunnan, the province most directly affected by China's growing drug problem, goes further than the 22 chemicals on the 1988 Convention Watch List by monitoring exports of 28 chemicals. According to press reports, in the first ten months of 1998, Yunnan provincial law enforcement authorities seized more than 300 metric tons of precursor chemicals destined for illegal use, more than the amount confiscated nationwide in all of 1997. China supports a law enforcement program to increase interdiction in Yunnan Province under the auspices of the UNDCP and funded by the USG.

Although Chinese law prohibits laundering the proceeds from illegal narcotics trafficking, China's legal system and banking regulations generally have not kept pace with the country's rapid economic internationalization. Consequently, China is vulnerable to possible exploitation by drug traffickers, particularly from Burma, seeking to launder money.

Colombia

Colombia developed a solid record of success in meeting the 1998 certification criteria, with several notable exceptions. A new counter-narcotics strategy, developed by the incoming Pastrana administration earlier in the year, establishes a solid platform to frame efforts in the coming years. Such strategic planning was almost totally lacking in Colombia before then. The USG is working closely with the Government of Colombia (GOC) to refine and improve that strategy. Pastrana administration officials have been very receptive to U.S. offers of advice and assistance, and expressed a commitment in the Joint Alliance Against Drugs, signed during President Pastrana's visit in October 1998, to continue close cooperation as we advance our joint counter-narcotics goals. This willingness to cooperate closely is the greatest difference between the current status of efforts in Colombia and the checkered history of the last four years. While political will is difficult to measure and can only be tested by time, it appears that a corner has been turned in Colombia that will allow for much closer cooperation and greater results in the near future.

The Colombian National Police (CNP), under the leadership of General Rosso Jose Serrano, added to its record of outstanding performance in counter-narcotics. This year the CNP received more and better support from the Colombian armed services, and joint operations in southern Colombia began to show success. Such joint operations will be an important factor in the future of the program, given the increasing threat to counter-narcotics operations from heavily armed traffickers and the guerrillas and paramilitaries who are involved in many aspects of narcotics trafficking. For the third straight year, record levels of illicit crops were eradicated, although this eradication did not offset the continuing expansion of cultivation by the traffickers as part of their effort to concentrate the entire drug industry within Colombia. The CNP also had a strong year in terms of seizures and arrests of important traffickers.

Another key criterion was fully met when the GOC set up a successful program to register and regulate privately owned aircraft in Colombia, which has the effect of discouraging their use in narcotics trafficking. The GOC has also begun to take action on prison reform, a long-standing problem.

The biggest disappointment of 1998 was the 5–4 decision of the Colombian Constitutional Court in August to uphold the new Colombian extradition law as passed by Congress. The court rejected the claim advanced and supported by both the Samper and Pastrana administrations that procedural irregularities in the congressional votes resulted in the passage of a law which does not apply retroactively. The lack of retroactivity in the law severely limits its effectiveness. As a result, the law places the imprisoned Cali cartel kingpins beyond the reach of U.S. justice, at least with regard to crimes committed before passage of the extradition law in December 1997.

The judicial system continues to be the weakest link in Colombia's counternarcotics performance. 1998 saw little progress in resolving the endemic problems in a system that is plagued by corruption, incompetence and inefficiency. Asset forfeiture laws and money-laundering laws are still not enforced to any meaningful extent, and needed legislative reforms such as stiffer prison sentences for narcotics trafficking and establishment of legislation to deal with ongoing criminal enterprises have not been advanced.

Overall, however, Colombian counter-narcotics performance improved in 1998, and the arrival of the new Pastrana administration gives grounds for optimism about the future.

Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is a major transshipment point for drugs destined for the United States and Europe. Traffickers smuggle narcotics from Colombia, Venezuela, and Panama into Dominican territory by air and sea, and from Haiti by land routes. The drugs are then moved onward by air and sea to Puerto Rico and the United States.

The Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR) demonstrated strong counter-narcotics law enforcement and interdiction efforts in 1998. The GODR continued to cooperate fully with the USG on counter-narcotics goals and objectives, including expanded cooperation under the 1997 bilateral maritime interdiction agreement. Cocaine and heroin seizures increased dramatically in 1998. The GODR initiated a new border patrol unit to control the flow of drugs into the Dominican Republic from Haiti. For the first time ever, the Dominican Republic and Haiti cooperated on an anti-drug smuggling border operation. The GODR and the USG signed an agreement to establish a canine drug detection program at Dominican airports and seaports. Despite recent improvements, however, a weak judicial system continues to hamper law enforcement efforts.

In 1998, the GODR enacted legislation repealing a prohibition on the extradition of Dominican nationals and explicitly authorizing the extradition of nationals. The Dominican Republic subsequently extradited one of its nationals to the United States in 1998. We will continue to urge the GODR to act on a number of other U.S. extradition requests and to adopt a National Counter-Narcotics Master Plan.

Ecuador

Ecuador continues to be a major transit country for the shipment of cocaine from Colombia to the United States and Europe. Traffickers also use Ecuador for money laundering of drug profits and to transit precursor chemicals destined for Colombian drug labs. Some poppy and coca fields have been found within Ecuador, but there are no indications that significant amounts of heroin or cocaine are produced.

Although lack of adequate governmental funding for counter-narcotics programs and little interagency coordination are weak points, the Government of Ecuador (GOE) continued to demonstrate its cooperation and willingness to work closely with the USG in countering narcotics trafficking and transshipments, chemical diversions, money laundering, and judicial corruption/inefficiency. The GOE has also stated its willingness to improve bilateral cooperation in maritime interdiction.

The GOE has increased the effectiveness of its anti-narcotics activities by randomly deploying mobile road interdiction teams along Ecuadorian highways, a tactic which accounted for 40 percent of the drugs seized by the police. Successes for the national police included seizures of 42 kilograms of heroin and the seizure of 7.6 tons of cocaine from the Fishing Vessel DON CELSO. The GOE also deployed drug detector dogs at airports; inaugurated a Joint Information Coordination Center (JICC) in the major port city of Guayaquil; and passed legislation to combat corruption and inefficiency in the Customs Service. The Superintendent of Banks indicated strong interest in creating a joint task force to expedite interagency coordination in pursuing financial investigation regarding control of money laundering.

To improve the professionalism and efficiency of its enforcement efforts, the GOE has created a judicial police unit to foster closer coordination with prosecutors. The GOE also plans to create a separate anti-narcotics police unit within the judicial police system to allow greater concentration of efforts in this field.

Guatemala

President Arzu has taken Guatemala well down the road to reconciliation of its 36-year internal struggle. His efforts are now focused on combating violent crime, organized crime and other domestic issues. He has fully cooperated with the United States in combating counter-narcotics trafficking in Guatemala and in the region.

Guatemala's location and scarce law enforcement resources facilitate its continued use by traffickers as a transshipment and storage point for cocaine destined for the United States via Mexico. Along with increased use of motor vehicle and container shipments, there has been an increase in airdrops of illicit drugs over Guatemalan territory for consolidation and transshipment. With USG assistance, the Department of Anti-Narcotics Police (DOAN) has stepped up training to react to air shipments and efforts to develop air interdiction capabilities. The expanding self-funded port security program and the trained DOAN agents made impressive seizures in the past year.

The consolidation of the National Civilian Police (PNC) continues on track with full integration of the DOAN. The USG-trained DOAN seized almost 10 metric tons of cocaine in 1998. The drug prosecutor assistance program maintained its 90 percent conviction rate, with some traffickers receiving sentences of up to 20 years. The new drug prosecutor's field office in Quetzaltenango accounted for 110 successful prosecutions in 1998.

Guatemala is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention and most GOG law enforcement activities are fully consistent with its goals and objectives. However, some of the Convention's provisions have not been codified into law and regulations, including provisions on extradition and money laundering. President Arzu has also been unsuccessful in gaining legislative support for ratification of a full maritime counter-narcotics agreement.

In 1998, the Government of Guatemala (GOG) began implementation of its national drug policy, the anti-drug master plan, and national strategy which incorporates both demand and supply reduction objectives to be accomplished by specified ministries. The GOG provided additional funding to plan implementers to attack the alarming increase in drug abuse docu-

mented last year. The GOG also took major steps in implementing assets seizure and precursor chemicals regulations.

Haiti

Haiti in 1998 made significant progress in a number of areas of counternarcotics performance and cooperation, but a political impasse spanning the entire year precluded passage by Parliament of key antidrug laws and other important steps. Resource constraints—Haiti is the hemisphere's poorest country—and the lack of an effective judiciary also reduced the effectiveness of Haitian counter-narcotics efforts. As a result, Haiti fell short of agreed-upon counter-drug goals and cannot be certified as having fully cooperated with the United States or on its own to meet the goals and objectives of the 1988 UN Drug Convention, to which Haiti is a party. However, the vital national interests of the United States require that foreign assistance continue to be provided to Haiti.

Haiti is a significant transshipment point for drugs, primarily cocaine, moving through the Caribbean from South America to the United States. The increased flow through Haiti is directly related to the success of interdiction operations in other parts of the region and the perception that the Government of Haiti (GOH) is ill-prepared to respond.

The certification goals set, in consultation with GOH, for 1998 were: to present to Parliament for passage a set of anti-drug trafficking laws, including money laundering and asset forfeiture, which were drafted in 1997; to begin implementing the "National Master Plan for Combating Drugs in Haiti" drafted in 1997; and to target at least one major international narcotics organization for significant enforcement action.

Haiti did not meet two of these three goals, principally because of the prolonged political impasse between the executive and legislative branches, funding shortfalls, and insufficiencies in institutional structures. The political stalemate prevented the parliamenary ratification of a Prime Minister with executive authority throughout 1998. This meant that, in accordance with the constitution, no new legislation, including the anti-drug laws and the National Master Plan, could be presented to the Parliament for enactment. (Indeed, the Parliament failed to act even on legislation clearing the way for significant new international loans, in which all Haitian parties presumably had an interest.)

Although there was some implementation of elements of the Master Plan, GOH efforts to investigate, arrest, prosecute, or convict members of international drug trafficking organizations were lacking. This lack of success, however, must be understood in the broader context of Haiti's pervasive poverty, its dysfunctional judicial system, the still limited capabilities of the four-year-old Haitian National Police (HNP), and the inexperience and inadequacy of the two-year-old police anti-narcotics unit (BLTS).

Although most of the specific goals set during the year were not achieved, Haiti's performance and cooperation with the United States improved significantly in a number of key areas. Haiti signed a Joint Information Coordination Center (JICC) agreement with the United States. The entire staffs of the JICC and BLTS were polygraphed. Under a DEA-mentored task force concept, the flow of cocaine from Panama through Port-au-Prince airport has been reduced. Port-au-Prince's seaport is now the target of periodic inspections, including by U.S. Customs Service sniffer dogs in November. The HNP has indicated it will cooperate on the expulsion to the United States of third country nationals who are the subjects of U.S. indictments. The Haitian Coast Guard fully cooperated with the USCG "ship rider" program, and is increasingly demonstrating independent initiative at sea. The HNP counternarcotics unit increased the quantity of drugs seized without direct USG assistance. The GOH also initiated the first joint Haitian-Dominican drug monitoring effort at the Malpasse-Jimani border crossing.

A vital national interests certification is appropriate and necessary. A cutoff of U.S. bilateral assistance mandated by denial of certification would adversely affect vital U.S. national interests in Haiti, including ending the ongoing political crisis, promoting economic stability and democracy, and stemming the flow of illegal drugs and migrants to the United States.

Denial of certification would terminate USG programs that provide critical support for Haiti's fragile economy. Without external assistance and the police mentoring that accompanies it, economic stability and growth would be jeopardized, with consequent renewed pressure on illegal immigration to the United States.

USG and other international programs that go beyond counter-narcotics assistance also address underlying problems in the Haitian law enforcement and judicial systems, especially endemic corruption and the lack of a strong professional tradition, that contribute to a weak anti-drug performance. A cutoff of USG programs and the votes against multilateral development bank funding would undermine USG efforts and reduce the incentive for Haitian counter-narcotics entities to improve that performance.

The risks posed to all of these U.S. interests by a cutoff of bilateral assistance outweigh the risks posed by Haiti's failure to cooperate fully with the USG or to take adequate steps on its own to combat illicit narcotics. Haiti's inability to fulfill key counter-narcotics commitments in 1998 precludes full certification, but decertification would deny GOH many of the desperately needed resources to make progress in the counter-narcotics and other arenas.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong traffickers continue to control large portions of Southeast Asian narcotics traffic, arranging both the financing and shipping of narcotics through Asian ports. In 1998, none of the heroin seizures in Hong Kong appeared destined for the U.S. market. No major heroin seizures in the United States had clearly transited Hong Kong. However, historical precedent, geographic location, transportation infrastructure, and trade activity suggest that Hong Kong remains an important factor in heroin supply to the United States.

Hong Kong uses a multi-pronged strategy in combating drug trafficking and abuse, incorporating legislation and law enforcement, treatment and rehabilitation, preventive education and public awareness, and international cooperation. Money laundering, which often stems from drug trade proceeds, is a serious issue for the Hong Kong authorities. The Financial Action Task Force reviewed Hong Kong's financial system in April 1998. Hong Kong played an active role in reducing illicit trafficking of narcotics and precursor chemicals, another major concern, through its participation in the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs as part of the People's Republic of China delegation. During 1998, a new extradition treaty between the United States and Hong Kong entered into force. Hong Kong also signed mutual legal assistance agreements with several countries and, in December 1998, the United States ratified a Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement and a Prisoner Transfer Agreement with Hong Kong. Both agreements await legislative approval in Hong Kong.

While trafficking and money laundering remain issues for Hong Kong, the authorities of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region have launched serious efforts in all areas of enforcement and have been exemplary partners with the United States in the battle against narcotics.

India

India, an important producer both of licit and illicit narcotics, is also a crossroads for international narcotics trafficking. There was no USG illicit poppy survey in India in 1998. Indian authorities claimed there were less than 100 hectares of illicit cultivation, but the last available USG surveys in 1996 and 1997 identified 3,100 and 2,000 hectares of illicit opium poppy, respectively.

India's location between the two main sources of illicit opium, Burma and Afghanistan, as well as its relatively well-developed transportation infrastructure, make it an ideal heroin transit point. There was credible evidence of large amounts of Burmese heroin being trafficked through India's northeastern border with Burma. However, there is no evidence at this time to indicate that opiates transshipped through India reach the United States in significant amounts.

The Government of India (GOI) continues its progress in controlling the production and export of narcotics chemical precursors produced by India's large chemical industry. The GOI controls restrict access to acetic anhydride (AA), a chemical used to process opium into heroin. Nevertheless, there were unauthorized exports of essential chemical precursors and methaqualone (mandrax), a popular drug in Africa. Despite GOI precautions, in late 1998, there was growing evidence of AA entering Burma via India's porous Northeastern border for use in Burmese heroin refining. The GOI has a cooperative relationship with the DEA. However, there has been limited success in prosecuting major narcotics offenders because of the lack of enforcement funding and weaknesses in the intelligence and judicial infrastructure.

In 1998, India took concrete steps to deter trafficking and control chemicals. The GOI systematically combatted illicit opium cultivation by combining remote sensing information with raids and the destruction of illicit crops. The Narcotics Control Board (NCB) continues to monitor industry manufacture and sales of controlled and precursor chemicals carefully, resulting in a price rise of precursor chemicals for illicit use. The NCB fully staffed three new zonal offices opened in 1996 along the border with Pakistan, and they are now fully operational. The zonal office in Imphal, Manipur, is also being fully staffed to add a greater enforcement presence in the northeast.

GOI counter-narcotics officials increased their cooperation with drug liaison officers from countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa to undertake a successful series of controlled delivery operations in 1998. These operations, many through parcel post, resulted in the arrest of more than 18 persons and the seizure of quantities of heroin, hashish, and methaqualone. The GOI has created the position of Joint Secretary for Narcotics in the Ministry of Finance reporting directly to the Revenue Secretary in order to tighten licit and illicit narcotics controls. This position has also increased the flow of information to Mini-Dublin Group countries and other bilateral and multilateral donors. Finally, to decrease the backlog of cases, the GOI continues to work with special state courts for narcotics matters, and federal narcotics enforcement officials continue to meet quarterly with their state government counterparts to share information and provide training. Federal efforts have spurred the formation of specialized narcotics units in state and metropolitan police agencies.

India is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, but has not yet enacted supporting legislation on money laundering or asset seizure under civil law. This supporting legislation is now being prepared for resubmission to the Parliament. However, with the cooperation of UNDCP, the GOI hosted a regional conference on money laundering in New Delhi in March 1998. The conference focused on harmonizing regional efforts to fight money laundering and brought together experts from all over South Asia.

In order to build on this progress, the USG will encourage GOI to take several important law enforcement steps in 1999. India needs to increase seizures of drugs sharply and to investigate and dismantle smuggling rings. The GOI should give increased priority to combating trafficking on the Indo/Burma border, which may be at least five metric tons of heroin per

year. The GOI should pass the amendments to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS) of 1985, introduced into Parliament in August 1997, which would modernize the criminal justice system.

India is the world's largest producer of licit opiates for pharmaceutical use and the only producer of licit gum opium. The GOI continues to tighten its control over diversion of licit opium. However, some opium continues to be diverted from the country's legal production. The GOI estimates diversion at about 10 percent, although it may be as high as 30 percent. As a licit producer of opium, India must meet an additional certification requirement. In accordance with Section 490(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act, India may not be certified unless it maintains licit production and stockpiles at levels no higher than those consistent with licit market demand and has taken adequate steps to prevent significant diversion of its licit cultivation and production into illicit markets and to prevent illicit cultivation and production.

Production and stockpile of licit opium in India has clearly not exceeded licit market demand. Indeed, India's stockpile has been barely adequate for some time and disastrous weather during the 1997–1998 poppy growing season, combined with a cultivator's "strike" which delayed planting, led to a 1998 harvest that is one of the smallest on record: about 260 metric tons (MT), well under even initial GOI estimates. To meet domestic and international licit demand, the GOI now concedes that it has been forced to "completely exhaust" its licit opium stockpile, leaving no carryover stock from 1998 whatsoever. This precarious situation makes an adequate 1999 harvest extremely important, and the USG is thus encouraging increased licit production.

To meet India's share of anticipated world demand for licit opium in 1999, and begin rebuilding domestic stockpiles to about 750 MT, the GOI plans to produce a licit opium harvest of at least 1300 MT in 1999, just below the 1997 record harvest. To meet this goal, the GOI has decided to reverse years of reductions in acreage (to improve control of diversion) and to sharply increase both the area under cultivation and the number of licit opium cultivators. Acreage will be increased by 32 percent; licit cultivators will more than double.

In 1998, India took six important steps to increase licit opium production to meet market demand and rebuild the stockpile while curtailing the diversion of licit opium. These steps included: (1) sharply raising the number of hectares to be cultivated for the 1998–1999 poppy growing season; (2) retaining the highest-ever minimum qualifying yield at 52 kilograms/hectare to discourage diversion from the licit crop; (3) raising the prices paid to opium cultivators to increase incentives for declaring and selling to GOI all licit opium; (4) expanding licit opium diversion controls to include re-surveys of plots after the planted crop reaches a particular stage of growth to ensure that the area under cultivation matches the amount of land licensed; (5) destroying cultivation more than five percent above the licensed amount with the cultivator liable for prosecution; and (6) raising licit opium diversion-related offenses by licensed cultivators to the level of trafficking offenses, with convictions resulting in 10 to 20 years imprisonment and fines up to U.S. \$6,000.

While these are important steps to curb diversion, the USG believes even more must be done, given the significant planned increase in hectarage and farmers. The USG will work with the GOI to increase diversion controls. Despite the assent of a high-ranking GOI official in February 1998 to undertake a comprehensive joint opium yield survey with the USG, the GOI has not yet signed the necessary formal agreement. A joint licit opium survey would provide a firmer scientific basis for the GOI to set minimum qualifying yields (MQY) for licit opium farmers. More realistic MQYs would facilitate governmental controls on diversion and forecasting the supply of licit opiates.

Jamaica

Jamaica is a major transit point for South American cocaine en route to the United States and is also the largest Caribbean producer and exporter of marijuana. During 1998, the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) made some progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the 1988 UN Drug Convention, to which it became a party in 1995. At regional meetings, GOJ officials actively supported counter-drug initiatives. Bilateral counter-drug cooperation is good and improving, especially in the area of maritime law enforcement. The U.S.-Jamaica bilateral maritime agreement, proposed by the USG in July 1995, came into force when Jamaica passed enabling legislation in February 1998. Jamaican forces participated in several combined operations under the new agreement.

During 1998, the GOJ removed four persons to the United States, three by extradition and one under a waiver of extradition, compared to three removals in 1997. The USG and GOJ worked together to remove from the list of pending extradition requests all non-active cases, leaving 17 pending requests for which the United States seeks early resolution.

GOJ's cannabis eradication during 1998 was down only slightly from 1997, despite a lack of helicopter and fixed wing air support. Marijuana and cocaine seizures and drug-related arrests increased significantly over 1997; hash oil seizures were down. The GOJ made a valuable contribution to regional anti-drug efforts by assuming funding of operating costs of the Caribbean Regional Drug Law Enforcement Training Center, located near Kingston and built with USG funding under a UNDCP project.

In 1998, the Lower House of Parliament passed amendments to the existing anti-money laundering legislation; Senate action is pending. If passed by the Senate, the proposed amendments would raise the threshold for mandatory transaction reporting from U.S. \$10,000 to U.S. \$50,000 equivalent, but would also introduce a new requirement that suspicious transactions in any amount be reported. Further GOJ action is required to bring its anti-money laundering law in line with international standards, especially extending the law to cover the laundering of the proceeds of all serious crime.

Current Jamaican law requires the conviction of a criminal drug defendant prior to commencing a forfeiture action. The GOJ forfeited the house of a convicted drug trafficker in 1998. However, Jamaica's current asset forfeiture regime does not permit the GOJ to take full advantage of the forfeiture mechanism to augment the resources of its anti-drug agencies and deprive criminals of the proceeds of their crime.

In 1998, the GOJ did not table in Parliament a precursor and essential chemical control law, despite stated commitments to do so for the last several years. However, the GOJ has budgeted for implementation of chemical controls, and the USG has already provided training to Jamaican precursor chemical control personnel. The GOJ did table in Parliament anti-corruption legislation, which is currently under debate. Corruption, especially among members of the security and law enforcement forces remains a serious problem in Jamaica, and the GOJ should take stronger action to prosecute corrupt individuals.

In 1998, the GOJ arrested 7,352 drug offenders, and the Supreme Court reported 10,290 convictions of drug offenders. However, even though GOJ counter-drug cooperation with DEA continued to be good, no Jamaican drug kingpins were arrested or convicted during 1998. The GOJ has agreed to develop in the coming year, with USG assistance, special units to target drug kingpins and apprehend fugitives from justice.

The GOJ has in place a comprehensive national drug control strategy which covers both supply and demand reduction; the GOJ should add to its strategy specific goals and objectives and measures of effectiveness. The GOJ also should ratify the Inter-American Convention against Corruption,

and, as it mandates, put in place legislation that requires financial disclosure by public officials. The GOJ also needs to take stronger steps to strengthen internal controls and investigate and prosecute corrupt members of the security and law enforcement forces.

The USG will continue to provide technical assistance, training, and equipment to the GOJ to help strengthen its anti-drug, anti-money laundering and anti-corruption laws and enforcement capabilities. In addition, the USG will continue to assist the GOJ to address port security problems identified in a 1997 comprehensive assessment.

Laos

Laos remains the world's third largest producer of illicit opium, trailing only Burma and Afghanistan. However, because small-scale subsistence farmers, without fertilizer, irrigation, or other agricultural improvements grow opium, Lao yields average less than half those found in neighboring Burma.

For the 1998 growing season, although opium cultivation fell only seven percent, adverse weather conditions, which also affected opium production in Burma and Thailand, dramatically affected production levels. The United States estimates Lao potential opium production for 1998 at 140 metric tons, down 33 percent from the previous year. Significant decreases in production can also be attributed to lower productivity per hectare due to crop substitution in project areas funded by foreign donors. These areas continued to show only low levels of opium cultivation, none of which was for commercial distribution, but rather was restricted to small amounts for local use.

In January 1998, a heroin laboratory was seized in Bokeo province, the first such seizure this decade. In July, the position of Chairman of the Lao National Drug Commission was raised to ministerial rank. A DEA agent was assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane for the first time since 1975. Laos is not yet a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, but the government of Laos (GOL) has set a goal of ratification by the year 2000.

Laos' location next to the world's largest producer of opium and heroin (Burma), and its land borders with countries that combine important opium markets and ports on trade routes to Europe and the United States (China, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia), make it an important route for drug trafficking. The GOL does what it can to combat trafficking and has shown itself ready to work very closely with the international donor community to attack the socio-economic problems underlying poppy cultivation in Laos. The GOL has already opened four Drug Control Units, and is determined to open one in each of the country's provinces.

Mexico

Mexico made significant counter-narcotics progress in 1998. Building on presidential commitments made in May 1997, the United States and Mexico developed a Bi-National Drug Strategy—released in February 1998—which identified sixteen areas for cooperation in reducing the illicit consumption, production and trafficking in drugs. Later in 1998, the two countries developed Performance Measures of Effectiveness for the Strategy to guide its implementation and to provide a means of monitoring progress. The Measures were formally adopted during President Clinton's trip to Mexico in February 1999. The U.S.-Mexico High-Level Contact Group on Narcotics Control (HLCG) and the Senior Law Enforcement Plenary continued to serve as the principal fora for coordination of bilateral counter-narcotics cooperation.

USG agencies enjoy productive working relationships with Government of Mexico (GOM) counterparts across a broad range of counter-narcotics programs. The two governments have established numerous mechanisms, both formal and informal, to promote good communication and coordination.

The most serious obstacles to both bilateral counter-narcotics cooperation and the effectiveness of Mexican agencies in combating the major drug cartels relate to institutional weaknesses, such as lack of adequate resources and training and widespread drug-related corruption. The GOM took a number of important steps in 1998 to address these problems. For example, for the first time ever, the Office of the Attorney General (PGR) implemented an intensive screening process for recruits to law enforcement as well as for all personnel assigned to sensitive positions. This level of screening will eventually be expanded to all PGR personnel. These kinds of reforms, along with bilateral training activities, are helping to build confidence between USG and GOM authorities, resulting in improved bilateral cooperation.

The GOM also took steps during 1998 to implement important legislative reforms designed to enhance efforts against drug trafficking and organized crime. Among these steps were introduction of legislation regulating seized property to allow for asset forfeiture and sharing, streamlining the Mexican code of criminal procedure to facilitate prosecution of drug traffickers, and reducing the ability of employees dismissed for corruption to be reinstated upon appeal. In an effort to enhance professionalism and increase capabilities, Mexican law enforcement and judicial officials participated actively during 1998 in various bilateral training programs designed to improve management of evidence, electronic surveillance, asset forfeiture, drug detection, and fraud investigation.

During 1998, Mexican authorities arrested numerous drug traffickers, including Jesus and Luis Amezcua (major methamphetamine traffickers wanted for extradition to the United States), twenty members of the Amado Carrillo Fuentes Organization (the Juarez Cartel), the former military commander of Baja California, and two Federal Judicial Police chiefs. Notable convictions and sentences for drug-related crimes in 1998 include former Drug Czar Army General Gutierrez Rebollo (sentenced to almost 14 years for offenses involving illegal possession and transportation of firearms and abuse of authority), and Ernesto "Don Neto" Fonseca Carrillo (sentenced on drug charges to 11 years, in addition to time he is serving for the 1985 murder of a DEA agent). Over 10,000 Mexican nationals and 255 foreign nationals were arrested on drug-related charges.

On the basis of legislation and regulations adopted in 1996–97, the GOM made progress last year in detecting and prosecuting instances of money laundering. The Financial Investigative Unit established in 1997 in Mexico's Finance Ministry continued to work closely with USG counterparts on money laundering investigations, providing leads, follow-up and access to witnesses. With informational assistance and technical support from the USG, the GOM increased seizures of drug traffickers' assets in 1998, including a \$250 million seizure of assets connected to Alcides Ramon-Magana in Cancun. Mexico's first successful prosecution for money laundering demonstrated encouraging progress in 1998.

The GOM sustained its massive interdiction and eradication programs throughout 1998. For example, Mexican law enforcement and military personnel seized 22.6 metric tons of cocaine and over 1,000 metric tons of marijuana. They eradicated for an entire growing season approximately 9,500 hectares of opium poppy and 9,500 hectares of cannabis. The GOM continued cooperation with the USG in interdicting drug shipments throughout 1998. For example, during one major event, the GOM seized three tons of cocaine from a trafficking vessel forced to land by coordinated action by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Mexican Navy. In addition, bilateral cooperation in using U.S. air assets to detect and monitor drug flights increased in 1998.

Both governments recognize that much remains to be done to dismantle the major international drug cartels, which pose such a serious threat to both nations. The criminal organizations based in Mexico are well financed and violent, placing Mexican law enforcement and military personnel at grave risk. The persistent corrupting influence of these groups is also an important concern for the GOM. President Zedillo has publicly underscored his commitment to combat drug trafficking and to strengthen Mexico's law enforcement institutions. He reaffirmed this commitment to U.S. officials, including in a June 1998 meeting with President Clinton at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs. In February 1999, the GOM announced a major public security initiative which will significantly intensify the national anti-drug effort. Despite an austere budgetary situation, President Zedillo has directed the GOM to invest up to \$500 million over the next three years on enhancements to the nation's capabilities to interdict drug shipments, to combat the major drug trafficking organizations, and to counter the corrupting influences that these organizations exert in both the public and private sectors. the initiative also calls for a major effort to address street crime and violence.

The USG and the GOM have carefully nurtured positive working relationships, and the goodwill resulting from those efforts will remain essential as both Governments continue to confront the shared threat of international drug trafficking.

Nigeria

Nigeria has failed to fully meet the criteria for cooperation with the United States on counter-narcotics matters and has not taken adequate steps on its own to meet the goals of the 1988 UN Drug Convention. The vital national interests of the United States, however, require that Nigeria be certified in order that assistance, otherwise withheld, might be provided to support the transition to democratic civilian rule and the increased efforts to improve cooperation on counter-narcotics and other crime evident during recent months.

Nigeria remains the hub of African narcotics trafficking. Nigerian criminal organizations operate global narcotics trafficking networks. They control sub-Saharan African drug markets, transport heroin from Asia to Africa, Europe and the United States, and transport cocaine from South America to Europe, Africa and Asia. Nigerian smugglers are responsible for a significant portion of the heroin used in the United States. Marijuana, the only narcotic grown in Nigeria, is exported to Europe and other African nations, but has little impact on the United States.

Nigerian counter-narcotics efforts remain unfocused and lacking in material support. New head of state General Abubakar's strong public stand against narcotics trafficking and other crimes was a welcome change from past indifference, but has not yet resulted in new policies or action. The Government of Nigeria (GON) reaffirmed the existing bilateral basis for extraditions, but had not yet concluded any extraditions by the end of 1998. The 1995 National Drug Strategy remains unimplemented; wage increases that would have given law enforcement personnel a living wage for the first time in more than a decade were announced, but have not yet been implemented. Nigerian law enforcement continues to suffer from lack of material support, insufficient training, and widespread corruption.

In 1998, there was some progress with the interdiction of low level couriers, gradual improvements in the capabilities of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), and the intensification of basic demand reduction efforts. The NDLEA made a number of seizures from individual couriers, but no major drug traffickers were prosecuted or convicted; total heroin seizures decreased. The increasingly sophisticated bulk and mail concealment methods of drug traffickers are moving beyond the capabilities of Nigerian law enforcement to detect them. The GON did not share counter-narcotics intelligence with the USG. A limited number of asset seizures were made, none against major traffickers or money launderers, and no asset seizures were prosecuted to conclusion. Nigeria has only just begun to acknowledge the depth of its own drug abuse problem. Demand reduction efforts have intensified with the opening of anti-drug clubs at Nigerian universities, and their endowment with anti-drug literature and videos. Most of these

efforts, however, are nascent and are hindered by the continuing misperception that drug abuse is a "foreign" problem.

Nigerian money launderers operate sophisticated global networks to repatriate illicit proceeds from narcotics trafficking, financial fraud and other crimes. Efforts to enforce the well-drafted money laundering decree were uneven and superficial, and did not result in any convictions or asset seizures that were prosecuted to conclusion.

Nigeria is one of the most important countries in Africa. What happens in Nigeria politically and economically will, to a large degree, determine whether there is stability and progress toward democracy and economic reform in West Africa. If Nigeria's ongoing transition fails, it could easily result in an implosion of government and the collapse of the economy, triggering a humanitarian disaster in Africa's most populous country, with over 100 million people, and a destabilizing exodus of Nigerians to neighboring states. Such an upheaval could also disrupt the movement of high-quality Nigerian oil, which accounts for more than seven percent of total U.S. petroleum imports.

If, on the other hand, Nigeria's transition succeeds, it will be an example to all of Africa, and has the potential to lead to economic growth and greater transparency in government. Nigeria could become an engine for growth in West Africa. A stable and democratic Nigeria will permit greater cooperation between law enforcement agencies, and the opportunity to reduce the impact of Nigerian criminals who prey on the American people.

The military's acceptance of its appropriate role in a functioning democracy, and the new civilian government's ability to govern, will be critically impaired if Nigeria if deprived of the full range of U.S. support. Building a political consensus and meeting the challenges of a collapsing economy will also depend in no small part on outside assistance and expertise.

Denial of certification would block assistance the new democratically-elected government will need to meet these challenges, seriously damaging the prospects for success of stable, transparent democracy in Nigeria. U.S. vital national interests require providing humanitarian, economic and security assistance to Nigeria as well as counter-narcotics assistance from all sources. The risk of not doing so now would jeopardize not only Nigeria's transition to democracy, but also Nigeria's attempts to reinvigorate its failing economy and support for democracy and peacekeeping throughout the region. Further, any new civilian government's ability to work with the United States on all issues, including counter-narcotics and other law enforcement, will depend on its access to multilateral lending and U.S. technical and economic assistance. The risks posed by the cutoff of assistance clearly outweigh the risks associated with GON's inadequate counter-narcotics performance over the past year.

Pakistan

In 1998, Pakistan advanced toward its goal to eliminate opium poppy in the year 2000, by reducing opium poppy cultivation by 26 percent. The atmosphere for cooperation on drug control between Pakistan and the United States also improved significantly. Pakistan extradited two narcotics fugitives to the United States, whereas none were extradited in 1997.

The Government of Pakistan (GOP) undertook an unprecedented poppy eradication campaign in some of its most inaccessible territory, which reduced cultivation by 26 percent and production by 24 percent and decreased the cultivation level to significantly below that of 1996. Despite financial constraints, the GOP ensured that wheat for planting alternative crops arrived in poppy-growing areas in time for the October planting, to forestall a return to poppy cultivation.

Narcotics seizures were down, with heroin seizures down 48 percent. The GOP did, however, prevent the re-emergence of heroin/morphine labora-

tories in Pakistan, although some labs moved across the border into still chaotic Afghanistan. In November, the Prime Minister pledged to take steps to strengthen Pakistan's law enforcement agencies, particularly the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF).

To meet law enforcement goals, a number of important arrests were made in 1998, including three individuals arrested in conjunction with heroin shipments that exceeded 100 kilograms. The GOP also arrested Faheem Babar, a major Lahore trafficker, whose arrest led to the discovery of an important drug trafficking organization operating with the alleged collaboration of at least one mid-level government official. Assets of drug traffickers totaling \$5.8 million were frozen in 1998, and for the first time, a High Court ruled in favor of forfeiture of the assets to the government.

The GOP took several important steps to strengthen law enforcement in 1998. The Control of Narcotics Substances Act and the Anti-Narcotics Forces Act were extended to the tribal areas of the Northwest Frontier Province, a major drug trafficking area. For the first time, Pakistan's antinarcotics laws can be legally enforced in Pakistan's tribal areas. The GOP also approved cooperation with DEA for the establishment of a special vetted unit within the ANF.

To meet extradition goals, the GOP extradited two drug traffickers on the extradition list and arrested three more. Many extradition requests remain problematic, as neither DEA nor the GOP have addresses for many extraditables within Pakistan. The GOP also requested certification that the cases were still pending in U.S. courts. To meet anti-corruption goals, in 1998, ANF removed 70 corrupt officials from its ranks.

Pakistan's counter-narcotics performance improved in many aspects from last year's record. Independent of USG assistance, the GOP took a number of steps on its own to meet the goals and objectives of the 1988 UN Drug Convention, including: extending the Control of Narcotics Substances Act and the Anti-Narcotics Act to tribal areas in the Northwest Frontier Province; freezing significant drug trafficking assets; arresting several major drug traffickers; and dismissing corrupt counter-narcotics officials.

The GOP also actively and fully cooperated with the USG beginning in April to meet a number of important mutual counter-narcotics goals, including: an agreement with DEA to establish the special vetted unit; increased extraditions; arrests of some major drug traffickers; and the location of illicit poppy fields for the spring poppy eradication program.

The GOP should take immediate steps to improve its performance in a number of areas, including: significantly improved narcotics seizures; convictions of major drug traffickers; closure of pending cases against two prominent drug offenders, Sakhi Dost Jan Notezai and Munawar Hussain Manj; concentration of law enforcement resources in investigations, arrests, prosecutions and convictions of drug kingpins; and steps to enact and implement the narcotics-related money laundering provisions of the Control of Narcotics Substances Act and to approve formally the Drug Abuse Control Master Plan.

Panama

Panama is a major transit point for Colombian cocaine and heroin en route to the United States. Cocaine passes through Panamanaian territorial waters concealed in fishing boats, "go-fast" boats and ocean freighters. Some of it is offloaded on the Panamanian coast and then transported by truck up the Pan American highway bound for the United States, or carried by couriers travelling by air to the United States and Europe.

There is no evidence that any senior officials of the Government of Panama (GOP) are involved in drug smuggling. Nor does government policy encourage or facilitate drug-related criminal activity. However, the amount of drugs seized by Panama's neighbors to the north on the Pan American highway

suggests either inadequate inspections or corruption on the part of GOP border officials. The judiciary, with its traditional susceptibility to political influence and threats, remains a concern because of plans for it to assume control of the Judicial Technical Police, the principal partner of USG counternarcotics operations.

The GOP continued implementation of its national counter-narcotics plan and its excellent cooperation with USG counterparts in 1998. Collection of information by the Financial Investigations and the Financial Analysis Units also improved during 1998. However, very little progress was made on bringing cases to prosecution. Panama remained active in international fora and associations targeting money laundering including the Egmont Group, the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), the Basel Committee's Offshore Group of Bank Supervisors, and the Commission Against Addiction and Illicit Drug Trafficking (CICAD) of the Organization of American States.

In 1998, GOP officials seized 11.771 metric tons of cocaine and 22 kilos of heroin. Although the lack of resources for counter-narcotics police remains a problem, with USG assistance, the facilities and equipment of the Panamanian National Maritime Service have been upgraded, facilitating the highest level of cooperation on maritime interdiction in the region. Maritime operations included several shiprider operations and numerous occasions of information sharing and cooperation on maritime drug interdiction.

Highest priority in the coming year will be signing a maritime counternarcotics agreement, achieving greater success in prosecuting money launderers, expanding money laundering legislation to include the profits of all crimes, and increasing interdiction capabilities of the Panamanian counter-narcotics police.

Paraguay

Up to 40 metric tons of primarily Bolivian cocaine are estimated to transit Paraguay annually, en route through Argentina and Brazil to the United States, Europe and Africa. Paraguay is also a source country for high-quality marijuana. Significant money laundering occurs, but it is unclear what portion is drug-related.

In 1998, Paraguay signed a new bilateral extradition treaty with the United States that includes extradition of nationals. Modest improvements in counter-narcotics performance were achieved after the inauguration of the Cubas administration in August, such as the seizure of 215 kilograms of cocaine (more than the previous two years combined) and arrests of numerous low-level narcotics traffickers.

However, the Government of Paraguay (GOP) failed to accomplish the majority of the agreed-upon counter-narcotics goals for 1998 in a manner sufficient for full certification. Paraguay did not implement its national drug control strategy through effective investigations leading to the arrest and prosecution of major drug traffickers, corrupt officials and their associates; drafted, but did not pass a revised anti-drug statute which includes provisions authorizing controlled deliveries and undercover operations, and criminalizes drug-related conspiracy; failed to effectively implement the new money-laundering statute; and failed to develop an effective anti-drug and organized crime investigative and operational capability for the tri-border area. In part, these shortcomings stem from the country having been distracted by the May elections and later by continued political turmoil over the status of former Army Commander, and unsuccessful 1996 coup plotter, Lino Oviedo.

Denial of certification would, however, cut off assistance programs designed to meet the priority USG goal of strengthening Paraguay's democratic institutions and civil-military relations. This would reduce USG support for Paraguay's democracy at a time when it is being tested by conflict

between the executive branch and the legislative and judicial branches, and calls by some Paraguayans for extraconstitutional measures. Denial of certification would also jeopardize ongoing cooperation and assistance programs with the GOP against other key areas such as intellectual property piracy and terrorism. Moreover, vital national interests certification would help promote the political will and positive action against narcotics trafficking that we continue to seek from the new Cubas administration.

The risks posed to the totality of U.S. interests (i.e., promoting democracy, cooperation against intellectual piracy and continued counter-terrorism cooperation) by a cutoff of bilateral assistance outweigh the risks posed by GOP's failure to cooperate fully with the USG, or to take fully adequate steps to combat narcotics on its own.

For 1999, Paraguayan counter-narcotics and anti-money laundering institutions need to be strengthened and given independence from political institutions and intrigue. With strong civilian leadership and cooperation among the President, congress and the courts, as well as adequate resources and legal authorities, the GOP could achieve all of its stated goals.

Peru

Peru achieved a 26 percent decline in coca cultivation in 1998, yielding a total reduction of 56 percent since 1995. Eradication of illegal coca cultivation reached an all-time record of 7,825 hectares, nearly doubling the Government of Peru (GOP) target goal of 4,000. In terms of hectarage, an estimated 51,000 hectares of coca cultivation remains, down from an estimated 115,300 hectares in 1995. In the past two years, a strong law enforcement program focused on trafficking organizations and transportation infrastructure, combined with an efficient coca eradication program, led to a collapse in coca leaf prices. The reduction in coca leaf prices prompted greater numbers of farmers to accept the economic alternatives to coca offered by the USG-Peru alternative development project, which continued to expand in 1998. However, coca leaf prices began to rise throughout Peru in August. This trend may reflect multiple factors, including new transportation methods, new markets for Peruvian drugs, natural market forces, and possibly increased cocaine hydrochloride (HCl) production in Peru.

As traffickers have adapted and developed new smuggling methods on Peru's rivers, land borders and maritime routes, Peruvian counter-narcotics agencies, the Peruvian National Police (PNP) and the Peruvian Coast Guard established several riverine counter-narcotics bases and increased resources for riverine operations. Cooperating with U.S., Colombian and Brazilian law enforcement personnel, PNP exchanged counter-narcotics intelligence and participated in joint law enforcement operations in the Amazonian tri-border area. The PNP, working in close cooperation with U.S. and other Andean counter-narcotics agencies, also pursued and arrested major drug trafficking organizations with both U.S. and international cocaine trafficking connections.

The successful "airbridge denial" program has significantly shaped trafficking patterns in Peru and has caused the traffickers to develop alternative methods of transport to export drugs. While traffickers continue to fly large quantities of coca products out of Peru, particularly through Brazil, river and overland routes are increasingly used as intermediate steps in the export process. Overland routes, particularly north into Ecuador and south into Chile and Bolivia, are complementing maritime conveyance of drugs through Peru's coastal ports. The GOP is responding to the change by developing riverine and other counter-narcotics transit control strategies, using USG assistance and training.

In 1998, the joint USG-GOP alternative development program operated in five valleys of Peru to strengthen local governments, provide access to basic services and promote licit economic activities, thereby establishing the social and economic basis for the permanent elimination of coca. A total of 239 communities have signed coca reduction agreements to reduce coca by approximately 16,300 hectares over a five-year period. Two hundred more agreements are expected to be signed by the end of 1998. Licit economic activities involving assistance for more than 25,000 hectares of licit crops are focused on rehabilitating coffee and cocao plantations abandoned during the "coca boom." One hundred thirty kilometers of rural roads and four bridges have been constructed. Other donors are expected to provide additional resources for infrastructure development.

Donors participating in the November 1998 Peru Consultative Group in Brussels described Peru as a model of effective counter-narcotics policy, balancing interdiction with alternative development and demonstrating a willingness to make tough decisions required to achieve sustained illicit coca reduction. Of the \$277 million for Peru's overall alternative development and demand reduction programs, approximately \$127 million represents funding by non-USG donors. This support will enable the GOP to undertake major programs in six new coca-producing valleys.

Effective drug interdiction—especially strengthening "airbridge denial"—and law enforcement remain the keys to maintaining coca leaf prices at unprofitable levels. The USG expects that low coca leaf prices will convince more farmers to abandon coca in favor of new crops or economic activities. Meanwhile, Peru's alternative development programs are designed to provide long-term, sustainable alternative economic opportunities which will discourage farmers from returning to coca cultivation. The GOP will need to increase security in areas still known for guerrilla activity and undertake a strong counter-narcotics effort to keep traffickers from interfering with alternative development efforts. Internal drug consumption is likely to increase, and the USG will continue to support the GOP's efforts to counter this growing problem.

Taiwan

Given its role as a regional transportation/shipping hub in Asia, Taiwan is considered a significant transit point for drugs affecting the United States. Its geographical location also facilitates Taiwan nationals' involvement in international narcotics trafficking. Taiwan authorities make every effort to restrict this role, however, and routinely cooperate with U.S. enforcement activities.

Although Taiwan's aggressive domestic counter-narcotics program continued, with an increase of 19 percent in the number of new cases investigated and the implementation of new counter-narcotics laws, the amount of drugs seized and the number of prosecutions in 1998 decreased substantially from 1997. Taiwan cannot be a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention because it is not a UN member. Nevertheless, over the last several years, Taiwan passed and implemented laws unilaterally bringing it into compliance with the Convention's goals and objectives. Taiwan also continued to expand counter-narcotics cooperation with U.S. law enforcement agencies through the American Institute in Taiwan.

Taiwan is not a significant cultivator or producer of illegal narcotics, but the illegal consumption of both heroin and methamphetamine remains a serious internal social problem. Amphetamines were produced in Taiwan in the past, but aggressive police efforts in 1998 and shifting market forces within the drug trade have forced producers to move their facilities to Mainland China. About 68 percent of the methamphetamine and 42 percent of the heroin seized on Taiwan during the first eleven months of 1998 originated in Mainland China.

Kaohsiung Harbor, the world's third busiest container port, is a major center for shipping to and from Southeast Asian ports. Monitoring this traffic for smuggling is a difficult task. A significant percentage of the nearly six million TEU (twenty foot equivalent unit) shipping containers at Kaohsiung port last year were "in transit" and, according to standard inter-

national practice, not subject to routine inspection by Taiwan Customs. Of the nearly 3 million containers legally entering and leaving Taiwan, Customs examined approximately 2 percent—a percentage comparable to that of other ports.

Thailand

Throughout 1998, despite a serious domestic methamphetamine abuse problem and deep government budget cutbacks, Thailand continued its long tradition of cooperation with the United States and the international community in narcotics law enforcement and drug control efforts. Thailand cemented its role as a leader in regional drug control programs by co-establishing the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) with the United States in Bangkok. In 1998, legal and judicial cooperation also became more streamlined, additional defendants arrested in 1994's Operation "Tiger Trap" were extradited to the United States, and new cooperative law enforcement programs were initiated. Extradition to the United States of Thai citizens and residents who claim Thai citizenship continued to expand.

The Royal Thai Government (RTG) has one of the most effective narcotic crop control programs in the world. USG analysts estimated that Thailand's opium production in the 1998 growing season declined 36 percent to 16 metric tons. Cultivation decreased by 18 percent. Reflecting trends of previous years, opium farmers continue to cultivate smaller, more isolated fields and engage in multiple cropping to avoid eradication. A drought last year adversely affected the production of all agricultural commodities, including opium. The 1999 eradication campaign was inaugurated in mid-November 1998. Concentrated efforts will be necessary to destroy the poppy before it can be harvested. Activities related to heroin production, such as the refining of raw opium into morphine base, continued in northern border areas where drug producers often combined heroin operations with the manufacture of methamphetamine.

Thailand has yet to become a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention due to its lack of anti-money laundering legislation. A draft bill is currently in a legislative committee where differences over the types of predicate crimes covered are being debated. The RTG remains committed to the passage of a law with as broad application as possible. Seizures and court actions under the asset seizure law continued. In 1998, with DEA support, the Thai Police established the first in a series of specially trained narcotics law enforcement units to target major trafficking groups. RTG programs aimed at treatment, epidemiology of substance abuse, and demand reduction were maintained and continue to be effective.

Venezuela

Venezuela is a major transit country for over 100 metric tons of cocaine shipped annually from South America to the United States and Europe. Venezuela is also a transit country for chemicals used in the production of drugs in source countries. Venezuela is not a significant producer of illegal drugs, but small-scale opium poppy cultivation occurs near the country's border with Colombia.

In recent years, Venezuela's relatively vulnerable financial institutions and other sectors of the government have become targets for money laundering of illegal drug profits. U.S. Customs Operation "Casablanca" identified Venezuela as one of the routes by which Colombian narco-traffickers launder drug proceeds through Venezuelan banks. Following arrests in May of Venezuelan bankers implicated in this case, the Government of Venezuela (GOV) expressed concern over the vulnerability of its financial sector and indicated a willingness to cooperate with the USG on follow-up investigations.

In 1998, Venezuela sustained its efforts to combat narcotics trafficking and consumption. The National Anti-Drug Commission was instrumental

in coordinating better implementation of existing legislation and lobbying for new, tougher counter-narcotics legislation.

Actions by the GOV to intensify counter-narcotics efforts included: programs to implement a major reform of the judicial system due to take effect in July 1999; establishment of a central Financial Intelligence Unit; adoption of a unified regulatory system for chemical precursors; and passage of a new Customs law. Regrettably, efforts to gain passage of a Comprehensive Anti-Organized Crime bill were unsuccessful when the senate failed to pass the bill before congress adjourned for elections.

The Venezuelan military continued cooperation with the USG in an aggressive campaign against small-scale opium cultivation that occurs in the Sierra de Perija area near Venezuela's northern border with Colombia. Two eradication operations in this area conducted in 1998 reduced opium cultivation to less than 50 hectares.

In October 1998, the GOV moved to reorganize the customs sector—a major element in controlling narcotics smuggling through ports and airports. The reform addresses all aspects of customs procedures and is expected to result in better control measures.

Corruption in law enforcement and the judicial system continues to be a major problem. The GOV's judicial reform program is designed to reduce the opportunities for corruption in the judicial sector. Venezuela's new President, Hugo Chavez Frias, has included fighting corruption and combating drug transit as priorities for his new administration.

Vietnam

Narcotics flow into Vietnam from drug-producing areas in Burma, Thailand, Laos, and China along Vietnam's long mountainous borders. Its location close to the "Golden Triangle" renders Vietnam an important transit route for heroin and more recently for amphetamines. Drugs entering the country are used locally and transshipped to other destinations. Increased availability of heroin and methamphetamine has fueled a sharp increase in domestic drug abuse.

Trafficking through Vietnam continued at a high level in 1998, and may be increasing, but has been accompanied by a steady increase in arrests. Constant vigilance is necessary to assure corruption does not make the problem worse. The country is poor and suffers from a growing problem of trafficking, especially to school-aged children. Within the constraints of its limited resources, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (GOSRV) has endeavored to stem the flow of narcotic drugs to its own population and to work cooperatively with the world community, including the United States, in the counter-narcotics effort.

Opium poppy cultivation appears to have declined in 1998, after an increase in 1997. In 1998, Vietnam began staffing its Drug Control Committee secretariat and approved a drug control action plan. Vietnam is highly supportive of bilateral and international cooperation to stem the flow of drugs into the country and sponsored two international conferences in Hanoi during the year. GOSRV also sent capable delegations to other international conferences.

The USG and the GOSRV are expanding bilateral cooperation, including negotiating a counter-narcotics agreement and exchanging information on drug trafficking cases. The DEA will open an office in Hanoi in 1999.

Vietnam is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention, as well as the 1961 UN Single Convention and its 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances.