



U.S. Department
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**Maritime
Administration**

MARITIME SECURITY REPORT

***Cocaine Smuggling From South America to
Europe and the United States Increased in 2000
Via Commercial Maritime and Other Modes of Transport***



*** September 2001 ***

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PREFACE

The *Maritime Security Report* is an unclassified periodic publication prepared to inform the commercial maritime industry, senior Maritime Administration officials, the Secretary of Transportation's Office of Intelligence and Security, and the Security Subcommittee of the Interagency Committee on the Marine Transportation System. The report focuses on international criminal activity and security issues which pose a threat to U.S. commercial maritime interests and the movement of U.S. civilian cargoes in foreign trade.

The global nature of U.S. trade means that U.S.-flag ocean carriers call on ports in nearly every country, and cargoes owned by U.S. interests may be embarked on ocean vessels of any flag or in any port worldwide. U.S. commercial maritime interests, therefore, can be jeopardized worldwide by a broad range of illicit activities, adversely affecting their competitiveness.

The *Maritime Security Report* is intended to increase awareness of the scope and severity of economic crime affecting U.S. maritime commerce. Increased awareness is a factor in improving port and cargo security in the international maritime trade corridors. The Maritime Administration expects increased awareness to contribute toward deterring criminal exploitation of the marine transportation system, its users and providers.

The *Maritime Security Report* is produced under the authorization of Margaret D. Blum, Associate Administrator for Port, Intermodal, and Environmental Activities. The information contained in the report is based on our research and analysis of recent, significant developments, and is compiled from commercial sources and U.S. Government reports.

Please direct any questions and comments on the information in this report to Thomas Morelli, Program Manager, Port and Cargo Security, or Raymond Barberesi, Director, Office of Ports and Domestic Shipping, Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20590, or telephone (202) 366-5473/fax (202) 366-6988.

Previous Issues of the Maritime Security Report

Note: The preceding issue of the *Maritime Security Report* is dated November 2000. Issues previous to that are dated: May 2000, June 1999, October 1998, October 1997, April 1997, January 1997, September 1996, April 1996, January 1996, and August 1995 (the initial issue of the report). Copies of previous issues are available in printed format or in electronic form. Visit MARAD's web site at <http://www.marad.dot.gov> to view specific editions or for more information.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cocaine Smuggling From South America to Europe and the United States Increased in 2000 Via Commercial Maritime and Other Modes of Transport

An increase in the detected and estimated transatlantic flow of cocaine smuggled from South America to the United States and Europe in 2000 has been reported by the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). According to the ONDCP *Annual Assessment of Cocaine Movement - 2000* (AACM), some 515 tons is estimated to have potentially arrived in the United States, by various modes of transportation, substantially more than the 382 metric tons (tons) recorded in 1999. The tonnage of cocaine detected departing South America in direct transit to Europe, increased by 39 percent during 2000 to 104 tons. Nearly all of this cocaine flow occurred in commercial maritime vessels destined primarily for the Iberian Peninsula, the primary gateway for Europe-bound cocaine shipments. The AACM estimates that because of the difficulty in detecting commercial maritime shipments of cocaine, especially in containerized cargo, "actual cocaine flow to Europe could be as great as 200 tons."

Trends in commercial maritime smuggling of cocaine identified by AACM include:

- Cocaine "traffickers are likely to continue, and perhaps even increase, their exploitation of maritime container ports throughout Europe, including those on the Mediterranean Sea and in Eastern Europe."
- "Complex routing and reassignment of a final destination while in transit will be a hallmark of commercial maritime smuggling in containers."
- "Cocaine will continue entering the United States concealed in commercial maritime vessels, including containerized cargo."

In separate reporting, the current U.S. *International Crime Threat Assessment* states that the trade facilitating features of intermodal commercial shipping -- including standardized cargo containers, computerized cargo tracking, and automated cargo-transfer equipment -- are inadvertently advantageous to criminals as well as the legitimate shippers. Drug trafficking organizations anticipate less scrutiny utilizing commercial maritime trade for smuggling because of business and government imperatives to facilitate commercial and financial transactions and expedite transportation of goods. Developments pertaining to commercial maritime drug smuggling activities in South America during 2000, presented in the U.S. Department of State's *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, substantiate the threat to European and United States bound sea trades.

Cocaine Smuggling From South America to Europe and the United States Increased in 2000 Via Commercial Maritime and Other Modes of Transport

An increase in the detected and estimated flow of cocaine smuggled from South America to the United States and Europe in 2000 has been reported by the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). Drug trafficking organizations exploit the global reach of maritime commerce, particularly containerized cargoes, and utilize circuitous routing in order to evade surveillance methods for tracking, monitoring, and interdicting maritime shipments. Consequently, any of the world's seaports are potential destinations for consignments of illegal drugs shipped via commercial maritime conveyance. These circumstances pose a direct threat to the commercial maritime industry and integrity of legitimate international sea trade corridors of the United States.

A recent U.S. interagency assessment published by ONDCP, reports that cocaine flow, seizures, and consumption demand in 2000 continued to demonstrate the cocaine trafficking industry's ability to take advantage of an increasingly integrated global economy. According to the ONDCP *Annual Assessment of Cocaine Movement - 2000* (AACM¹), drug trafficking organizations have diversified their worldwide distribution patterns by utilizing "more sophisticated transportation and communications infrastructure, altering smuggling routes, schedules, and concealment techniques." The AACM, an unclassified publication, reports that in 2000, large amounts of cocaine continued to depart South America toward the United States; 31% via the Caribbean corridor. Some 515 metric tons (tons) are estimated to have potentially arrived in the United States by various modes of transportation, substantially more than the 382 tons recorded in 1999. At the same time, drug trafficking organizations smuggled increased quantities of cocaine to European markets, mainly by commercial maritime conveyance.

Commercial Maritime Cocaine Flows to Europe Estimated Possibly 200 Tons.

The AACM reports that, in 2000, the total cocaine flow detected departing South America enroute mainly to the United States and, secondarily, to Europe was 749 tons. The volume of cocaine detected departing South America in direct transit to Europe was about 104 tons, according to the AACM, and represents a 39 percent increase since 1999. An additional 12 tons of cocaine were detected also en route to Europe in secondary movements that exited the Caribbean corridor subsequent to northward transit from South America. Nearly "all of this cocaine flow occurred in commercial maritime vessels destined primarily for the Iberian Peninsula,² the primary gateway for Europe-bound cocaine shipments." The AACM points out that "much of this increase

¹(AACM) *2000 Annual Assessment of Cocaine Movement*, ONDCP-01-01, U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy; Feb 2001.

²AACM, p. 4.

reflects greater awareness resulting from access to additional sources of information.” The AACM estimates that because of the difficulty in detecting commercial maritime shipments of cocaine, especially in containerized cargo, “actual cocaine flow to Europe could be as great as 200 tons.”³

Trends in commercial maritime smuggling of cocaine identified by AACM include:⁴

- Cocaine “traffickers are likely to continue, and perhaps even increase, their exploitation of maritime container ports throughout Europe, including those on the Mediterranean Sea and in Eastern Europe.”
- “Complex routing and reassignment of a final destination while in transit will be a hallmark of commercial maritime smuggling in containers.”
- “Cocaine will continue entering the United States concealed in commercial maritime vessels, including containerized cargo.”

Commercial Maritime Drug Smuggling from South America

Unconstrained by borders or national sovereignty, drug trafficking organizations are taking full advantage of the growth in sophisticated global commerce, transportation, communication, and financial links. As barriers to trade and travel are reduced and volumes of international cargo and passengers continue to grow, smuggling opportunities increase for exploitation of maritime commerce by drug trafficking organizations. The *International Crime Threat Assessment* (ICTA⁵) produced in December 2000 by a U.S. Government interagency working group is a product of the U.S. *Interagency Crime Control Strategy*. According to ICTA, these developments have allowed international criminals to expand their networks and increase their cooperation. Contributing factors include the increased promotion of international commerce and transportation of goods, relaxed border controls, and transnational freedom of movement by more nationalities -- especially within regional trade blocs.

Trade facilitating features of intermodal commercial shipping -- including standardized cargo containers, computerized cargo tracking, and automated cargo-transfer equipment -- are inadvertently advantageous to criminals as well as the legitimate shippers. According to ICTA, drug trafficking organizations anticipate less scrutiny

³AACM, p. 5.

⁴AACM, p. 5.

⁵(ICTA) *International Crime Threat Assessment*, U.S. interagency working group, Office of the President of the United States; Dec 2000.

utilizing commercial maritime trade for smuggling. They expect that business and government imperatives to facilitate commercial and financial transactions and expedite transportation of goods will prevail.⁶

Cargoes of Precursor Chemicals from the United States. A basic factor in the illicit drug trade is the large quantities of precursor chemicals required in the production and refining of cocaine and heroin. Precursor chemicals are obtainable by drug trafficking organizations in a number of industrialized countries, according to ICTA. The shorter transportation distance to South American cocaine and heroin refineries makes the United States a preferred source of supply for these often unstable chemicals, over other chemical producing countries.⁷

The U.S. *National Drug Control Strategy: 2001 Annual Report*, produced by ONDCP, explains that in response to stricter international controls, drug trafficking organizations have increasingly been forced to divert the precursor chemicals from the legitimate commercial trade. Chemicals critical to the production of cocaine are introduced into South America's Andean region through legitimate purchases by companies that are registered and licensed as chemical importers. Once in the country, the chemicals are diverted either directly from corrupt importers or as a result of coercion on the part of drug traffickers. Methods of chemical diversion include mislabeling shipping containers, forging documents, establishing front companies, circuitous routing and hijacking shipments, bribing officials, or smuggling products across land borders from adjacent countries. The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), plays a vital role in coordinating chemical-enforcement operations in Latin American countries that produce cocaine or serve as transit points for precursor chemicals.⁸

Source and Transit Countries. The *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (INCSR) produced by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs annually provides a worldwide compilation of drug control developments. The following highlight commercial maritime drug smuggling activities in selected South American countries during 2000. They were reported in the INCSR⁹ and substantiate the threat to European and United States bound sea trades.

⁶ICTA, p. 4.

⁷ICTA, p. 119.

⁸*National Drug Control Strategy: 2001 Annual Report*, U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President of the United States, 2001; p. 109.

⁹(INCSR) *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report - 2000*, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, U.S. Department of State; Mar 2001. Internet-version pages are not numbered but countries are listed in alphabetical order by region. www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/drugs/01030110.htm

COLOMBIA. Traffickers continue to exploit commercial maritime conveyances and seaports in 2000 and have resorted to utilizing countries bordering Colombia, including Venezuela, as exit points for drug shipments. As a result of a U.S. sponsored port security assistance program facilitated by the Narcotics Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bogota, since late 1998 and through 2000, Colombian port authorities were instrumental in the seizure of more than 31 tons of cocaine and 60 tons of marijuana. The port security program's success is a function of a public-private partnership in which specially trained narcotics police carry out inspection and interdiction operations, all at very little cost to the U.S. Government. Improvements in port security and consequent interdiction success have motivated trafficking organizations to take elaborate and costly measures to disguise cocaine inside machinery, bribe officials, and avoid Colombia's commercial ports by using "go-fast" boats to move drugs offshore.

VENEZUELA. Venezuela is a significant transit route for illegal drugs destined for the United States and Europe. By some U.S. Government estimates, more than 100 tons of cocaine transit Venezuela annually. Most of this tonnage reportedly is smuggled by land into Venezuela and then concealed in commercial cargo leaving major Venezuelan ports. The vast majority of this traffic consists of cocaine and heroin from neighboring Colombia. Drug trafficking organizations also use Venezuela as a transit point to divert precursor chemicals used in drug source countries. During 2000, investigations uncovered evidence of increasing numbers of large-scale shipments of cocaine to Europe through Venezuela. Venezuelan law enforcement, U.S. Customs Service (USCS), DEA, and European police agencies cooperated in the dismantling of a major Colombian drug smuggling organization operating in Venezuela. The organization was responsible for shipping several multi-ton loads of cocaine transported in freighters to the United States and Europe. Police seized nearly nine tons of cocaine intended for shipment at several landside locations in eastern Venezuela and arrested more than ten co-conspirators.

GUYANA. Although reportedly a minor source of cocaine entering the United States, Guyana serves as a transshipment point for more significant amounts of South American cocaine on its way to Europe. Guyana Government officials believe that the country's drug enforcement agencies interdict only a small percentage of the substantial amounts of cocaine shipments that transit Guyana from Colombia or Peru. Guyana's porous and largely unpatrolled borders enable drug shipments to enter the country by road or river. Cocaine shipments are exported primarily from Georgetown. Transport by commercial ship is used and may involve intermediate stops in the Caribbean or, increasingly, direct transit to the United States and Europe. In 2000, Guyana's police agencies received drug interdiction assistance from DEA, which covers the country from its office in Caracas, Venezuela.

SURINAME. A transshipment conduit for cocaine transshipment from South America to Europe and the United States, Suriname lacks the necessary infrastructure and border control for effective detection of drug shipments. A largely unmonitored interior

comprises 90 percent of the country. Cocaine shipments have historically been primarily destined for Europe, but Suriname Government officials report an increase in the amount of cocaine intercepted en route to the United States. The U.S. Embassy continues to work toward establishing a permanent DEA presence in Suriname.

PARAGUAY. Paraguay is a transit country for mainly Bolivian and some Colombian cocaine, which is smuggled to Argentina, Brazil, the United States, Europe, and Africa. Peruvian cocaine is also smuggled into Paraguay. Although it is difficult to determine the drug smuggling volume precisely, U.S. Government law enforcement officials estimate that approximately ten tons of mostly Bolivian cocaine transit Paraguay annually. Paraguay lacks effective counterdrug and organized crime investigative and operational capabilities, which has been due in part to legal restrictions on police use of informants, controlled drug deliveries, and undercover operations.

BRAZIL. Brazil continues as a major transit country for cocaine, transported from Colombia and other neighboring countries, and remains a major producer of precursor chemicals. Manaus and Belem are among the Brazilian seaports reported to serve as transshipment points for drugs shipped to the United States and Europe. U.S. counterdrug policy initiatives in Brazil focus on bilateral assistance to identify and dismantle international drug trafficking organizations operating in Brazil. In 2000, this included expanded sharing of law enforcement intelligence with U.S. agencies and participation by DEA observers in major Brazilian federal police operations.

URUGUAY. While Uruguay is not a major drug-transit country, the large amount of containerized cargo passing through the Port of Montevideo may be susceptible to drug shipments. The country's porous northern border with Brazil is the major crossing point for drugs entering Uruguay destined for export, principally to Europe.

ARGENTINA. Argentina's seaports provide a principal conveyance for smuggling drug shipments out of the country via maritime transport in bulk cargo and possibly containerized cargo. Although it has been difficult to quantify the flow of illegal drugs transported through the country with any degree of accuracy, Argentina remains a transit country for cocaine, primarily from neighboring Bolivia. Undetermined quantities of cocaine are being moved through Argentina in international transit from Peru and Colombia, and some drugs, such as marijuana, enter Argentina via Paraguay and Brazil. Riverine traffic from Paraguay and Brazil is a probable method for moving drugs into and through Argentina. Most Argentine officials agree that drugs transiting through Argentina are a problem. The Government of Argentina has been encouraged by the U.S. Embassy to determine the extent of South Atlantic maritime drug trafficking.

The Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) -- consisting of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay as members, and associates Bolivia and Chile -- was established in 1991 to increase regional economic cooperation. As a member of MERCOSUR, Argentina cannot open and inspect sealed containers from another

member state which are passing through the country in transit. These sealed and uninspected containers are considered to be vulnerable to the threat posed by drug smuggling.

Argentina has a large and well-developed legitimate commercial chemical industry, which manufactures many of the solvents, acids, and oxidizing chemicals used as precursors in the illicit processing of cocaine. During 2000, Argentine authorities seized more than 2,700 liters of chemicals which had been diverted for illegal purposes. Government controls on essential chemicals and precursors require that all manufacture, import, or export of precursor chemicals be registered with Argentine authorities. However, until recently, little was done to authenticate chemical transactions or investigate suspicious chemical transfers. Argentina is rebuilding a national database of producers and distributors to gain a better understanding of the scope of the problem and to support a chemical investigation unit.

Argentina has proposed to its neighbors that they work more closely together to monitor the flows of chemicals in the region. The U.S. Embassy continues engagement with Argentina to develop effective chemical controls and to identify the illegal diversion of precursor chemicals. Argentine counterdrug officials have expressed willingness and capability to exchange chemical industry records with U.S. law enforcement authorities.

CHILE. Smugglers from cocaine source countries make effective use of the extensive containerized cargo facilities at Chile's ten seaports, contributing to its status in 2000 as a medium-level transshipment country for refined cocaine exported to the United States and Europe. Chile also continues to be a source of precursor chemicals illegally diverted to South American countries for use in processing cocaine. Cocaine products enter Chile principally from Peru and Bolivia across their land borders and are transported along the Pan American Highway to the country's seaports for export transit. Treaty provisions bind Chilean authorities to provide inspection-free export of transiting commercial cargo originating in Bolivia or Peru.

During 2000, Chilean authorities cooperated with DEA in a commercial maritime cargo seizure of nine tons of cocaine hidden in a Panamanian registered freighter which had made a port call in the Chilean Port of Arica, near the country's northern border with Peru. Chilean authorities also participated in the dismantling of a precursor chemical diversion operation involving 11,000 tons of sulfuric acid manufactured in Chile, intended for cocaine processing in Bolivia. U.S. support to Chile reinforced ongoing bilateral priorities, including those pertaining to the diversion of precursor chemicals and the transshipment of illegal substances using containerized cargo. The U.S. Embassy arranged a USCS training course, funded by Department of State (DOS), designed to share U.S. techniques and strategies to detect and thwart the latest methods of container alteration for the shipment of illegal drugs. DOS anticipates that more training for Chilean personnel will be conducted by USCS and DEA on containerized cargo and diversion of precursor chemicals, respectively.

PERU. Trafficking organizations in Peru significantly increased the use of maritime transport during 2000, with a growing percentage of drugs shipments destined for Europe. The Port of Callao and other Peruvian seaports were used in order to export large shipments of cocaine products, including multi-ton shipments of cocaine to the United States, Mexico, and Europe. Private sector shipping companies, however, made progress in their ability to monitor their containerized cargo shipments moved by ocean transport. They have been instrumental in providing the Peruvian National Police with intelligence to support major ongoing investigations of Peruvian and other international drug trafficking organizations attempting to transport multi-ton shipments of cocaine via sea containers to the United States, Mexico, and Europe. The Government of Peru also cooperated with DEA and Chilean authorities in the nine-ton seizure of cocaine concealed in a commercial maritime shipment from the Chilean seaport of Arica.

ECUADOR. Ecuador is a major staging area and primary transit route for shipments of cocaine transported from Colombia through Ecuador's seaports to United States and European markets. Cocaine smuggled into Ecuador for consolidation into export loads arrives primarily by truck in large shipments of legitimate products via the Pan American Highway. Drug shipments exported to the United States and Europe depart from the Ecuadorian seaports of Guayaquil and Manta. Outbound cocaine shipments are hidden in compartments of oceangoing vessels or concealed within legitimate containerized or bulk cargoes or in perishable products such as seafood, bananas, and flowers. Ecuador is also an important transit country for precursor and essential chemicals smuggled into Colombia and Peru for the processing of cocaine.

Ecuador's police maritime cargo information coordination center (SIPA) in Guayaquil, began operations in 2000. The Ecuadorian National Police (ENP) has established data communication links between its counterdrug division's intelligence center in Quito, SIPA, and the Ecuadorian customs service. This has contributed to the improved exchange of information on inbound and outbound shipments. Ecuadorian police seizures in 2000, including more than three tons of cocaine products and 18 tons of marijuana, were attributed in part to more effective use of intelligence and canine interdiction teams at Ecuador's seaports.

The U.S. Embassy, through the Narcotics Affairs Section, has established a USCS advisor position to provide technical assistance to the ENP and to the national customs service to strengthen control over the ports. The ENP also plans to establish new seaport cargo inspection units which will provide additional intelligence input to the SIPA, again with U.S. Government assistance. Despite improvements, U.S. Department of State favors an increased police presence in all major Ecuadorian seaports. The Ecuadorian Navy controls the country's ports and cooperation with police varies widely from port to port and remains a serious problem.

Enhancing Intelligence on Foreign Commercial Drug Smuggling Activities

Predictive, actionable intelligence of a quality that provides explicit information is critical to successful investigations of commercial maritime drug smuggling -- particularly those involving freight containers. Drug shipments by commercial maritime conveyances complicate smuggling investigations by obfuscating the links between the illicit consignment and the traffickers. Consequently, profiles or inferential reporting are less effective for discriminating drug smuggling via commercial shipping and trade routes. More than seven million commercial containers are estimated moving worldwide in maritime and intermodal trades at any given time, with an average of 2.5 consignments per container. Smugglers using the commercial maritime method of conveyance, therefore, face a statistically low risk of detection. Adding to this probability, commercial maritime drug smuggling frequently is facilitated by internal conspiracies involving accomplices infiltrated into various aspects of the shipping cycle. Such investigations necessarily depend on informants to provide explicit intelligence.

The U.S. Customs Service Intelligence Division holds that predictive, actionable intelligence that provides explicit information has multiple applications. Foremost it may be used for indications and warning reporting to preempt harmful threats to U.S. seaports. As current intelligence, at the tactical level, it supports effective investigation and interdiction efforts. Particularly applied to commercial maritime drug smuggling, actionable intelligence is critical to an effective enforcement posture. As maritime container traffic volumes increase, inspections conducted in seaports become statistically less likely without effective intelligence. In order to achieve such focused targeting, and minimize the impact on the commercial operations of seaports and their users, transborder collection of information leading to actionable intelligence is of critical importance.¹⁰

The U.S. General Counterdrug Intelligence Plan. The domestic and international activities of drug trafficking organizations directing the flow of drugs into the United States are inextricably integrated. In response, U.S. law enforcement agencies strive to effect an investigative "bridge" linking the activities of drug trafficking organizations in other countries with those in the United States, in order to effect their comprehensive dismantlement. A recent U.S. Government task force developed a strategic planning framework to improve intelligence support of the national counterdrug strategy.

The U.S. *General Counterdrug Intelligence Plan* (GCIP) is the product of a Presidential Task Force, *Review of the U.S. Counterdrug Intelligence Centers and Activities*. The GCIP report, published in 2000, sets forth guidance and direction to relevant U.S. Government agencies. The GCIP report specifies the need for a more robust international counterdrug effort within U.S. embassy missions and between the United

¹⁰U.S. Customs Service Intelligence Division Headquarters.

States and its overseas counterdrug partners, consistent with the authority of each Chief of Mission. An intended outcome is improvement in the leadership and coordination of counterdrug components in U.S. embassy missions and improved counterdrug intelligence dissemination to host nations.¹¹ Included in the GCIP are specific measures for countering commercial maritime drug smuggling.

In addressing the requirement for enhancing intelligence on foreign commercial drug smuggling activities, the GCIP¹² states the need to:

- Increase expertise in the foreign collection and exploitation of intelligence addressing drug smuggling in commercial conveyances, and
- Deploy adequate levels of U.S. Customs Service personnel overseas to ensure intelligence collection on foreign commercial drug smuggling activities.

USCS Overseas in the Western Hemisphere. The U.S. Customs Service (USCS) coordinates international counterdrug investigations with DEA and Department of State through Customs Attache offices in U.S. Embassies covering Central and South America. These activities include foreign counterdrug intelligence collection efforts coordinated with and under the auspices of the relevant DEA Country Attaches and the U.S. Chiefs of Mission.¹³

In prepared testimony for a Congressional appropriations committee in late March 2001, the Commissioner of Customs explained that the USCS had initiated the Foreign Drug Intelligence Collection Program, consistent with the U.S. *General Counterdrug Intelligence Plan* and in partnership with DEA. This USCS program was established to meet the agency's requirements for tactical counterdrug intelligence in support of its interdiction mission. The program entails the proactive collection of commercial drug smuggling intelligence in selected drug source and transit countries by USCS teams. This intelligence product will support the USCS interdiction mission at the U.S. borders, be shared with the U.S. embassy mission and other members of the counterdrug community, and also assist host-country customs interdiction and inspection efforts. This program is directed by the Customs Intelligence Division and fully coordinated and shared with DEA Country Attaches.

¹¹(GCIP) U.S. *General Counterdrug Intelligence Plan*, Office of the President of the United States; Feb 2000; Foreign Coordination, p. 41.

¹²GCIP; Enhancing intelligence on foreign commercial drug smuggling activities, p. 43.

¹³GCIP, p. 43.

Trade Intelligence Bilateral Exchanges. Protocols and mechanisms for the exchange of trade data and intelligence information between the U.S. Customs Service and their foreign counterparts are critical elements in achieving increased transparency of cargo flows. The result improves the integrity and efficient movement of trade flows and contributes to countering commercial maritime drug smuggling in source, transit, and arrival countries.

The USCS' Trade Intelligence Development Exchange/Numerically Integrated Profiling System is a specialized analytic tool developed by the USCS Intelligence Division, according to the Commissioner of Customs' Congressional testimony. This is used to integrate trade data that are provided by foreign governments through cooperative agreement. The system uses foreign government data provided through bilateral agreement that are compared with United States records and assists in analyzing transnational movements of people, money, and goods to detect criminal activity in both countries. The Commissioner reported further that this USCS intelligence program has been successfully applied with the Government of Colombia. Under the auspices of Plan Colombia this international analytic effort is expanding to include the Governments of Panama, Venezuela, Aruba, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru.

DEA: Lead Enforcement Agency. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is the lead U.S. agency for drug law enforcement. Because DEA lacks enforcement authority in other countries, cooperation with foreign law enforcement agencies in bilateral investigations is essential to its mission. The agency's international strategy and operations depend, for the most part, on this cooperation and commitment by its law enforcement counterparts around the world. Overseas, DEA conducts foreign liaison, training of host country officials, bilateral investigations, and intelligence collection. It maintains 78 overseas offices in 57 countries to support its domestic investigations. DEA assists its foreign counterparts by developing sources of information relevant to cases that involve drug trafficking affecting the United States.

In Congressional testimony during 2001, the DEA Administrator spoke on the agency's use of a strategic approach to targeting major drug trafficking organizations worldwide. This involves a combination of intelligence, investigative technology support, and the coordinated investigative efforts of its federal, state, local, and foreign law enforcement counterparts. The DEA Administrator explained that the agency has been instrumental in encouraging countries to conduct investigations and operations across their common borders, enabling regional results. DEA's commitment to furthering this strategy throughout the Western Hemisphere and its cooperative efforts with these countries has resulted in development of more self-sufficient and effective drug law enforcement programs. As an example, DEA assists the implementation of the Joint Information Coordination Centers program, primarily in Western Hemisphere countries, to enable establishment of their own facilities for processing counterdrug intelligence.

DEA intelligence elements provide assistance and support including strategic and investigative reports on foreign and domestic drug-related issues, innovative database enhancements, and improved information sharing and dissemination. In addition, DEA develops programs to enhance interagency cooperation and to enable the strengths and resources of each agency to most effectively support U.S. counterdrug efforts.¹⁴

U.S. Department of State (DOS) is the lead agency for international narcotics control and anti-crime policy formulation and implementation. It is responsible for coordinating the international narcotics control and anti-crime assistance activities of all U.S. Government agencies operating overseas. The Secretary of State has designated the Assistant Secretary for the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) as DOS's primary focal point for all international narcotics and international criminal matters. The DOS's role, carried out by INL, is both diplomatic and programmatic. The DOS organization principally involved in effecting those outcomes overseas is the U.S. Embassy's Narcotics Affairs Section. Regional bureaus, such as the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs and the Bureau of European Affairs, are responsible for guiding the operation of U.S. diplomatic establishments in their geographic areas. And, the DOS Bureau of International Organizations works with INL in coordinating involvement with the agencies of the United Nations system on drug control or anti-crime issues.¹⁵

Policy Coordination. The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) coordinates the international and domestic programs and policies of all U.S. Government agencies engaged in drug control activities. ONDCP is also responsible for developing an annual national drug control strategy and budget. ONDCP's *National Drug Control Strategy 2001 Annual Report* explains that the transnational nature of the international drug trafficking threat prevents any single country from successfully combating it unilaterally. ONDCP regards international cooperation and assistance as an essential aspect of a comprehensive counterdrug strategy. ONDCP advocates a series of bilateral, multilateral, sub-regional, regional, and global accords to create a network for effective counterdrug measures.¹⁶

INTERPOL's International View. According to the United Nations International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), improved mechanisms of international cooperation for effecting a more integrated intelligence approach are essential to combating transnational organized crime. The collection, exchange, and analysis of

¹⁴GCIP, p. A-8.

¹⁵Fact Sheet: Narcotics and Crime Control - Role of United States Government Agencies, U.S. Information Agency, Department of State; 2001. www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/drugs/control.htm

¹⁶*National Drug Control Strategy: 2001 Annual Report*, U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President of the United States; 2001.

intelligence data should be included in that effort. In written testimony presented before the U.S. House Judiciary Committee in December 2000, a senior official of INTERPOL's Criminal Intelligence Directorate encouraged the combining of available data from different agencies and countries. Consultation mechanisms among different experts from all fields are needed to provide an adequate platform to better assess the threat of drug trafficking, organized crime, and terrorism. The INTERPOL official stated that international support in intelligence training, assistance, and technical expertise are needed by many countries before being able to address the aforementioned intelligence deficiencies. Building and sharing intelligence databases are key factors to success. However, they are dependent upon proper information technology infrastructures. Toward practical results, intelligence training should focus on information processing techniques and development of analytic capabilities.¹⁷

COMMENT: Implications for Regional Stability.

Commercial maritime drug smuggling poses a direct threat to the economic and trade interests of the United States and its global economic alliance. It erodes the integrity of international trade corridors, the economic competitiveness of legitimate open market commerce, and deters trade and investment. The vast sums in illicit profits enable drug trafficking organizations to compromise and penetrate commercial markets, acquire legitimate companies, and to corrupt governmental administrations. The most powerful criminal organizations may be capable of achieving substantial influence or even monopolistic control over critical sectors of the national economy of some countries. Such developments can discourage the commercial initiative of legitimate business interests in affected countries, diminish multilateral efforts to promote more cooperative solutions to national and regional trade problems, and may prevent credible economic systems from being instituted.

In some countries, drug trafficking organizations may attempt to influence the political process by forming financial alliances with anti-government guerrillas or terrorist groups. The outcome may exacerbate regional tensions, contribute to political instability, subvert democratic institutions, and even destabilize legitimate central government authority. This may result in civil conflict, violence, or economic disruptions, and contribute to regional instability.

According to the U.S. *International Crime Threat Assessment* (ICTA), without effective law enforcement throughout the international community, transnational criminals will continue to threaten the interests of the United States and other democratic and open

¹⁷"The Threat Posed by the Convergence of Organized Crime, Drugs Trafficking, and Terrorism", excerpts of written Congressional testimony on international crime by R. Mutschke, INTERPOL Criminal Intelligence Directorate, before U.S. House Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Crime, U.S. Information Service, Department of State; 13 Dec 2000.

market countries. The ICTA report contains projections by 2010 of threat scenarios including those relevant to criminal exploitation of commercial maritime transport. Some are already emerging, such as the following:¹⁸

- Greater regional integration and worldwide interdependence of national economies will make it easier for criminal organizations to operate on an international scale and blend their operations into legitimate economic activity.
- Improvements in transportation infrastructures and modalities to facilitate international trade may increase the volume, speed, and efficiency of smuggling and commercial transactions by international crime groups.
- Many countries are likely to be at risk of organized crime groups gaining significant leverage or even control over their political and economic systems.

¹⁸*International Crime Threat Assessment*, U.S. interagency working group, Office of the President of the United States; Dec 2000., p. 128.

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